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Shared leadership in the context of change
a Saudi Arabian case study

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Abstract

Leadership is a major research subject for many scholars, and approaches to the study of leadership range from a concern for distinctions between leaders and leadership, the role of leadership in strategy and strategic decision-making, behavioural approaches to leadership, systems and network approaches, including those that encompass complex adaptive systems and enduring concerns for leadership through and beyond organisations, system-wide change, and sharing of authority through shared leadership. Shared leadership and its impact on teams and organisations have been major research concerns for decades. Shared leadership is a horizontal style of leading, unlike traditional leadership behaviour, and focuses on team collective leadership. The term describes a team process that distributes leadership among team members, empowering each member to act as a leader instead of relying on a single designated leader. Traditional leadership and shared leadership are not interchangeable; rather, they act to complement one another. Given that the case study and the research time frame align with a period of discontinuous change for the organisation.

This PhD thesis aims to identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. It identifies within the literature the factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionises how that model operates in an empirical setting. The researcher utilised a qualitative approach to collect the data for this study from a Saudi commercial organisation. The researcher collected the data through semi-structured interviews. The researcher applied the embedded case study approach because they conducted the study in three different regions of one commercial organisation. The study sample consisted of branch managers, heads of departments, and branch members. The researcher interviewed the case

CEO, five branch managers, three heads of departments, and 17 team members across the three regions.

This PhD thesis has provided a deeper understanding of the empirical implementation of shared leadership, specifically within the context of organisational change. The conceptual model of shared leadership in practice provides an opportunity to empirically explore how key factors of shared leadership operate in a real-world environment. It makes a useful contribution to the growing body of shared leadership literature. The conceptual model yielded useful insights for identifying shared leadership practices within the case study organisation. The researcher was able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the empirical implementation of these factors and their impact on shared leadership practices, particularly in the context of organisational change. The conceptual model effectively facilitated the identification of shared leadership practices within the case study organisation and explored the influence of these factors on the successful implementation of organisational change in Saudi commercial organisations.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

This introduction will present a comprehensive outline of the research topic and the objectives of this PhD thesis. It addresses the research background, the study context, and the case study. Furthermore, it outlines the research questions that guide the investigation, the study originality, as well as the methods that will be employed to address these inquiries. Ultimately, it includes a comprehensive outline of the thesis's framework and concisely outlines the substance of each chapter.

Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this study is to identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. It identifies within the literature the factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. Accordingly, the research will work towards accomplishing the objectives below:

1. To identify shared leadership practices within the Saudi commercial organisation.
2. To assess the factors that have foremost influence on the development of shared leadership practices.
3. To assess the impact of shared leadership practices on the process of significant organisational change in the Saudi commercial case study.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding the study are:

- What factors identify the "shared leadership" practices in the case study organisation?
- What are the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices?
- What is the impact of shared leadership practices on the process of significant organisational change within the case study organisation?

Background to the Case Study: Organisation & Location

Case Study Organisation

The case study organisation is a Saudi business entity operating in the service industry. The organisation was founded over three decades ago and underwent a recent transition from a solely owned company to a corporate entity following the death of its original founder in November 2020. The corporation experienced this transition in December 2020, and the process of transformation was completed within a span of around 12 months. Its headquarters are located in Al-Khobar City, in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. The case organisation is specialised in legal and auditors' accounting.

Prior to the institution transition, it was one of the well-known and recommended institutions by the Eastern Province Court House. In 2020, after the death of the institution's founder, and because the firm was solely owned, Saudi regulations required that the business be wound up (Ministry of Commerce of Saudi Arabia, N/D). The institution was granted a period of time to resolve its legal standing with the Ministry of Commerce in Saudi Arabia (Ministry of Commerce of Saudi Arabia, N/D). During this period, the new owner converted it from a solo-owned institution into a corporate entity: a significant process of organisational change. The

new management developed the current business model and added legal accountant services to its core objectives.

Currently, the company employs 51 technical staff members across three regions in Saudi Arabia, as well as several non-technical employees, including human resources professionals, quality assurance personnel, and finance department personnel. Throughout the process of transition, the organisation encountered several obstacles and challenges in sustaining its business operations, such as maintaining their former experienced employees and gaining the trust of their current and future clients.

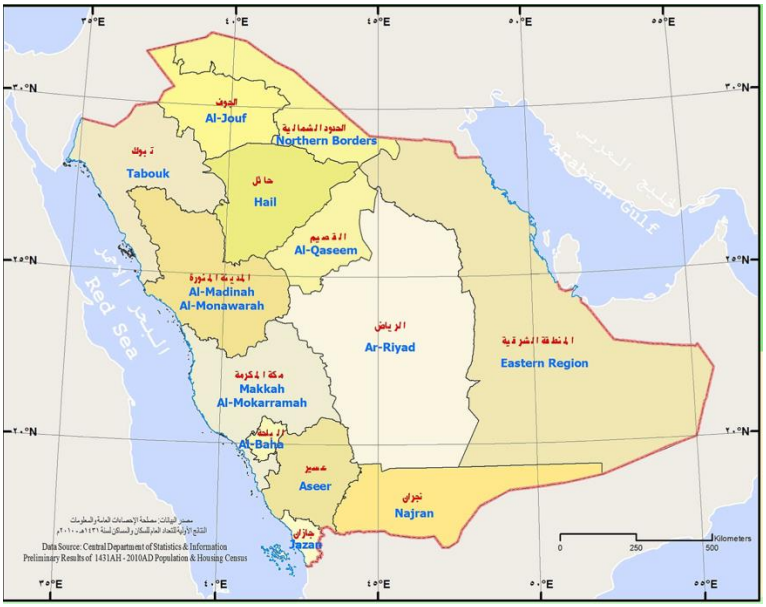
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as Case Study Location

Saudi Arabia, formally referred to as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is a country located in the Middle East on the Arabian Peninsula. Saudi Arabia is well-known for its enormous desert areas, notably the well-known Rub' al Khali, also known as the Empty Quarter, as well as its stunning shoreline along the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf. The country was established as the Emirate of Riyadh and then, in 1932, transformed into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the leadership of its founder, King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud. Jordan and Iraq border Saudi Arabia to the north, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates to the northeast, Oman and Yemen to the southeast, and Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates to the east.

Saudi Arabia has a geographical size of around 2.15 million square kilometres, making it the biggest country in the Middle East and the 13th largest globally. Saudi Arabia is a nation known for its extensive cultural legacy and historical background. Mecca, the birthplace of Islam, is a major religious site that draws millions of believers annually.

The country includes five distinct regions: Central, Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern. These regions consist of thirteen provinces, namely Riyadh, Makkah, and Eastern provinces, as well as 136 governorates. Riyadh, located in Riyadh province within the Central region,

serves as the capital of Saudi Arabia. From an administrative standpoint, Riyadh province has the title of being the biggest province in the Kingdom. However, when considering geographical size, the Eastern Province takes the lead as the largest province in Saudi Arabia. Makkah province is the third-most extensive province in Saudi Arabia, behind Riyadh, and is located in the Western region. The population of the country exceeds 30 million.



Source: (Central Department of Statistics and Information, 2010)

The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia unveiled the ambitious Vision 2030 in 2016, with the objective of diversifying the economy and diminishing reliance on oil. Saudi Arabia aims to foster new opportunities and ensure ongoing sustainability by allocating resources to fields including tourism, technology, and renewable energy. The primary goal of the vision is *"to be an exemplary and leading nation in all aspects"* (Al-Saud, 2016, p. NP). The human capability development programme is a key aim of the Saudi Vision. Its primary objective is to enhance the knowledge and skills of individuals through various programmes, including the 2030 Leaders programme (Misk, N/D). Moreover, the implementation of the Vision 2030 plan has the potential to significantly transform Saudi Arabia into a more important and progressive

participant in global affairs (Vision 2030, 2016). Therefore, the Saudi context is a suitable setting for undertaking a study project on the topic of leadership.

Study Originality

The problem with conventional understandings of leadership, as previously noted, is that they primarily concentrate on the behaviour of the designated leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Fausing, et al., 2013; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Stone, et al., 2004; Yukl, 2002). These approaches created a framework where followers only played supporting roles for a predetermined group of individuals inside the organisation, resulting in inflexible power dynamics.

A collaborative group method in which the task is distributed among group members collectively rather than being assigned to a single designated leader is what the leader's network views as the essence of leadership, 'Shared Leadership' (Ensley, et al., 2006). The difficulties of leadership and the challenges that organisations must overcome are the topics that will be discussed in this thesis. Shared leadership refers to the leader's network view, and this approach can create a new organisational dynamic that benefits all individuals involved (Ensley, et al., 2006; Pearce, 2004; Pearce, et al., 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Perry, et al., 1999). According to Manz et al. (2013) and Perry et al. (1999), it is a system that functions by means of the reciprocal influence of members of the group, in which they share the responsibility of implementing particular behaviours within their group.

Thereby, a comprehensive investigation of leadership is essential for both commercial and non-commercial organisations, especially when addressing the concept of shared leadership. Thus, this thesis has provided an extensive understanding of the practical implementation of shared leadership, specifically within the framework of organisational change. The concept provides a novel aspect to leadership research by emphasising a horizontal leadership style (Allen & Rush, 1998; Stogdill, 2001), an increase in the degree of autonomy that group members have,

and an improvement in their sense of self-efficacy to take up leadership practices (Carson, et al., 2007). Wherein leadership duties are distributed among group members instead of being centralised on one selected leader (Pearce & Conger, 2003).

By addressing key research questions such as what factors identify the "shared leadership" practices in the case study organisation, what are the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices, and what is the impact of shared leadership practices on the process of significant organisational change within the case study organisation, will provide a crucial understanding of the importance of utilising shared leadership practices during an organisational change. As a result, the purpose of the research is to provide a contribution to the existing body of knowledge and to provide practical strategies for the implementation of shared leadership practices in commercial organisations, particularly during the process of organisational change.

Thesis Structure

The thesis will be structured into six chapters, which include an introduction, a review the academic literature, research methodology, findings, discussion, and a conclusion. Each chapter will delve into specific aspects of the research topic, providing a comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand.

The thesis begins with this introductory chapter, which presents the context of the study and provides background on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the case study organisation. It also discusses the significance of the study and its potential contributions to the field. It introduces the research questions, aims, and objectives. It then moves to chapter two, reviewing the literature. This chapter focuses on the background to leadership scholarship and important developments within the leadership literature. This includes the development of the literature around key areas such as leadership qualities, and styles, systems approaches, and current

challenges to leadership thinking (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Fausing, et al., 2013; Grint, 2007; Murphy, et al., 2021; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Stone, et al., 2004; Tourish, 2020; Yukl, 2002). The chapter also explores the connections between leadership and organisational change including alternative perspectives on ‘change’ and ‘changing’ (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; By, 2005; Van De Ven & Poole, 1995), It then narrows its focus to a consideration of ‘shared leadership' (Carson, et al., 2007; Cox, et al., 2003; Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Conger, 2003) and the ways in which shared leadership as a concept has developed within the academic literature and particular practices, which can be identified within the construct. It then moves on to the third chapter— research methodology, which provides a comprehensive overview of the data collection approaches adopted for the study, followed by discussion of the research philosophy, design, and the researcher relationship to the case study organisation. It also outlines an overview of the tools and techniques utilised for gathering and analysing data, which encompassed the process of selecting research sites, challenges in obtaining access and conducting field work, and the particular methods employed for data collection. This chapter also examines ethical considerations and outlines the procedures for transcribing and translating the collected data. The fourth chapter— research findings, provides a comprehensive analysis of the gathered data. This provides an opportunity to deeply analyse the data gathered from the case study organisation and illustrate an in-depth understanding of the obtained data. This chapter will detail the process by which the semi-structured interviews were analysed using the qualitative six-thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke , 2006). It then moves towards the fifth chapter, which discusses the findings in the context of the existing academic literature on shared leadership. The sixth chapter serves as the conclusion and brings together the entirety of the study and evaluates the extent to which the thesis has addressed the research questions. Additionally, it assesses the research's contributions to the current body of knowledge on leadership, with a specific focus on shared leadership and its role in driving

significant organisational transformation processes. The study also examines the implications and recommendations for adopting shared leadership, as well as identified potential areas for future research to enhance the understanding of shared leadership in Saudi commercial organisations.

Conclusion

To summarise, this chapter presents a comprehensive outline of the study subject and the goals of this PhD dissertation. It provides an overview of the research's background, and the organisation involved in the case study. Furthermore, it examines the importance of the research and its location within the wider leadership literature. In addition, it defines the research objectives that have directed the investigation and the methodology that has been utilised to address these questions. Ultimately, it presents an overview of the organisation of this thesis and offers a brief summary of the topics covered in each chapter.

Chapter Two: Reviewing the Literature

Introduction

This research aims to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices during a process of major organisational change. It identifies within the literature the factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing body of research and academic literature related to the topics of leadership, with a particular focus on shared leadership. This chapter will also explore the connection between leadership and ongoing processes of organisational change. To do this, the review will identify what is already known and understood about three relevant and interconnected areas of scholarship. The first of these is a theoretical understanding of leadership, with a particular focus on shared and distributed leadership. The second is leadership, including shared leadership during process of change, especially rapid, discontinuous change. The third area of literature of interest is that which explores approaches and understandings of leadership in the region of the Middle East and, more particularly, the Gulf States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Importance of Studying Leadership

Leadership is a major research subject for many scholars (Butt, et al., 2019; Cheong, et al., 2019; D'Innocenzo, et al., 2021; Grint, et al., 2017; He, et al., 2020; Pearce, et al., 2018), and approaches to the study of leadership range from a concern for distinctions between leaders and leadership (Day, et al., 2014; Rost, 1993), the role of leadership in strategy and strategic decision-making (Pettigrew, et al., 1992), behavioural approaches to leadership (Bass &

Riggio, 2006), systems and network approaches (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2007), including those that encompass complex adaptive systems and enduring concerns for leadership through and beyond organisations (Appelbaum, et al., 2012; By, 2021; Murphy, et al., 2017), system-wide change (Murphy, et al., 2021), and sharing of authority through shared leadership (Pearce & Conger, 2003). As such, leadership is considered one of the critical domains in the advancement and success of organisations (By, 2021; Lussier & Achua, 2007; Pearce, 2004), necessary but not sufficient for organisational success (Heifetz, et al., 2009).

Day et al. (2014) argued that distinctions exist in defining the terms ‘leader’ and ‘leadership’ based on the intrapersonal (leader) and the interpersonal (leadership) factors. A leader primarily focuses on the individual person, the leader within a group, while leadership encompasses a wider scope, involving many individuals such as the leader, followers, peers in self-leadership, and shared leadership (Day, et al., 2014). Wendt et al. (2009) suggested in their research that the study of leadership behaviour can be approached from two distinctive angles: a leader's behaviour that is focused on task productivity such as directive leadership, and a behaviour that is focused on relationships as supportive leadership. Researchers have paid attention to leadership’s style and behaviour and its effect on the organisation and followers (Albloshi & Nawar, 2015; Alwahhabi, et al., 2023; Amabile, et al., 2004; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bernuzzi, et al., 2023; D'Innocenzo, et al., 2021; Yukl & Becker, 2006). The effect of top-down leadership style on organisational change has received scholarly attention for decades (Hartge, et al., 2019; Holten & Brenner, 2015; Moran & Brightman, 2000), and leadership practices have been found to have a direct relationship with the effectiveness of organisational change (Burnes, 2017; Ford, et al., 2021; Holten & Brenner, 2015; Moran & Brightman, 2000).

In addition, leadership scholars have given considerable attention to the increasing interest in the horizontal leadership style of “shared leadership” and its impact on followers and

organisations (Bergman, et al., 2012; Carson, et al., 2007; Castellano, et al., 2021; D'Innocenzo, et al., 2021; Müller, et al., 2018; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Xu, et al., 2022). Traditional leadership and shared leadership are not interchangeable, rather they act to complement one another (Pearce & Sims, 2000). Shared leadership practices encourage group members to demonstrate leadership responsibilities in activities that official leaders may be unable to accomplish owing to their busy schedules or lack of necessary abilities (Avolio, et al., 1991; Edelmann, et al., 2023; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Zhu, et al., 2018; Yukl, 2002). Nevertheless, in addition to the positive impacts of shared leadership practices, scholars have identified certain detrimental elements associated with shared leadership (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Edelmann, et al., 2023; Wang & Peng, 2022; Zhao, 2013; Zhu, et al., 2018). For example, shared leadership might result in job stress due to the frequent change of roles among group members (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Wang & Peng, 2022). Further, the implementation of shared leadership may negatively affect the formal leader's job, particularly their psychological experience of losing their position as leader, which could potentially lead to a decline in the formal leader's overall well-being (Edelmann, et al., 2023; Zhu, et al., 2018).

Given the significant breadth of leadership literature, some have observed that it is best to navigate it from a set of different perspectives. Avolio et al. (2009, p. 423), for example, categorises leadership from six perspectives: *"dyadic, shared, relational, strategic, global, and a complex dynamic*." Others such as Toor & Ofori (2008) approaches leadership in terms of qualities; Carter, et al. (2015) and Uhl-Bien (2006) approaches leadership in terms of networks; and Grint & Smolović-Jones (2023) and Grint et al. (2017) approaches leadership in terms of person, position, process, and purpose. We will use a combination of these approaches to organise a brief review of the wider leadership literature below.

Qualities, Styles, and Networks

A focus on qualities privileges leader's talents and adopt trait-based leadership perspective with things like vision, influence, and resilience as key concerns (Toor & Ofori, 2008). In relation to 'styles', the focus is on the leader's relationship with their followers by adopting a preferred leadership style such as transformational (Bass & Riggio, 2006), transactional leadership (Hannah, et al., 2020), empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014) and directive leadership (Martin, et al., 2013) styles. 'Networks' views the leadership as collective group process, which the work will be shared between the group members as a group instead of one appointed leader "shared leadership practices" (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Leadership behaviours such as transactional, transformational, empowering, and directive leadership have been recognised by scholars as being linked to the development of shared leadership practices (Cox, et al., 2003; Pearce, et al., 2014; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Perry, et al., 1999). Each type of leadership behaviour mentioned has an impact on the development of shared leadership within a group (Cox, et al., 2003). For instance, transactional leadership involves a reciprocal relationship between the leader and follower, where group members acknowledge and appreciate each other's contributions. Transformational leadership relies on the influence of highly skilled and experienced group members. Empowering leadership allows group members to have the ability to influence and lead themselves. Directive leadership refers to a leadership style that emphasises giving clear instructions and guidance to group members. In this style, experienced group members take the initiative to direct their peers in order to successfully complete their shared tasks (Cox, et al., 2003). This perspective also encompasses concerns for a systems-based view of leadership as shared and distributed. We will now look at these in more details below.

Perspectives on 'Leadership Qualities'

The concept of leadership has been subject to various definitions, which differ based on the characteristics, actions, impact, interactions, trends, positions, associations, and vocation of the leader (Yukl, 2002). The majority of leadership definitions, according to Yukl (2002), centre on the individual tasked with directing, organising, and facilitating interactions and activities inside organisations or groups. Leadership is defined by Bass and Riggio (2006) as the individual capacity to exert influence, provide direction, and inspire followers in order to achieve predetermined objectives established by the organisation. Grint et al. (2017) provided a definition of leadership as an individual who responds in an inventive manner to a novel scenario or case that surpasses the individual's prior experience.

The preceding definitions were based on the circumstances and position of the leader inside the organisation. Initially, the emphasis was placed on the characteristics and personalities of leaders (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). More recently, researchers have asserted that leadership is a process rather than an attribute of individuals (Grint, et al., 2017; Silva , 2016; Stogdill, 2001). For example, Stogdill (2001, pp. 114-115) defined leadership as *"the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts towards goal setting and goal achievement"*. And Silva (2016, p. 4) defined leadership as *"the process of interactive influence that occurs when, in given context, some people accept someone as their leader to achieve common goals."*

Therefore, scholars have classified the leadership into the following five leadership approaches: a) leadership as a person, exemplified by charismatic leaders; b) leadership as the outcomes of the leader's accomplishments; c) leadership as a position, occupies a position of authority; d) leadership as a process, examining how leaders collaborate with their followers to accomplish tasks d) leadership as a purpose, understanding that leaders lead for a specific

reason (Grint & Smolović-Jones, 2023; Grint, et al., 2017). On the other hand, Kuipers & Murphy (2023) outlined four elements that elucidate the multi-level leadership necessary for achieving collective good: 1) An internal organisational perspective; 2) Leadership interactions at a large-scale and intermediate level; 3) Leadership that is distributed and shared inside organisations; and 4) Leadership which leads to collective action and system-wide change.

Leadership that is motivating, encouraging, and persuading enables followers to be inventive while fostering their creativity (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Wu & Chen, 2018). The leader's efficacy may be accurately assessed by seeing whether or not the followers demonstrate respect and obedience towards the leader (Yukl, 2002). Because charismatic leaders exude self-confidence and exert a profoundly positive influence on their followers, the latter develop a sense of trust in them (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Thereby, charismatic leaders have a unique ability to inspire and motivate their adherents, which produces an enduring impact. Their speech exhibits not only the capacity to persuade, but also the capability to leave their audience with a deep and lasting impact (Antonakis, et al., 2022). Based on an empirical investigation, researchers discovered that the speech of charismatic leader has a significant impact on the behaviours of their followers (Antonakis, et al., 2022). Indeed, researchers have demonstrated a direct correlation between leadership styles and various desirable job attitudes and behaviours (Wu & Chen, 2018).

However, Antonakis et al. (2022) identified three specific areas of criticism about charismatic leadership: a) the concept of charismatic leadership was erratically associated with the transformational leadership style, even though they have distinct approaches; b) the definition and evaluation of charismatic leadership were primarily focused on the outcomes of leadership, leading to conceptual and empirical confusion; c) because internal factors influenced the measurement of charismatic leadership, it was not entirely accurate. The next section will look

at the leadership critiques and a brief review of the wider leadership styles such as transactional, transformational, empowerment, and directive leadership in more details below.

Perspectives on Leadership 'Styles'

A considerable body of research has identified a clear and consistent relationship among the various leadership styles—including transactional (Bass, et al., 2003; McCleskey, 2014; Meslec, et al., 2020), transformational (Avolio, et al., 1991; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bryant, 2003; Kovjanic, et al., 2012; Stone, et al., 2004), empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Martin, et al., 2013), directive (Lorinkova, et al., 2013; Stone & Jawahar, 2021), and shared leadership (Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2013; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Wu & Chen, 2018)—and the behaviours and outcomes of workers. Higgs (2022) argued that researchers are currently investigating the attributes possessed by leaders rather than the concept of leadership itself. Furthermore, five critiques have been classified in this regard: 1) Inadequate recognition of leadership as a dynamic process within a group; 2) Neglecting to consider the purpose; 3) Insufficient attention given to the context; 4) Inadequate consideration of processes and behaviours; 5) Limitations or restrictions related to the methodology used; 6) A gap between academic research and practical application (Higgs, 2022). Thus, the present thesis project was constructed based on the theoretical and empirical research conducted by Manz and Sims (1991) and Pearce and Sims (2002). These scholars developed a leadership model that encompasses four distinct leadership styles: transactional, transformational, empowering, and directive leadership. Therefore, investigating these leadership approaches is crucial for developing shared leadership practices among group members.

Five leadership styles, including transactional, transformational, empowerment, directive, and shared leadership, would be discussed in the next section of reviewing the literature.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is predicated on a reciprocal connection between the leader and the followers, in which the followers receive rewards in exchange for their productivity (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bryant, 2003; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Pearce, et al., 2003). Consequently, transactional leadership is a give-and-take strategy. A reward for the successful completion of a task and the fulfilment of a target is seen as an agreement between the group leader and his colleagues (Walumbwa, et al., 2008). In this leadership style, a leader assigns tasks to their followers, guiding them to accomplish the set goals and objectives, organising and providing the resources that are required, and rewarding the group for their successful achievements (Hannah, et al., 2020).

According to Pearce et al. (2003), the relationship between transactional leaders and followers is founded on reward-giving as a kind of motivation in return for superior performance and results. Walumbwa et al. (2008) argued that the impact of transactional leader behaviour extends to the entire group rather than to each person. Indeed, transactional leadership is desired by followers because it signifies that leaders value the efforts of their followers and recognise their successes (Bass, et al., 2003). As a result, it influences the leader-follower relationship positively (McCleskey, 2014). In contrast to transformational leaders, transactional leaders place a higher priority on meeting the core requirements of their followers, providing them with direction and resources to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities, and rewarding their accomplishments (Hannah, et al., 2020).

Furthermore, these studies established a positive correlation between transactional leadership and both job satisfaction and performance (Bass, et al., 2003; Meslec, et al., 2020). This particular leadership behaviour positively impacts the performance of the followers as well as their efforts to accomplish a designated work that the leader has set (Bass, et al., 2003; Meslec,

et al., 2020). Indeed, this particular leadership conduct has a beneficial impact on the unity of a group (Bass, et al., 2003), as well as on the efficiency of both the group leader and the group members (Pearce & Sims, 2002). As a result, the behaviour of transactional leaders motivates followers to optimise their performance in order to enhance the overall efficiency of the organisation (Bass & Riggio, 2006; McCleskey, 2014).

Bass and Schneider (2008) and Lyons and Schneider (2009) classified three constituent elements that comprise transactional leadership: contingent reward, management by exception-active, and management by exception-passive. A contingent reward system involves a delineation of expectations between a leader and their followers regarding the completion of a certain job in order to receive a reward, such as a monetary incentive, in return for a successful task. Active leadership, or management by exception–active, consists of the leader mentoring and directing followers in addition to implementing corrective measures to ensure performance standards are maintained. This form of transactional leadership is seen as the behaviour of a motivated leader. Conversely, management by exception–passive represents an unfavourable perspective of the behaviour of the leader. De Cremer et al. (2005) and Klimoski & Hayes (1980) found that transactional leadership behaviour influences followers' self-confidence towards their skills and abilities through the perception of fairness engendered by transactional contingent reward behaviour.

Adhering to the views of transactional leadership, the leader abstains from assuming the roles of mentor and director towards their followers and also abstains from executing corrective actions, as they would do so under an active leadership approach. Indeed, if the leader refrained from taking any action until the issue was brought to their attention, the performance of the followers would fall short of the expected level; thus, the satisfaction and performance of the followers would be adversely affected (Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Howell & Hall-Merenda,

1999; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Lyons & Schneider, 2009). Since a contingent reward style is classified as a transactional leadership behaviour, it functions as an empowering and motivating instrument to encourage followers to exert their utmost effort in order to achieve the objectives of the organisation, with the expectation of receiving a reward for their successful endeavours (De Cremer, et al., 2005). In fact, a meta-analysis conducted by Young et al. (2021) found that there is a positive relationship between transactional leadership, contingent reward style, and empowerment, as well as leader–member exchange.

Conversely, scholars argued that transactional leadership behaviour generates followers' relationships in accordance with the leader's hierarchical position and legitimate control over the rewards system; thus, followers comply with the leader's direction to satisfy their needs, which constitutes the reward (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). Consequently, the performance of followers is impacted in a negative way by the leader's influence, which is counterbalanced by the rewards provided (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). In contrast, Abdelwahed et al. (2023) found a significant correlation between transactional leadership and employees' performance working in SMEs in Pakistan. Further, according to the findings of the Young et al. (2021) meta-analysis, transactional leadership has a positive effect on followers' performance through the mediating role of leader–member exchange and empowerment.

Even though transactional leadership has been found to have a positive effect on employees' performance, scholars have also found that there is a positive correlation between this leadership style and employees' innovative behaviour (Hansen & Pihl-Thingvad, 2019). Their research revealed that motivational or verbal rewards positively influence group members' innovative behaviour, whereas contingent material rewards and contingent sanctions rewards have a negative impact on group members' innovative behaviour (Hansen & Pihl-Thingvad,

2019). Employees' innovation is influenced by the leadership style of their group leader. This is because the leader's behaviour can have either a positive or negative impact on the performance, innovation, and satisfaction of group members, which ultimately has an effect on their outcome (Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Hansen & Pihl-Thingvad, 2019; Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Lyons & Schneider, 2009)

Despite the positive impact of transactional leadership on workers, transformational leadership was found to be more active and effective than transactional and laissez-faire leadership, according to the comprehensive leadership model developed by Bass & Bass (2008). The model examined three distinct leadership behaviours: transactional, laissez-faire, and transformational. Lyons and Schneider (2009) suggest that followers are more likely to get social support from a transformational leader as opposed to a transactional leader. This, in turn, reduces the stress that followers create in the workplace. Bass and Bass (2008, p. 618) put forth the claim that transformational leadership is an enhanced iteration of the transactional leadership approach, wherein *"transformational leadership added to transactional leadership effect."*

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership, as opposed to transactional leadership, is the leader's personal capacity to influence the attitudes and behaviours of followers in a conducive environment so that they align with the organisation's objectives (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Stone, et al., 2004).

According to Bass & Riggio (2006), Chan & Mak (2014), and Yukl (2002), transformational leadership style increases followers' levels of commitment, trust, and loyalty to their leader and the organisation as a whole. This is because followers generate positive emotions in response to such leadership styles. Similar to transactional leadership, leader's acknowledgment of their followers' accomplishments exhibits a favourable correlation with

their performance (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Due to the fact that they perceive themselves as being valued, appreciated, and empowered by their transformational leader, motivated group members typically exert more effort than is required (Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Stone, et al., 2004). Therefore, this particular leadership style may be seen as an instrument of empowerment that enhances the self-efficacy and degree of autonomy of followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Thus, this aligns with Wang and Howell's (2010) definition of transformational leadership, who classified it as individual-oriented, as the aims of transformational leadership behaviour are to empower their followers to recognise their complete capabilities and proficiencies, as well as strengthen their sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem.

According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leadership increases the level of autonomy that followers possess; therefore, it is recommended that transformational leaders involve their group members in the decision-making stages and the formulation of group goals (Kovjanic, et al., 2012). Since transformational leadership increases group autonomy (Bass & Riggio, 2006), then, it may be assumed that the development of shared leadership practices within groups is influenced by transformational leadership (Pearce, et al., 2014; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Pearce & Sims, 2002). While shared leadership practices and transformational leadership are not intended to replace other leadership styles, they, in fact, complement and enhance the effectiveness of the aforementioned approaches (Avolio, et al., 1991; Pearce & Sims, 2000).

Transformational leadership emphasises the leader's receptivity to diverse perspectives and willingness to embrace novel experiences, whereas shared leadership practices refers to group members functioning as leaders within their group by sharing their knowledge, skills, and expertise (Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Pearce & Sims, 2002). According to Wang and Howell (2010), transformational leaders have the ability to inspire and develop their individual followers through the following four distinct aspects: The first is to establish high standards

which is the leaders expectations on the followers performance and outcome; second is followers' developments by focusing on the behaviour that enhance their skills and abilities; third is to stimulate intelligence enhance their followers creativity; and fourth is to provide personal recognition by recognising the followers accomplishments. Furthermore, Wang and Howell (2010) suggest that understanding these dimensions would be an assistance to the leader in the process of exerting influence over their followers by recognising their talents, abilities, and needs. This is likely because the leader would have a greater comprehension of their followers' requirements. According to a study by Hansen & Pihl-Thingvad (2019), transformational leadership has a significant impact on followers' levels of innovation.

The charisma of a leader may inspire group members to collaborate with them even in situations where authority and hierarchy are absent (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). The development of shared leadership practices in groups may be influenced by the fact that it entails the cultivation of group members' abilities and skills that enable them to act and behave as leaders. Transformational leaders, according to Bass & Riggio (2006), most likely direct and enhance the behaviour of their followers. In addition to strengthening followers' confidence and trust in themselves, their peers, and their leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Wang & Howell, 2010). Studies have demonstrated that the implementation of transformational leadership has a significant impact on the performance of employees and influences the behaviour of followers positively (Wang & Howell, 2010). Further, it should be noted that transformational leadership not only has a positive impact on the performance of followers but also enhances the degree of organisational commitment among group members (Avolio, et al., 1991; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Díaz-Sáenz, 2011; Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999).

Stone et al. (2004) examined four functional characteristics of transformational leadership that Avolio et al. (1991) identified: idealised influencer, inspirational motivation, intellectual

stimulation, and individualised consideration. An idealised influencer is a leader whose charisma inspires and motivates followers to go beyond their perceived capabilities in responding to the organisation's objectives, establishing trust, and demonstrating respect for their followers. Inspirational motivation refers to, inspiring and motivating followers to achieve the organisation's objectives by serving as a role model, communicating the group's vision and mission to followers in order to instil confidence in them, and maintaining an optimistic outlook despite challenging circumstances. Intellectual stimulation refers to the manner in which a leader guides their followers toward originality and encourages them to collaborate with one another while exchanging information and learning from past challenges in order to approach current issues in an inventive manner. Individualised attention includes the leader's dedication to fostering followers' empowerment through the cultivation of self-efficacy, the provision of essential resources to accomplish organisational objectives, the establishment of trusting relationships, and responsiveness to unique requirements (Avolio, et al., 1991; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bryant, 2003; Stone, et al., 2004).

On the other hand, scholars have argued that transformational leadership influence is emphasised on individual followers, while others argued that transformational leadership influence is emphasised on groups of followers rather than one individual (Wang & Howell, 2010). Thus, Wang & Howell (2010) defined group-focused transformational leadership as a leader’s behaviour that is characterised by efforts to emphasise the significance of group objectives, foster common values and beliefs, and motivate a cohesive endeavour to accomplish group goals. This emphasises the group as a whole group rather than focusing on individuals, encouraging cooperative behaviour among group members to achieve the group's common objectives (Pearce & Sims, 2002; Wang & Howell, 2010). Therefore, group-oriented transformational leadership appears to have an impact on the implementation of shared leadership in groups (Pearce & Sims, 2002). In fact, group-oriented transformational leadership

fosters cooperation and shared purpose, including shared objectives (Wang & Howell, 2010), which were considered antecedents of shared leadership (Carson, et al., 2007; Perry, et al., 1999). Moreover, Wang & Howell (2010) identified three components of group-oriented transformational leadership: a) focusing on group identity, which is common traits among group members; b) communicating a group vision; and c) fostering the development of a cohesive group (group building).

The behaviour and attitude of the followers are being positively impacted by their participation in establishing the group's objectives and making decisions (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In fact, group-oriented transformation leadership significantly impact group members' performance and behaviour towards their peers and the group collective objectives (Wang & Howell, 2010; Yukl, 2002). The organisational leaders mostly occupied themselves with problem-solving and administrative duties rather than planning for the group (Yukl, 2002). Thus, leaders should reframe these challenges so that their followers may address them, allowing themselves additional time to plan and provide guidance to their group. As a result, leaders are allocating varying degrees of attention to these concerns, contingent upon their size (Yukl, 2002).

Both transformational and empowering leadership styles facilitated group member involvement in the decision-making process, and they both had an equivalent impact on employee behaviour. Therefore, both are exerting an impact on the development of shared leadership practices among group members (Cheong, et al., 2019; Manz & Sims Jr., 2001; Pearce, et al., 2003).

Empowerment Leadership

Empowerment leadership style is another important element that influences the development of shared leadership practices (Cox, et al., 2003). Amundsen & Martinsen (2014, p. 489) defined empowering leadership as *"the process of influencing followers through power*

sharing, motivation support, and development support with intent to promote their experience of self-reliance, motivation, and capability to work autonomously within the boundaries of overall organisational goals and strategies." Empowerment in this case describes how group members observe their leader's abilities to influence their followers on task accomplishment (Yukl, 2002). In fact, Pearce & Sims (2002) argue that leaders' empowerment is giving followers an opportunity to self-lead themselves and practice leadership among their peers as well. Further, Manz and Sims Jr. (2001) described empowering leadership as a style of leadership that encourages followers to take charge of their own responsibilities and lead themselves and contribute to the organisation. Martin et al. (2013) and Lorinkova et al. (2013) described empowering leadership as the process of sharing authority with followers, enhancing the followers' level of autonomy and responsibility, including followers in the decision-making process, and recognising their contributions. According to Martin et al. (2013), when leaders delegate and share power with members of the group, encourage self-management, enhance their level of autonomy, and engage people in the decision-making process, it fosters the development of personal motivation and leads to proactive behaviour. Therefore, Empowerment leadership has a significant effect on group members' proactive behaviour (Martin, et al., 2013). Yukl (2002, p. 3) argued that followers could perform as leaders to support their appointed leader in the group; *"the distinction between leader and follower roles does not mean that a person cannot perform both a leader and follower at the same time."* According to Amundsen and Martinsen (2014) and Yukl (2002), the level of empowerment that a leader demonstrates increases when that leader has trust in the people who follow them. Therefore, it could be assumed that there is a correlation between trust and empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Yukl, 2002).

Appointed leaders often establish goals for their group members and offer direction on how to accomplish those goals; on the other hand, empowering leadership entails leaders setting goals

and enabling their followers to be involved in this process (Lorinkova, et al., 2013; Pearce & Sims, 2002). Consequently, their followers will initiate the exchange of knowledge, demonstrate leadership qualities within the group, and develop their own self-management skills. As stated by Yukl and Becker (2006), when an organisation shares fundamental information with its workers, it demonstrates its recognition of the employees' significance as stakeholders in the organisation. Furthermore, the level of satisfaction among followers is correlated with the leader's efficacy in delegating authority and granting them autonomy (Yukl, 2002). Hence, the inclusion of followers in the process of establishing objectives is seen as a critical element in shared leadership practices (Pearce & Sims, 2002).

Empowerment is effective due to its positive impact on employees' job satisfaction, commitment, and self-efficacy, all of which contribute to the development of shared leadership practices within groups (Cox, et al., 2003; Yukl & Becker, 2006). Furthermore, according to Yukl (2002), a leader's behaviour, job attributes, and organisational framework influence group members confidence in their skills and abilities. Additionally, Ahearne et al. (2005) found that empowering leadership behaviour significantly influences group members' confidence in their skills, and abilities. Nevertheless, they additionally noticed that a leader's empowerment has a minor effect on group members who possess a high level of knowledge and expertise (Ahearne, et al., 2005). On the other hand, Yukl & Becker (2006) found that empowerment is correlated with employee attributes such as extensive education and professional experience. With respect to innovation, Echebiri & Amundsen (2021) argued that this leadership style had both a direct and indirect impact on group-driven innovation. According to Sims et al. (2009) group members' initiative increased by empowering leadership, which thereby influenced them to take responsibility for their actions and, in turn, improved their perspective, self confidence in their skills and abilities and capacity to solve problems. Therefore, it is suggested that leaders recognise and appreciate the skills and abilities of their group members in order to facilitate

and assist them in enhancing the leader's trust and level of empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014).

Empowering leadership increases autonomy levels, promotes participative and cooperative environments, and motivates group members to engage in and contribute to the decision-making process, which would result in enhancing their performance as well (Lorinkova, et al., 2013). Ahearne et al. (2005) asserted that leader empowerment behaviour should focus on group members who have a lack of experience and limited knowledge. Thus, a leader's empowerment behaviour towards their group members, in which group members are motivated to exert influence on their fellow group members, might develop shared leadership practices. In addition to this, empowering leadership plays a crucial role in the development of self-leadership skills and abilities in group members (Sims, et al., 2009). In fact, Sims et al. (2009) asserted that the primary focus of empowering leadership is on followers, encouraging them to explore their skills and develop their leading capabilities. Thereby, shared leadership practices may foster group empowerment by increasing the amount of group autonomy (Carson, et al., 2007), and influence the development of self-leadership skills (Cheong, et al., 2019; Pearce & Manz, 2005) in group members.

An organisational structure that is centralised restricts the opportunities for middle and lower-level management to participate in the decision-making process and grants power and authority to the highest level of management (Yukl & Becker, 2006). Indeed, the involvement of group members in the decision-making process enhances its accuracy (Yukl & Becker, 2006). Amundsen & Martinsen (2014) proposed that in order to achieve the required level of empowerment, leaders need to delegate authority to their followers and increase their level of autonomy.

In fact, empowerment leadership influences followers' behaviour in a number of positive ways, including the following: a) followers become more committed to the task at hand; b) initiative increases with positions of greater responsibility; c) innovation levels rise; d) job satisfaction increases; e) employees become more optimistic about future success; and f) organisational commitment increases as a result of empowerment (Yukl, 2002). This style of leadership develops the self-influence of followers, which increases the autonomy level within the group (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). Thus, empowering leadership fosters shared leadership practices, in which members of the group exert influence not just on themselves but also on their colleagues (Cox, et al., 2003). The encouragement of self-management and the demonstration of leadership behaviour among peers contribute to the development of shared leadership practices among group members (Pearce & Sims, 2002; Perry, et al., 1999). Hence, the development of shared leadership practices among group members is significantly impacted by the empowerment leadership style (Pearce & Sims, 2000).

On the other hand, self-management, or self-leadership, is an additional kind of group empowerment in which individuals are granted the autonomy to undertake work-related duties and make decisions relating to their own tasks (Manz & Sims Jr., 2001; Yukl & Becker, 2006). Indeed, these elements contribute to the development of self-efficacy and shared leadership practices at the individual and group levels, respectively, which is advantageous for the organisation and the individual (Yukl & Becker, 2006).

In short, empowering leadership is a style of leading that primarily focuses on fostering followers leadership skills (Manz & Sims Jr., 2001; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Sims, et al., 2009), sharing authority with group members, increasing autonomy levels, and involving them in the decision-making process (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Lorinkova, et al., 2013; Martin, et al., 2013). Directive leadership, on the other hand, is a hierarchical approach where the leader

possesses substantial control and power over their group (Pearce, et al., 2003; Sims, et al., 2009) and provides direction on how to implement their assigned tasks efficiently and effectively (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Sims, 2002).

Directive Leadership

Directive leadership style is commonly linked to a hierarchical approach, where the leader possesses substantial control and power over their group (Pearce, et al., 2003; Sims, et al., 2009). In fact, directive leadership style is task-oriented focus, in which the leader of the group provides direction to his or her followers while they are carrying out the work that has been allocated to them, and focus on ensuring that tasks are completed efficiently and effectively (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Wendt, et al., 2009). Directive leadership is a leadership style characterised by a leader who offers explicit instructions, establishes precise objectives, and closely oversees the work of their group members (Lorinkova, et al., 2013; Martin, et al., 2013; Muczyk & Reimann, 1987; Pearce & Sims, 2002). Martin, et al. (2013, p. 1374) defined directive leadership as *"leader behaviours that provide followers with specific guidance regarding goals, means of achieving goals, and performance standards."* According to Muczyk and Reimann (1987), directive leadership styles have the characteristics of leaders who delegate responsibility to their followers while also offering explicit instructions on how to carry out their respective tasks. Lorinkova et al. (2013) asserted that directive leadership responsibility towards group members is unlike empowerment leadership; the directive leader is responsible for outlines the steps necessary to achieve the established objectives and successfully complete their assigned task under the explicit guidance of the group leader. As a consequence of this, the group members' attention would be directed towards the task's performance, which is significantly affected by the directive leadership behaviour (Lorinkova, et al., 2013). According to Martin, et al. (2013), the directive leadership style involves actively

overseeing the performance of group members, offers comprehensive direction and closely supervise the development of their group members in order to ensure the achievement of goals. In fact, this leadership style allows the leader to adopt the transactional leadership contingent reward and reward their followers for their positive performance (Martin, et al., 2013). Thus, the directive leadership style would result in an improvement in the performance of the group members if proactive control was utilised and concurrent feedback was provided (Martin, et al., 2013). Studies indicated that group members hold favourable sentiments about their directive leader, which therefore has a positive effect on their level of engagement (Kahai, et al., 2004). However, it has been suggested by Echebiri and Amundsen (2021) that the utilisation of rewards and punishments may have a limited effect on the autonomy and creativity of a group.

Despite the positive impact that directive leadership has on employee performance, studies have indicated that directive leadership has a negative impact on employee-driven innovation. Moreover, it also has a significant negative relationship with leader-member exchange employed as a mediator role between directive leadership and employee-driven innovation (Echebiri & Amundsen, 2021). Wendt et al. (2009) stated that managers in individualistic cultural societies do not often exhibit the directive leadership style as it restricts the cultural ideals of such societies. Nevertheless, Sims et al. (2009) contended that the specific circumstances surrounding a particular situation influence the leader's decision to adopt the directive leadership style, wherein this leadership style is characterised by providing explicit guidance to their followers about the completion of their designated responsibilities. Essentially, this implies that as the circumstances become more crucial, the leader will adopt a directive approach in order to successfully navigate the challenging conditions. Further, this leadership approach will be utilised by the leader in situations where the group members have a limited level of experience (Sims, et al., 2009). Shared leadership practices, in contrast, relies

primarily on the skills, abilities, and degree of experience that each group member possess (Pearce & Manz, 2005). In shared leadership practices, group members assume leadership roles within their group and draw upon their respective areas of expertise to provide guidance and direction (Pearce & Conger, 2003).

According to Boulu-Reshef et al. (2020), two-way communication between leaders and their followers is what determines the effectiveness of directive leadership. This means that leaders actively involve their group members in the decision-making process by considering their viewpoints. Thus, the voice of the group members, which relates to their participation in the process of decision-making, is considered to be an antecedent of the development of shared leadership practices (Carson, et al., 2007).

The utilisation of directive leadership is greatly impacted by context-changing circumstances, particularly in the context of rapid organisational change (Stone & Jawahar, 2021). The leader's function as a directive is essential while dealing with intricate duties and situations (Stone & Jawahar, 2021). Stone & Jawahar (2021, p. 1200) provided a definition of directed leadership based on a specific organisational setting and circumstances as *"leadership that involves applying pressure through admonitions, threats and inducing stress for the explicit purpose of motivating follower performance or correcting deviant behaviour that violates organisational norms."*

Stone & Jawahar (2021) stated that, unlike other organisations, high-intensity organisations necessitate group members to demonstrate cohesion, commitment, cooperation, and mutual trust to effectively perform their tasks. Indeed, this exhibits similarity to the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices within groups (Carson, et al., 2007; Perry, et al., 1999) but differs in terms of leadership formation (Stone & Jawahar, 2021). In Stone and Jawahar's study (2021), the researchers asserted that these behaviours such as,

cohesion, commitment, cooperation, and mutual trust, were influenced by the directive leader of the group, whereas in shared leadership practices they are influenced by the group environment (Carson, et al., 2007; Sweeney, et al., 2019). Further, the primary emphasis of the leader in the high-intensity organisation would be on utilising directive leadership behaviour to enhance the performance of group members and exert control over their behaviour (Stone & Jawahar, 2021).

The challenge with traditional notions of leadership, is that they primarily focus on the behaviour of the designated leader with relatively fixed power dynamics. The following section of the literature will review the leadership networks. The network of leaders considers leadership to be more of a collaborative group approach in which everyone contributes to the accomplishment of the task at hand, instead of having a single individual in charge of the initiative (Pearce & Conger, 2003). The literature will also review the challenges encountered in leadership, specifically in the context of rapid organisational changes, and the crucial role that leadership plays in effectively implementing the change process. It will also review the leadership literature in the Arab setting, with a specific emphasis on the Middle East, including the GCC states and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as the primary context for this research project.

Leadership Networks and Critiques

The issue with the conventional concepts of leadership as discussed previously is that they mainly focus on the appointed leader's behaviour, with their followers setting a stage for an already established cast of agents in the organisation with almost fixed power distances. Network approach to leadership consider leadership to be a collaborative group process in which the workload is distributed among group members collectively as opposed to a single designated leader (Pearce & Conger, 2003; Perry, et al., 1999). The subject matter of this

discourse pertains to the complexities of leadership and the obstacles faced by organisations. Shared leadership is one outcome of this, and this style may generate a new organisational dynamic that can be beneficial for all actors (Pearce, et al., 2018). It operates through the mutual influence of group members, wherein they share the responsibility of implementing specific behaviours within their group to accomplish the organisational and group collective goals (Carson, et al., 2007; Manz, et al., 2013; Pearce & Manz, 2005).

Shared Leadership

Shared leadership, in contrast to traditional leadership, operates as a horizontal leading structure (Sweeney, et al., 2019). This is of particular interest in relation to our study. It is a style of leadership that encourages group members who possess the needed knowledge, skills, and capacities to navigate a given scenario independently (Manz, et al., 2013). Shared leadership facilitates cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999; Wood, 2005), knowledge sharing, and social support among group members (Carson, et al., 2007; Wood, 2005) as they carry out their respective responsibilities (Berkowitz, 1953; Cox, et al., 2003; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Multiple viewpoints have been expressed regarding shared leadership and its empirical realisation. The initial viewpoint considers shared leadership as a form of collective leadership approach wherein every group member act and behaves as a leader within the group (Pearce & Manz, 2005; Zhu, et al., 2018). The subsequent viewpoint interprets shared leadership as a decentralised action performed by the designated leader on behalf of his group (Xu, et al., 2022; Zhu, et al., 2018). An alternative perspective regards shared leadership as a managerial action in which individuals in managerial positions collaborate with other managers within the organisation to accomplish common objectives. Such perspectives see shared leadership as an organisational phenomenon (Döös & Wilhelmson, 2021). According to Wood (2005), leaders should not rely entirely on group structure, such as a flat structure, to encourage

members to engage in the practices of shared leadership. Decentralisation, on the other hand, facilitates the development of shared leadership practices within groups, particularly among those members who possess exceptional knowledge, skills, and abilities (Xu, et al., 2022).

Therefore, shared leadership practices focuses on group collective leadership rather than one appointed leader, which is influenced by self-leadership behaviour (Fitzsimons, et al., 2011; Manz & Sims Jr., 2001; Pearce & Manz, 2005) the group level cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999; Wood, 2005), knowledge sharing, and social support among group members (Carson, et al., 2007; Wood, 2005). Thereby, shared leadership emphasises group collective leadership as opposed to a single appointed leader. Pearce & Conger, (2003, p. 1) defined shared leadership as *"a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organisational goals or both."* Shared leadership was further defined by scholars in accordance with the practice-centred theory as *"a process of collaborative interactions among leaders and followers, and such interactions vary from one situation to another"* (Liu & Werblow, 2019, p. 42). And Drescher et al. (2014, p. 772) defined shared leadership as *"an emergent property of a group where leadership functions are distributed among group members."* Shared leadership is therefore comprehensible as a process of cooperation among the members of the group (Perry, et al., 1999). Hence, both group performance and the organisational work environment benefit from the shared leadership (Cox, et al., 2003). The practices of leadership behaviours within a group are predicated on the attention given to the abilities, specialisations, and capabilities of group members. Evidence would suggest that shared leadership practices are more successful at forecasting group performance than traditional leadership, despite the fact that both styles of leadership have an impact on groups (Pearce & Sims, 2002).

According to the social exchange theory, individuals have knowledge of the expectations placed on them and the expectations they have of others (Seers, et al., 2003). Therefore, social exchange theory pertains to an individual's anticipation of receiving reciprocal favours from their peers (Robert Jr & You, 2018). According to Robert Jr & You (2018), the connection between shared leadership practices and social exchange theory suggests that perceived group support reflects expectations. This implies that social exchange theory has a positive impact on the implementation of shared leadership practices and enhances mutual cooperation among group members (Robert Jr & You, 2018).

The phenomenon of shared leadership was identified as an influence behaviour in groups, wherein members communicate, collaborate, exert influence on one another, sharing authority, and participate in decision-making within the group (Aime, et al., 2014; Drescher, et al., 2014; Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). Despite the hierarchical structure, this style of leadership promotes the concept of distributing leadership more broadly among followers and diminishes the need for hierarchical systems through the inclusion of group members in the decision-making procedure (Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002). The development of shared leadership practices is impacted by the characteristics of group members (Gockel & Werth, 2010), the complexity of tasks (Gockel & Werth, 2010; Pearce & Sims, 2000), the organisational environment, and management skills, including interpersonal and technical skills (Gockel & Werth, 2010). As a result, these elements facilitate the emergence of shared leadership practices and diminish the necessity for appointed leaders (Cox, et al., 2003; D'Innocenzo, et al., 2021; Gockel & Werth, 2010; Pearce & Sims, 2000; Perry, et al., 1999; Seers, et al., 2003). The influence of group behaviour upstages that of organisational structure on the existence of shared leadership practices (Wood, 2005). In fact, group leader motivation significantly contributes to the development of shared leadership practices, which in turn encourages group members to engage in collaborative efforts with their peers (Edelmann, et

al., 2023). Indeed, the suitability of a leadership style for one situation does not necessarily translate to its suitability for another, indicating that the leadership practices are influenced by the organisational environment. In fact, scholars observed that leadership practices as managerial behaviour rather than just a distribution of leadership among group members (Döös & Wilhelmson, 2021). Nevertheless, group members who employ shard leadership practices can effectively execute specific leadership behaviours and accomplish the leadership responsibilities within their group (Bergman, et al., 2012). Furthermore, shared leadership may arise either expressly, as dictated by a higher-level manager, or informally, as a result of an agreement reached by lower-level managers (Döös & Wilhelmson, 2021).

A recent study examined the efficacy of shared leadership practices in influencing the attitudes and behaviours of groups. The researchers discovered a clear correlation between shared leadership practices, commitment, and innovation (Fausing, et al., 2013; Wu & Chen, 2018). Prior research has examined the impact of a leader's psychological behaviour in mediating Psychological Capital (PsyCap) on workers' behaviour towards a company, including performance, job satisfaction (Luthans, et al., 2007a), organisational commitment, and innovation (Wu & Chen, 2018). Perry et al. (1999) found that cross-functional groups had a beneficial impact on group performance and developed shared leadership practices, ultimately leading to increased group effectiveness. A study by Bergman et al. (2012) and Pearce & Manz (2005) found that shared leadership practices is a significant predictor of group processes, leading to a reduction in conflict among group members and an increase in trust and cohesiveness within the group. Hence, shared leadership practices exert a beneficial influence on specific employee behaviours, including group performance, commitment, and innovation (Carson, et al., 2007; Han, et al., 2018; He, et al., 2020; Wu & Chen, 2018). According to the study conducted by He et al. (2020), it was discovered that groups exhibiting a significant degree of shared leadership practices have greater levels of creativity both at the individual and

group levels. Therefore, shared leadership practices exert a positive influence on both groups and individual innovation. Researchers discovered that by sharing fundamental information about the organisation and involving followers in setting goals, making decisions, and formulating strategies, it is more probable that they will understand the group's purpose and contribute towards achieving it (Carson, et al., 2007; Luthans, et al., 2007a; Wu & Chen, 2018; Yukl & Becker, 2006). Consequently, group members would exert influence, provide support, and foster motivation among one another in order to achieve the aims and objectives of both the group and the organisation. Shared leadership practices rely on group members utilising their knowledge, skills, and abilities to guide and influence each other towards achieving the group's shared goals and vision. This leadership style is characterised by active engagement and the implementation of leadership behaviours by all group members (Pearce, 2004; Pearce, et al., 2018; Xu, et al., 2022). In fact, Döös and Wilhelmson's review from 2021 revealed that first-line managers were the focus of most empirical studies, while middle-line managers received less attention in terms of shared leadership practices.

In modern organisations, there is a growing complexity in job roles, making it essential to have knowledgeable and skilled workers (Pearce & Manz, 2005). In such conditions, shared leadership practices become important, but it relies on employees being prepared to take responsibility (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Given the wide variety of abilities, skills, and knowledge possessed by group members, Dust & Ziegert (2016) argued that a group with multiple leaders has a beneficial impact on complex tasks, as the varied expertise of the leaders enables the group to effectively accomplish the challenging job. Pearce (2004) argues that shared leadership practices should be employed in organisations when faced with complicated tasks or situations that require the collective knowledge and skills of the group. Job complexity is defined *"the extent to which the tasks on a job are complex and difficult to perform"* (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006, p. 1323). Pearce and Manz (2005) claimed that in a complex situation,

individuals with self-leadership skills and sufficient expertise would be inclined to carry out the responsibility of shared leadership practices and make valuable contributions to the organisation. A complex task implies cooperation among group members; given that cooperation influences the development of shared leadership practices, a shared leadership practices is crucial for effectively executing the complex task (Müller, et al., 2018; Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Manz, 2005). Moreover, shared leadership practices are linked to a heightened level of job complexity (Müller, et al., 2018). In their study, Buchanan et al. (2007) found that implementing shared leadership practices in a complex healthcare organisation, particularly during times of organisational change, was essential. They found that distributing leadership responsibilities based on the organisation's current capabilities was crucial for effective change management (Buchanan, et al., 2007).

There are an extensive body of research that has been conducted to address the factors that constitute shared leadership, which considered as antecedents of shared leadership (Döös & Wilhelmson, 2021). We will now look at these factors in more details below.

Factors of Shared Leadership Development

Multiple characteristics have been recognised by scholars as antecedents to shared leadership practices in groups (Brussow, 2013; Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012; Fausing, et al., 2015; Jain & Jeppesen, 2014; Perry, et al., 1999; Serban & Roberts, 2016; Small & Rentsch, 2010). More specifically, Carson et al. (2007) identified multiple key factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices. These factors include the group's internal environment, which comprises elements such as *social support* including knowledge, skills and accomplishment recognition, *voice, and shared purpose and objectives*; social support relates to *"group members' efforts to provide emotional and psychological strength to one another"*; shared purpose represents a similar understanding of the group's common objectives and goals;

and voice represents group members' participation in the decision-making process; (Carson, et al., 2007, p. 1222). In addition, a factor such as *Cooperation*, which Fausing et al. (2015) and Perry et al. (1999) referred to it as the level of task interdependency between group members, has been shown to lead to higher cooperation. *Trust*, mutual trust among group members is considered by scholars as an antecedent to shared leadership practices as well (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Trust refers to *"the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party"* (Mayer, et al., 1995, p. 712). Moreover, a study conducted by Slantcheva-Durst (2014), the focus was on examining the development of shared leadership practices through the use of cooperation. The study identified three key aspects that promote cooperation in groups: a) shared purpose and vision, b) group work, and c) empowerment (Slantcheva-Durst, 2014).

Social support, encompasses both the reciprocal assistance offered by group members and the acceptance of leadership approaches demonstrated by their fellow members (Carson, et al., 2007). Carson et al. (2007) and Serban and Roberts (2016) found that group members who recognise and acknowledge the skills, abilities, and accomplishments of their peers have a significant impact on the development of shared leadership practices within groups. Han et al. (2018) have demonstrated in their study that a group's social support is considered a relationship-oriented strategy. This involves group members creating a supportive and motivating environment that influences the development of shared leadership (Han, et al., 2018). Moreover, scholars have proposed that cross-functional groups enhance the effectiveness of shared leadership by leveraging the diverse knowledge, skills, abilities, and backgrounds of their colleagues (Bligh et al., 2006; Serban & Roberts, 2016).

Shared purpose, on the other hand, refers to the involvement of group members in the process of goal setting and strategy formulation is expected to contribute to their understanding of the group's objectives and provide guidance on how to successfully attain those objectives (Carson, et al., 2007; Luthans, et al., 2007a; Pearce, 2004; Wu & Chen, 2018). Moreover, followers' self-efficacy is likely to develop as a result of their understanding of the objectives and their implementation; this, in turn, enhances the degree of shared leadership practices within group members (Carson, et al., 2007). Additionally, Brussow (2013) measured shared leadership from four aspects include: a) collaboration, which refers to the individual willingness to offer a support to their peers in fulfilling their assigned duties to accomplish the goals of both the group and the organisation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999); b) vision, which refers to the shared objectives, or purposes between group members; 3) delegation; and 4) culture, which refers to the level of trust between group members. Indeed, shared objectives and purposes were regarded as mechanisms that fostered and empowered shared leadership practices within groups (Bligh, et al., 2006). Therefore, shared leadership practices tend to be more effective in cross-functional groups when members have a similar understanding of the group's aims and objectives; this is because it normally depends on the group's expertise, skills, capabilities, and background (Bligh, et al., 2006; Serban & Roberts, 2016).

The operationalisation of shared leadership practices is constructed with group members' skills, knowledge, and specialisations (Bligh, et al., 2006; Drescher, et al., 2014). Scholars have found that group members' characteristics and their approach to leadership influence the practices of shared leadership (Drescher, et al., 2014). According to Drescher et al. (2014), when shared leadership is implemented, duties should not be assigned to every group member; instead, they should be delegated to those who have demonstrated their leadership capabilities within the group. As a result, firms attain a competitive advantage when members, collaborate towards common objectives, exert mutual influence, and share leadership responsibilities

(Carson, et al., 2007). One of the methods to measure shared leadership practices is utilising the mutual influence between members on leading one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). Thus, cooperation is another factor that influences the development of shared leadership (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999; Wood, 2005). In addition to cooperation, members need to be communicative and coordinative between them to influence the development of shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010; Liu & Werblow, 2019). Indeed, reciprocal influence that members have on one another when it comes to leading is one approach to evaluating shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010). Conversely, an investigation carried out by Wood (2005) concluded that the implementation of shared leadership practices is not much impacted by horizontal structure. In fact, this finding does provide support for the decentralisation aspect of shared leadership practices, and the flat organisational structure has a negative impact on inter-group communication, which subsequently undermines inter-group engagement (Wood, 2005). Since cooperation is a significant determinant in the development of shared leadership practices (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999); therefore, the degree of shared leadership practices is negatively impacted by a flatter organisational structure (Wood, 2005). The perception of shared purpose, aims, and objectives among members produces an overall favourable correlation between the group internal environment and the appearance of shared leadership practices (Daspit, et al., 2013).

To maintain shared leadership practices, members must possess a sense of mutual trust between themselves in order to successfully accomplish complex duties and achieve given objectives (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Trust is a crucial component in shared leadership practices as it fosters cohesion, cooperation (Mayer, et al., 1995), knowledge sharing, and communication (Castellano, et al., 2021) among organisation members. Consequently, members have trust in their peer's capabilities, expertise, and knowledge, which are fundamental aspects of shared leadership in groups (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Organisational units that practice shared

leadership have higher levels of trust, group cohesion, and lower level of conflict among group members compared to groups that do not practice shared leadership (Bergman, et al., 2012). Additionally, members who take initiative and lead themselves are more likely to be trusted by their peers (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Therefore, shared leadership practices are positively influenced trust (Bergman, et al., 2012; Lyndon, et al., 2020), cooperation, and cohesion (Bergman, et al., 2012; Mayer, et al., 1995) among organisational members. Lyndon et al. (2020) conducted a study to further investigate the effect of cognitive trust as an antecedent of shared leadership practices. Their findings revealed that cognitive trust has a favourable influence on the development of shared leadership practices. Further, Drescher et al. (2014) found in their study that shared leadership practices and trust are affected by members' interactions, which can improve cooperation among members in order to achieve assigned goals (Wang, et al., 2014). Members' trust in each other is positively correlated with shared leadership practices and is impacted by social exchange theory, which also fosters mutual respect among members (Robert Jr & You, 2018).

While the aforementioned elements did influence the development of shared leadership practices among organisation members, Sweeney et al. (2019) also identified external variables that might influence this process. Certain elements contribute to this dynamic; these elements consist of the following: *a) empowerment*, representing the extent to which members perceive their leader as supporting them in exercising self-leadership, and increase their autonomous level to execute their assigned duties (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Fausing, et al., 2015; Manz & Sims Jr., 2001); *b) sharing authority*, wherein group leaders are encouraged to delegate certain authorities to their group members (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014); and *c) supportive culture*, which pertains to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012) including collective

decision-making (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007), and the leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002).

In their systematic review, Sweeney et al. (2019) claimed that researchers have discovered a correlation between the socio-demographic features of organisational units and the development of shared leadership practices, as previously noted by Muethel et al. (2012). The researchers discovered that the gender ratio has an impact on the development of shared leadership practices. Specifically, a unit with a higher proportion of females compared to males has a beneficial influence on the development of shared leadership (Muethel, et al., 2012).

The development of shared leadership practices and the complexity of organisational structure demand that the leaders exercise utmost caution with regard to empowerment (Xu, et al., 2022). Empowerment leadership behaviour encourages members to practice their tasks independently, thereby increasing their confidence and self-efficacy (Martin, et al., 2013); it also fosters shared leadership practices by encouraging organisational members to exert influence on one another (Drescher, et al., 2014; Wood, 2005). Autonomy on the other hand, refers to the degree of freedom that enables members to carry out their designated responsibilities and make crucial decisions related to their work and their group (Carson, et al., 2007), which is defined as *"the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion of the employee in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out"* (Hackman & Oldham, 1974, p. 5). According to Carson et al. (2007) and Cox et al. (2003), autonomy has been classified as a factor that enhances the efficacy of shared leadership practices. Carson, et al. (2007) found that autonomy leads to an increase in the members' responsibilities in terms of establishing the unit goals and objectives, guiding their work progress, and making decisions pertaining to their unit. Hence, it is important for the unit leader to play the role of a coach, carefully monitor the leadership behaviour, and intervene as needed

to rectify any weaknesses in leadership within the unit (Carson, et al., 2007; Perry, et al., 1999). Pearce (2004) asserted that the designated leader carries the responsibility for establishing and organising the structure, as well as overseeing any constraints that may arise during the implementation of shared leadership practices. In fact, the function of the designated leader plays a crucial part in fostering the successful execution of shared leadership practices; thus, the requirement for leaders is linked to the complexity of the task (Cox, et al., 2003). Pearce & Sims (2000) argued that shared leadership practices is not a substitute for traditional leadership theories but rather an expansion of them. This leading style would influence the span of control and motivate group leaders to depend on the abilities of their members to make decisions (Yukl, 2002). Therefore, it may be inferred that the span of control influences the development of shared leadership practices.

The utilisation of empowering leadership may be used to exert influence on each other and foster a supportive environment to foster the development of shared leadership practices (Drescher, et al., 2014). In addition to the increase in confidence that comes with empowerment, members will consequently begin to exhibit leadership qualities within their organisational units (Carson, et al., 2007; Yukl & Becker, 2006). Leaders are encouraged to promote and enable their members to take charge of themselves as leaders and depend on their skills, abilities, knowledge, and specialisations (Cox, et al., 2003; Manz & Sims Jr., 2001). In the context of shared leadership practices, leaders encourage their members to self-evaluate and award themselves for their accomplishments, as they behave and act as leaders within their unit (Pearce & Sims, 2002). As a result, both the unit's autonomy and its members' sense of responsibility rise (De Cremer, et al., 2005; Pearce & Sims, 2002).

The primary distinctions between shared leadership and self-leadership behaviour lie in the nature of their respective approaches. Bass & Bass (2008) argued that the distribution of work

among employees according to their areas of expertise increases work efficacy, according to the long-held theory. Pearce and Manz (2005) posit that group members within an organisation possess the requisite capabilities to lead themselves, thereby exerting an impact on the development of shared leadership. Hence, organisational leadership development is crucial for fostering self-leadership and shared leadership practices among group members, which in turn facilitates the growth of group members' leadership abilities (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Shared leadership practices involve interpersonal engagement among group members to collaborate, motivate, and provide mutual support in order to accomplish group objectives (Bligh, et al., 2006). On the other hand, self-leadership focuses on individual-oriented abilities to monitor personal progress and attain self-established goals (Bligh, et al., 2006). Pearce & Manz (2005) observed that self-leadership is based on the concept of self-influence, which extends beyond the factor of influence. Houghton et al. (2003) proposed that implementing self-leadership behaviour will foster group members' confidence and willingness to embrace the shared leadership practices.

Fletcher & Kaufer (2003, p. 24) described shared leadership as *"the model of shared leadership reinvasion the "who" and the "where" of leadership by focusing on the need to distribute the task and responsibilities of leadership up, down and across the hierarchy."* In the operationalising of traditional leadership, authority and power reside only with the designated leader. However, since shared leadership practices focuses on the group dynamics of leadership practice, the authority of power in shared leadership practices would be delegated to members (Drescher, et al., 2014; He, et al., 2020; Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). Manz et al. (2013) argue that in order to prevent the utilisation of power for the benefit of one person, authority must be distributed equally among all members. Shared leadership practices promote the delegation of power from leaders to their followers in order to facilitate the execution of their designated responsibilities, enable them to make work-related decisions, and include them in the decision-

making process (Cox, et al., 2003; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002). Further, shared leadership practices would elevate power to the level of unit members; this would, in reality, motivate members to exercise leadership collectively (Drescher, et al., 2014; Pearce & Sims, 2002). The delegation of decision-making authority to unit members is a critical factor that impacts the growth of shared leadership practices and has a positive effect on the leader-group relationship (Carson, et al., 2007; Cox, et al., 2003; Fausing, et al., 2013; Seers, et al., 2003; Volmer, et al., 2012; Wu & Chen, 2018; Yukl & Becker, 2006). Leaders are advised to delegate administrative small decisions and issues to their followers in order to free up their time for planning and direction, given that these difficulties require less of the leader's focus (Yukl, 2002). Thus, by delegating authority to organisation unit members, leaders might strengthen the group, alleviate pressure, and distribute power more equitably (Yukl, 2002). Therefore, it is important for leaders who are confident in their group members' knowledge, skills, and abilities about the specific challenge or circumstance at hand to transfer authority to them (Yukl, 2002).

The cultural structures, rewards, and support offered to the group are interrelated with the environment's efficacy (Erkutlu, 2012; Pearce & Sims, 2000). Supportive culture refers to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among members (Erkutlu, 2012). The supportive organisational culture has a positive relationship with the development of shared leadership. It is fosters the collocative decision-making process among group members (Erkutlu, 2012). According to Erkutlu (2012), the concept of shared leadership suggests that members have common interests, while a supportive culture in an organisation is characterised by shared values. Therefore, the development of shared leadership in groups is influenced by the organisation's supportive culture (Erkutlu, 2012). According to Yukl (2002), leaders should assign administrative minor decisions and

issues to their followers to free up their time for group planning and direction, as these tasks demand less of the leader's attention. According to Yukl and Becker (2006), the participation of group members in the decision-making process results in an increase in the precision of the decision. Carson et al., (2007) highlight that the involvement of group members in the decision-making process has an impact on the development of shared leadership, which is regarded as a form of voice.

Although shared leadership does have a positive impact on unit members, it also has negative implications for the unit as a whole and the leadership. We will now look at these in more details below.

Negative Implication Associated with Shared Leadership Practices

While shared leadership practices has been found to have a positive impact on group members and organisations, as supported by several studies (Carson, et al., 2007; D'Innocenzo, et al., 2021; Pearce, et al., 2014; Pearce, et al., 2018; Wu & Chen, 2018; Xu, et al., 2022), it is important to note that there are also negative implications associated with the use of this leadership style, as indicated by other research (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Edelmann, et al., 2023; Wang & Peng, 2022; Zhao, 2013; Zhu, et al., 2018). One such negative is the occurrence of knowledge sharing, which can stem from individuals' ambition for a leadership role (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Zhao, 2013). Job stress arises from a lack of comprehension of the worker's job within the group, resulting from the frequent shift between the roles of leader and follower. The use of shared leadership practices requires group members to assume both leadership and follower roles based on the task's complexity (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Wang & Peng, 2022). In addition, the implementation of shared leadership practices would have an adverse impact on the formal leader's function within the group, particularly in terms of the leader's psychological experience of losing territory and decreased motivation to lead (Zhu, et al., 2018). This would

give rise to a power struggle that would ultimately impair the relationship between the group and its leader (Zhu, et al., 2018). Furthermore, the utilisation of shared leadership practices might potentially impact the overall well-being of the designated leader, due to the jealousy they have towards their colleagues; similarly, in the context of group dynamics, appointing an unofficial leader within the group would have comparable outcomes: jealousy among group members, less cooperation, and poor leadership practices (Edelmann, et al., 2023). Consequently, Edelmann et al. (2023) inferred that sharing leadership responsibilities across all group members would lead to decreased conflict, improved leadership practices, decreased jealousy, and increase effectiveness.

The Accepted Understanding of Shared Leadership Practices

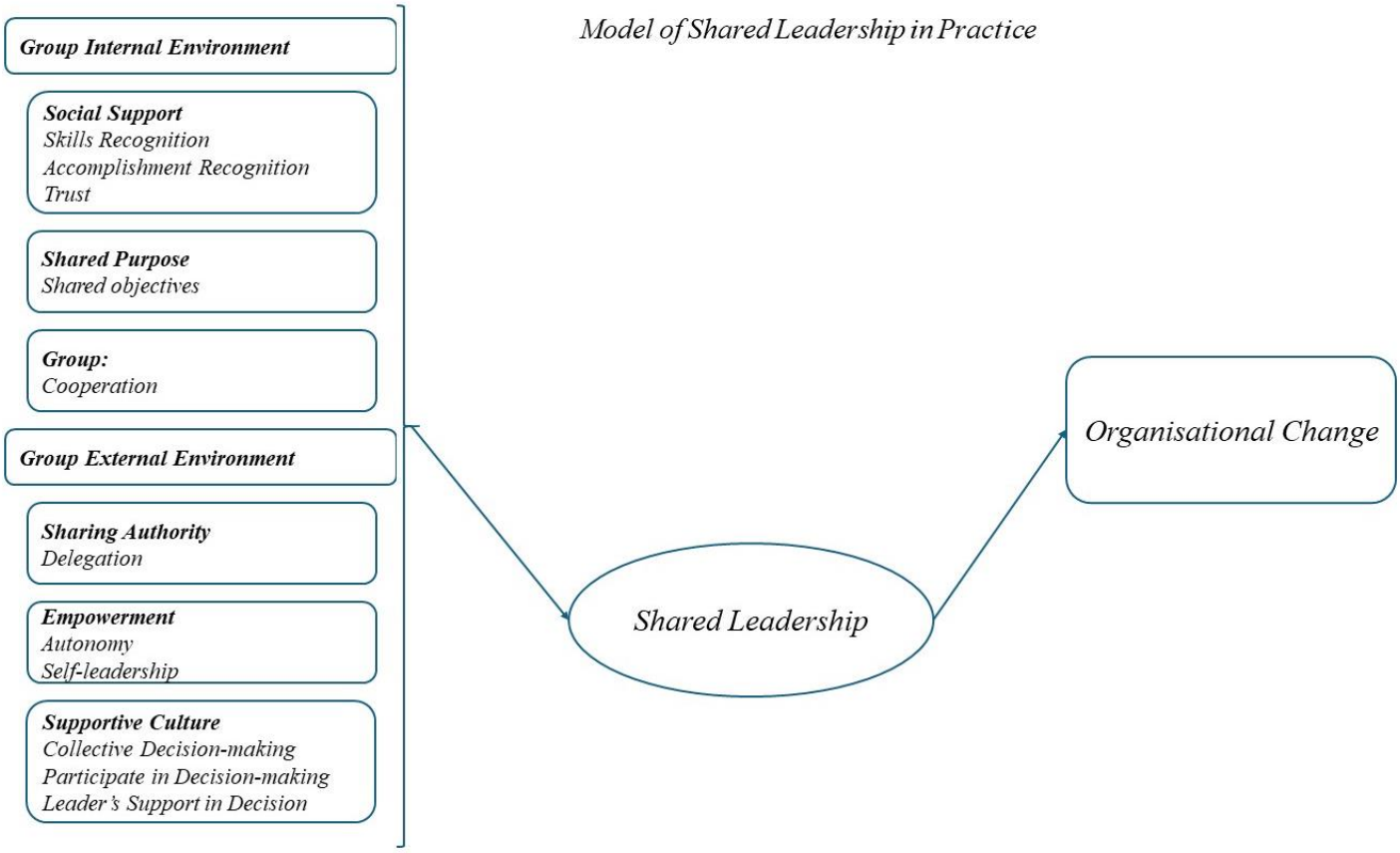
For the purposes of this study shared leadership will be defined as a mutual leading process that involve multiple individual in group dynamic that characterised with reciprocal influence to accomplish common objectives. In accordance with this definition, the next section of the shared leadership literature will expound upon the development of conceptual model of shared leadership in practice.

A Conceptual Model of Shared Leadership in Practice

After carefully considering the existing scholarship of shared leadership, taking into account the factors that contribute to the development of shared leadership, and recognising the significance of understanding shared leadership in practice, the researcher constructed a conceptual model that represents the factors influencing the development of shared leadership in practice. Scholars identified each factor in the development of shared leadership, either individually or in combination with other factors (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012; Fausing, et al., 2015; Gockel & Werth, 2010; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Perry, et al., 1999; Serban & Roberts, 2016; Small & Rentsch, 2010; Yukl, 2002).

According to the Döös & Wilhelmson (2021) comprehensive review, most of the reviewed papers focused on identifying the antecedents of shared leadership and testing their outcomes. However, in this research, the aim is to identify shared leadership in practice and construct a model to represent the factors that other researchers introduced as antecedents of shared leadership. The constructed model will serve as a tool to gain a deeper understanding of the development of shared leadership in practice, particularly in the context of organisational change (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model for Identifying Shared Leadership in Practice.



The above conceptual model in Figure 1 represents the aims of this research: to identify shared leadership practices in the case study organisation and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change within Saudi commercial organisation. Figure 1

presents the factors that influence the development of shared leadership in two areas: the group's internal environment and the group's external environment. Within Group Internal Environment three main factors were identified— *'Social Support'*, *'Shared Purposes'*, and *'Group'*. Within these main factors, associated factors were also derived. These were Social Support— Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016), and Trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010); Shared Purpose— Shared Objectives (Carson, et al., 2007); and Group (Gockel & Werth, 2010)— Cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999). And within the Group External Environment three main factors were identified— *'Sharing Authority'*, *'Empowerment'*, and *'Supportive Culture'*. Within these main factors, associated factors were also derived. These were Sharing Authority— Delegation (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014); Empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Fausing, et al., 2015)— Autonomy (Carson, et al., 2007) and Self-leadership (Pearce & Manz, 2005); and Supportive Culture (Erkutlu, 2012)— Collective Decision-making, Participate in Decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and Leader's Support in Decision-making (Yukl, 2002).

Hence, this model will serve as a representation for future research to assess the development of shared leadership in practice. The following section of the literature review will review the challenges that leaders face, particularly as they relate to leadership and the linkages between leadership and discontinuous organisational change.

Shared Leadership and Organisational Change

Given that the case study and the time frame of the research coincides with a period of discontinuous change for the organisation, it is useful to also review literature which looks at the connections between leadership, especially shared leadership practices and discontinuous change.

Therefore, following section of the chapter will review the challenges encountered in leadership, with a focus on interconnections between leadership and discontinuous organisational change. Specifically, it will discuss discontinuous organisational change and the role of leadership in successfully utilising the change process. It will then go on to review the leadership literature within the Arab context, specifically focusing on the Middle East, including the GCC states, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as the primary context for this research project.

Organisational Change

The need for change is crucial, particularly in light of the worldwide COVID-19 epidemic. Organisations employ change for several purposes, including gaining a competitive advantage (Bernuzzi, et al., 2023; Burnes, 2017), enhancing the organisation's capabilities (Moran & Brightman, 2000), and responding to crises (By, 2005). Organisational change may be a hierarchical process in which the leader imparts the change strategy, vision, and structure to the organisation's workers (Moran & Brightman, 2000) or an emergent process in which change is cultivated from the bottom up (Stace & Dunphy, 1998). Indeed, it is crucial for both the organisation and the stakeholders to effectively execute the necessary change by adopting the new organisational structure, working circumstances, and environment (Bernuzzi, et al., 2023). According to Whelan-Berry and Somerville (2010), it is essential to effectively communicate the necessity for change to stakeholders. This may be accomplished by clearly outlining the change vision and emphasising the urgency of carrying out the change (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). The process of change has a comprehensive impact on the organisation as a whole, including individual, group, and organisational communities (Van De Ven & Poole, 1995). The imperative for change has become essential in today's continuous market competition, and individuals must wholeheartedly embrace the continuing change (By, 2005).

According to Van De Ven and Poole (1995), four drivers—whom they refer to as motors—shape the process of change: a) The life-cycle model describes the progression of organisational change through a series of critical stages; b) The teleological model conceives of change as a cyclical process comprising goal establishment, goal execution, outcome assessment, and goal modification in accordance with the organisation's acquired knowledge; c) Dialectical models of change incorporate conflicting viewpoints, proponents of contradiction, and adversarial attitudes; these components comprise the dialectical progression's subsequent iteration; d) The evolutionary model of change posits that change occurs within organisations in an ongoing series of variation, selection, and retention events pertaining to a particular group.

Each motor relies on certain criteria pertaining to its execution, according to Van De Ven & Poole (1995). For instance, the life-cycle model is contingent upon the notion that an organisation that preserves its distinctive characteristics throughout ongoing transformations remains unique and distinct from any other organisation. To fulfil the objective of the teleological model, many requirements and limitations must be satisfied. The organisation's actions and changes in development influence the fulfilment of these requirements and constraints. Dialectical models necessitate interactions between at least two opposing or conflicting organisations, each with its own distinct and independent identity. The mechanisms that govern the variation, preservation, and selection of organisations for the revolutionary model must be recognisable (Van De Ven & Poole, 1995). As previously stated, the four drivers were classified based on the mechanisms and processes of the units and modalities of change. Consequently, organisational changes are classified based on their results or repercussions rather than their initial or procedural circumstances (Van De Ven & Poole, 1995).

Porras & Silvers (1991) emphasises the significance of comprehending the change process, executing efficient intervention strategies, and identifying the respective responsibilities of

various stakeholders—including change agents, change managers, and individuals within the system undergoing change—in order to achieve desired outcomes.

According to Whelan-Berry and Somerville (2010), the implementation of the change process is associated with three drivers: events, actions, and behaviours. These drivers are having an effect on the change process in the following ways: a) stakeholders accepting the change vision; b) leaders' actions supporting the change process; c) change-related communication: to communicate about the change process and provide a clear understanding of the necessity for the change initiatives.; d) change-related training is focused on providing significance to the change process and familiarising individuals with the new technologies being implemented; e) Employee involvement in the change process through active participation in the implementation process; f) alignment of human resources practices; and g) alignment of structure and control process (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010).

Moreover, Van De Ven & Poole (1995) have categorised organisational change into two aspects to make it more convenient to study. The first aspect is the internal development of a single organisation, which is influenced by its prior adoption and change processes. The second aspect is the relationship between multiple entities, which are influenced by the characteristics of their environmental processes, including competition, cooperation, conflict, and other forms of interaction (Van De Ven & Poole, 1995).

Further, the change process, according to Van De Ven and Poole (1995), can be attributed to a statistical or numerical correlation rather than a causal one. Adapting to the operations of a prescribed mode through incremental, continuous, and competency-enhancing change that the statistical process follows. Incremental change means that a prescribed mode of change often entails the systematic advancement of entities in a predetermined direction through gradual and constant modification and preservation of their real forms (Kindler, 1986; Van De Ven &

Poole, 1995). Constructive mode, on the other hand, is a mode of change that frequently yields unforeseen and unprecedented outcomes that, upon closer examination, frequently shift from the initial system and redesign it (Kindler, 1986; Van De Ven & Poole, 1995).

Constructive change processes are distinguished by their radical, discontinuous, and competence-destructive natures (Van De Ven & Poole, 1995). In the context of organisational dynamics, radical change refers to the comprehensive reconfiguration of the organisation's strategy, structure, authority, and control (McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). According to Greenwood & Hinings (1996), modern organisational dynamics require organisations to undergo radical organisational change. To effectively navigate through transformative processes, it is fundamental to understand the significance of the dynamics and methods involved in effecting radical change (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). These factors that influence radical change in modern organisations include shifts in politics, rules, and technology (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). Murphy et al. (2021, p. 323) provided an operational definition of the system-wide change as *"purposive and emergent changes that address issues of scale and straddle multiple arenas and transcend multiple field boundaries takes us into a range of practical challenges of data collection and method rarely attempted by scholars of management and organisation theory."* From this perspective, Murphy et al. (2021) argued that in order to attain desired outcomes in system-wide change initiatives, organisations approach radical change by recognising the significance of framing mechanisms. These mechanisms demonstrate cooperation and facilitate collective action that is particularly adapted to the context (Murphy, et al., 2021). In fact, it is crucial that they understand these mechanisms for organisations to effectively navigate complex change processes (Murphy, et al., 2021). Radical change encompasses significant and transformative changes in the structure, processes, or strategies of an organisation (Uotila, 2018). Frequently, it leads to a significant restructuring of existing systems. Radical change could be defined as transformative changes that fundamentally

reshape the entire organisation to create completely new paradigms or paths (Uotila, 2018). In fact, large and complicated companies exacerbate the difficulty and complexity of implementing radical change more than smaller ones (McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). This is due to the complex organisational structure, limited strategic choices, resistance, and cooperation (McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). Uotila (2018) argues that organisations need to engage in an incremental change process in order to preserve their existing market position, while radical change is required to prepare for the organisation's anticipated future position. Thus, radical change involves significant and profound alterations that fundamentally transform the organisation's direction (Uotila, 2018).

Discontinuous change on the other hand, is defined by Lant & Mezias (1990, p. 148) as *"fundamental restructuring of a formerly stable system, followed by resumption of stability within the new structure."* Unlike incremental changes, this particular form of change necessitates that organisation critically reconsider their strategies and restructure their operational methods in order to maintain competitiveness (Birkinshaw, et al., 2016). Birkinshaw et al. (2016) outline several challenges associated with adopting discontinuous change. These challenges include: 1) determining the appropriate method of adoption, such as structural separation, behavioural integration, or sequential alternation; 2) developing distinct capabilities that are specific to the chosen method; 3) overcoming organisational resistance; and 4) aligning the company's vision, culture, and people development strategies with the chosen method of adaptation. In their study they explored these challenges and how they were successfully implemented by several commercial organisations, for example structural separation entails separating the tasks of exploring and exploiting into separate divisions inside the company, which was utilised by Nestlé, behavioural integration encompasses the combination of both exploration and exploitation operation inside a single organisational unit, utilised by the pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline, and sequential alternation refers to

the process of shifting between different modes that promote either exploration or exploitation at different time periods, which was utilised by BMW group (Birkinshaw, et al., 2016). Tushman & Anderson (1986) categorised discontinuous change into competence-destroying and competence-enhancing. The competence-destructive discontinuous involves the adoption of innovative technology requires the development of whole new skills and abilities, making present skills ineffective. Competence-enhancive, on the other hand, emphasises notable improvements in the pricing or performance of a specific product category, utilising existing knowledge and abilities while ensuring that previous technologies remain successful (Tushman & Anderson, 1986). Thus, organisations need to be ready to embrace newly developed technologies while adopting discontinuous change, since it can impact their competitive standing (Birkinshaw, et al., 2016; Tushman & Anderson, 1986).

Leadership has a crucial role in both initiating and executing the necessary changes inside any organisation (Eisenbach, et al., 1999; Ford, et al., 2021). Within a vertical process, the leader carries the responsibility of providing the organisation's workforce with a change strategy, vision, and structure; this process, as described by Moran and Brightman (2000, p. 66), is *"the process of continually renewing an organisation's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers."* This change type involves the organisational capacity to transition from one form to another, known as a radical organisational change (Greenwood & Hinings, 2006). Leaders have a significant impact on the process of organisational transformation. Researchers have established a correlation between leadership and successful organisational transformation (Eisenbach, et al., 1999). For example, transformational leadership has been found to have a positive relationship with the processes of organisational change throughout managerial involvement (Holten & Brenner, 2015). Contrary to this, Ford et al. (2021) argue that the process of organisational change is not linked to any particular leadership style. Instead, they perceive change as an organisational

transformation that is a process in which several sources of leadership may be involved. Thus, leadership functions and behaviour have a greater impact on organisational transformation than one's position within the organisation (Ford, et al., 2021). Consequently, the behaviour of leaders towards their organisation is illustrated by their performance, influence, and attitude towards their followers (By, 2005). When leaders are transparent about the reasons behind the change and address any potential challenges, it shows that they value their group members' opinions. By means of this transparent and sincere correspondence, the group gains confidence throughout the period of change, as it fosters their trust (Moran & Brightman, 2000). Leaders can support employees in perceiving the significance of their individual contributions and the overall progress of the organisation by ensuring that the change is in line with its objectives (Ford, et al., 2021).

By (2005) argues that organisations cannot predict the need for change. Instead, organisational leadership has to react to a crisis and execute the necessary changes. Contrary to this, Boonstra (2023) contends that crises do not play a significant role in driving change. Instead, objectives and goals are primarily what drive change. According to Boonstra (2023), change is a deliberate process that involves anticipating and understanding the underlying problem that requires change; consequently, the process of change may be seen as a methodical and consistent procedure. The organisation's leadership is well aware of both the problem (the need for change) and its solution, which is well defined and known (Boonstra, 2023). Organisations may choose to execute change based on the specific need for it, such as whether it is required at the organisational level or at the individual level, regardless of the crises prompting the need for change (Burnes, 2017). Hence, it could be argued that the necessity for change is, to some extent, regulated by the organisational context. Further, Burnes (2017) argued that the organisation needs to go through rapid change in order to improve its structure and processes to counter contemporary development. The organisation needs this form of change in order to

respond to its environment, while the restructuring would enable it to address existing or prevent potential issues (Burnes, 2017).

Extensive research has shown that implementing distributed leadership has a positive impact on organisational change (Binci & Cerruti, 2016; Buchanan, et al., 2007; Canterino, et al., 2018; Canterino, et al., 2020; Harris, 2008; Kempster, et al., 2014). This is due to several reasons, including: a) it allows employees to enjoy a significant level of autonomy; b) it fosters a positive relationship between practitioners and managers; c) it ensures that network roles are adequately filled; and d) it encourages the recognition and utilisation of external resources (Buchanan, et al., 2007). Hence, in order to effectively utilise shared or distributed leadership throughout the transformation process, managers need to empower members of their group to enhance their level of autonomy and encourage them to make decisions within their area of expertise (Buchanan, et al., 2007; Carson, et al., 2007; Pearce & Manz, 2005). In fact, engaging employees in the decision-making process and asking for their input not only fosters a sense of appreciation but also utilises their specialised knowledge and discernment (Buchanan, et al., 2007). By employing a collaborative approach, not only is the decision quality enhanced, but employee engagement and sense of ownership towards the change are also increased (Buchanan, et al., 2007; Carson, et al., 2007; Perry, et al., 1999).

In light of the rapid nature of change, researchers have analysed organisational change from the prospective of distributed change leadership, employing pilot programmes to facilitate the change process (Kempster, et al., 2014). Their study revealed that pilot plays a significant role in the change process by facilitating distributed leadership, which in turn allows them to effectively drive successful change (Kempster, et al., 2014). Kempster et al. (2014) asserted that the leadership skills of followers are extremely important during a change crisis in an organisation. This is due to the fact that these skills have a substantial impact on determining

the course of the change process. Hence, it may be inferred that shared leadership exerts a substantial influence on the process of organisational change (Kempster, et al., 2014). Additionally, Denis et al. (2001) asserted that in organisations, the efficacy of the change process is largely impacted by the creativity and commitment of individuals, who play a critical role in inspiring the change process. Those individuals play a crucial role in driving the change forward (Denis, et al., 2001). Canterino et al. (2020) stated that in order for the process of organisational change to be effective, the individuals who are participating in the change process need to actively foster cooperation and demonstrate commitment to the change. Binci & Cerruti (2016) asserted that the findings of their study indicated that the president of the organisation was encouraging the establishment of shared leadership by offering greater autonomy and self-leadership while limiting the use of dictatorial control when the organisation was in the process of undergoing radical change. This specific illustration highlights the beneficial impact that shared leadership has on the performance of the change management group throughout the implementation of the change process (Binci & Cerruti, 2016). When it comes to the process of organisational transformation, the implementation of shared leadership is advantageous to the leader of the group because it enables them to effectively capitalise on the shared expertise and experience of the members of the group (Binci & Cerruti, 2016). There is a positive relationship between distributed leadership and organisational change, according to Harris's (2008) literature review paper. One of the mechanisms that is considered to be effective in supporting organisational change is distributed leadership (Harris, 2008). Indeed, the dynamics of this leadership style depend on the abilities, skills, and expertise of group members, which makes the process of implementing change a shared process rather than counting on one individual leader. Each group member would actively participate in the process of organisational change in order to promote its success (Binci & Cerruti, 2016;

Canterino, et al., 2020; Canterino, et al., 2018; Denis, et al., 2001; Harris, 2008; Kempster, et al., 2014; Pearce & Manz, 2005).

In the following section of the literature, a review of the leadership literature in the Arab context will be presented, with a particular emphasis on the Middle East, particularly the GCC states, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the primary focus of this research project.

Leadership in the Middle East, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Middle East Including GCC States

For decades, scholars have devoted their focus to the examination of leadership within the Arab context (Albloshi & Nawar, 2015; Aldulaimi, 2019; Ali, 1990; Alwahhabi, et al., 2023; Yaghi, 2017). According to Sutherland et al. (2022), the factor of place exerts a significant impact on the dynamics and connections between leaders and followers, making it a crucial component of both leadership theory and practice. In fact, the way in which leadership is perceived in terms of its importance and effectiveness varies from culture to culture when cultural norms are taken into consideration (Wendt, et al., 2009). Therefore, scholarship suggests that distinct Arab leadership styles are shaped by a variety of variables, including Islam and family tradition (Ali, 1990), culture, and customs (Ali, 1989; Ali, et al., 1997; Yaghi, 2017).

Individualism and collectivism are a characteristic that governs the manner in which members of an organisation interact with one another; it also influences the conduct and interactions of the organisation's leaders (Campion & Wang, 2019). Due to the collectivism of Arab communities, their customs, and the impact of Islam, several studies have examined the efficiency of leadership and management approaches in the Arab regions (Ali, 1989; Ali, et al., 1997; Yaghi, 2017). In the study of leadership, it is critical to not only consider the impact on organisations, but also to emphasise the significance of national contexts (Yaghi, 2017); for

instance, leadership techniques in Arab nations differ significantly from those observed in Western countries (Aldulaimi, 2019). The leadership methods are effectively influenced by both Arab culture and the diverse cultural norms prevalent in Middle Eastern nations. (Aldulaimi, 2019; Yaghi, 2017). Hence, Sutherland et al. (2022) argue that geographic location is a subjective and external determinant that provides leaders with a framework and wider environment in which to function and develop connections. It offers an underlying set of implicit rules (norms) that govern behaviour, thought, and conduct and imparts meaning to social settings.

Studies have indicated that the majority of managerial and leadership approaches utilised in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries were derived from Western models (Aldulaimi, 2019). This is primarily due to the fact that the majority of senior positions within these nations' organisations were previously held by national leaders from the West (Aldulaimi, 2019). The application of Western leadership styles in Arab countries appears to be difficult due to the influence of Arab cultural norms, values, and beliefs; it is necessary to combine Arab leadership elements with Western approaches (Aldulaimi, 2019). Due to the prevalence of Islam in Arab nations, Islamic leadership is adopted by Arabic leaders. This is demonstrated by the leader encouraging followers' consultation throughout the decision-making process; this behaviour impacts the degree of trust that is established between the leaders and their followers (Aldulaimi, 2019). According to Wendt et al. (2009), group members in individualistic cultures are less cooperative in collective work tasks; comparing this to collectivist cultures, it could be anticipated that there would be more cooperation between group members in collective work tasks.

Yaghi (2017) argued that the success of organisational change in public organisations in the UAE is attributable to the reactive behaviour of leaders and managers in order to provide an

effective solution to a crisis or problem in an innovative and efficient manner, regardless of the leadership style. This aligns with By's (2005) view that the leadership of an organisation has to respond to a crisis and implement the required adjustments. Conversely, an investigation carried out within the Egyptian context posits that leaders employ both transformational and transactional leadership styles. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that transformational leadership exerts a more substantial influence on employees' innovation when compared to transactional leadership (Rashwan & Ghaly, 2022).

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

As previously stated, both the Arab and Saudi cultures are generally perceived to be collective in nature (Ali, 1989; Ali, et al., 1997; Yaghi, 2017). Saudi society is characterised by collectivism; within this cultural context, collectivism is highly esteemed by both individuals and communities. This results in the extension of family connections as well as individual and collective relationships over an extended period of time.

In terms of change, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is now experiencing a significant transformation throughout the country as a result of the government's economic plans to achieve the ambitious Vision 2030. The Saudi vision is transforming the country's initiatives, which were developed in response to prior performance. The fundamental objective of the vision is *"to be an exemplary and leading nation in all aspects"* (Al-Saud, 2016, p. NP). This makes the leadership field a subject of significantly importance in Saudi Arabia and is part of the Saudi Vision 2030 agenda. The objective of leadership development is to enhance the knowledge and skills of the populace through a variety of initiatives related to the leadership field (Misk, N/D).

The operationalisation of leadership in Saudi culture is influenced by a number of aspects that Sutherland et al. (2022) describe as place. The concept of "place" can be conceptualised and

operationalised in several ways, including in relation to physical location, values and beliefs, history, culture and identity, structure, politics and power, discourse, language, and materiality (Sutherland, et al., 2022). Indeed, in Saudi Arabia, cultural and religious beliefs exert a substantial impact on leadership practices. The operationalisation of leadership in Saudi organisations often follows a hierarchical structure, placing significant importance on respect for authority figures. This indicates that the operations of these companies are impacted by the hierarchical nature of their structure (Albahali & Omran, 2017). Indeed, the major concern is the inadequate leadership approach adopted by the organisation's upper management, which therefore weakens the overall operational effectiveness of the organisation (Albahali & Omran, 2017); thus, leadership skills, abilities, and vision are crucial for the success of the organisation (Alasiri & AlKubaisy, 2022).

The application of leadership styles in the Saudi Arabian context utilised the Western theories of leadership while taking into consideration the cultural norms and effectiveness of Saudi Arabia. The influence of these leadership styles, characteristics, and features on Saudi organisations has been the subject of scholarly investigation for decades; for example, according to a study conducted by Albloshi and Nawar (2015), leadership styles positively impact the performance of small and medium firms in Saudi Arabia; in the Saudi hospitality industries for example, Abolnasser et al. (2023) discovered a correlation between transformational leadership and the psychological well-being of employees, which had a favourable impact on employee engagement. On the other hand, a study conducted by Alwahhabi et al. (2023) revealed that there is a negative correlation between transformational leadership and innovative behaviour in Saudi organisations. This phenomenon may be attributed to the degree of autonomy and centralised structure in decision-making, wherein the top management of Saudi organisations typically holds exclusive authority over crucial decisions.

Recently, scholarly interest has been diverted to the implementation of distributed or shared leadership in Saudi Arabia; their attention has been focused on the educational sector (Alarifi, 2020; Alduaiji, 2020; Alradi, 2017; Alyami & Floyd, 2019; Eryilmaz & Sandoval-Hernandez, 2023). For example, a study conducted by Alyami & Floyd (2019) found that one of the new educational programmes in Saudi Arabia seems to have successfully utilised the decentralisation managerial style along with the distributed leadership style. A further investigation, as stated in Alradi's (2017) master's thesis, reached the consensus that the implementation of shared leadership practices in primary schools had a beneficial impact on both school growth and student achievement; however, Alarifi (2020) reached a different conclusion on the effects of shared leadership practices: there is no correlation between shared leadership and the academic performance of male and female students in Saudi schools. Therefore, given the emphasis on leadership development and the highly ambitious objectives of the 2030 vision, the Saudi context appears to be a suitable environment for conducting this research study.

Conclusion

The recent literature review presented above indicates that different leadership perspectives, such as a leader’s qualities, style, and network, are directly related to various desirable individual and organisational outcomes (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2013; Luthans, et al., 2007a; Stone, et al., 2004; Allen & Rush, 1998; Wu & Chen, 2018). The literature also presented the current themes in leadership including those that encompass complex adaptive systems and enduring concerns for leadership through and beyond organisational (Appelbaum, et al., 2012; By, 2021; Murphy, et al., 2017), system-wide change (Murphy, et al., 2021) radical chnage (McNulty & Ferlie, 2004), and discontinuance change (Tushman & Anderson, 1986). The review also revealed a gap in the research on leadership in

general and shared leadership practices in particular. These gaps include the effectiveness of shared leadership practices during the transformational change process in a broader context, and particularly in Saudi Arabia. This will contribute to a deeper understanding of how leadership dynamics impact organisational change efforts in this unique cultural context. Available studies tended to focus on commitment, creativity (He, et al., 2020; Wu & Chen, 2018), performance (Carson, et al., 2007; D'Innocenzo, et al., 2021), or success factors associated with shared leadership practices.

Although there is a growing body of literature that highlights the significance of shared leadership practices and examines how it is put into practice and its effects on individuals and organisations, there has been limited empirical research on how shared or distributed leadership practices is implemented and its specific role in successfully carrying out organisational change. For example, Canterino et al.'s (2020) investigation was through the lens of distributed leadership; they sought to ascertain whether or not individual and task-centred leadership philosophies were associated with a focus on change mobilisation; and Buchanan et al. (2007) conducted research on the health care industry in the United Kingdom, specifically focusing on distributed leadership as a distributed change agency during an organisational transformation.

Hence, an extensive review of extant literature has failed to uncover studies exploring the effectiveness of shared leadership practices during the process of transformative change. Similarly, research on identifying and investigate shared leadership practices during a process of major organisational change is lacking in the Middle East in general and in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabian context in particular. Evidence from the extended studies indicates that leadership styles are positively related to organisational change success (Eisenbach, et al., 1999; Ford, et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to elucidate the significance and the factors

that have the greatest influence on the development of shared leadership practices and how they impact the accomplishment of organisational change in Saudi commercial organisations, as these directly contribute to organisational development. In order to contribute to this area of important leadership research, this study aims and objectives of this study is to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. It identifies within the literature factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. The study will be conducted in Saudi commercial organisation, covering three Saudi regions: Western, Central, and Eastern regions, as a research targeted sample.

Chapter Three: The Research Methodology and its Operationalisation

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to highlight the research process utilised to accomplish the study's aims and objectives, which are to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices and explore their impact during a significant organisational transformation. It identifies within the literature factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. The chapter presents an examination of the research design, methodologies employed in this research, the data collection procedure, sample selection, and data analysis methods utilised in the study. Additionally, ethical considerations related to the research will be taken into account, along with an examination of the data collection itself, encompassing challenges in obtaining access and conducting field work in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Questions and Objectives

The research questions guiding the study are:

- What factors identify the "shared leadership" practices in the case study organisation?
- What are the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices?
- What is the impact of shared leadership practices on the process of significant organisational change within the case study organisation?

As illustrated above, the aim of this study is to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices in the case study organisation. The study also seeks to explore the

operation of shared leadership practices during a significant organisational transformation, with particular regard to the implementation of transformative change within the case study. It identifies within the literature the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. Accordingly, the research will work towards accomplish the objectives below:

1. To identify shared leadership practices within the Saudi commercial organisation.
2. To assess the factors that have foremost influence on the development of shared leadership practices.
3. To assess the impact of shared leadership practices on the process of significant organisational change in Saudi commercial case study.

Research Design

As Yin (2009) reflects, research design is not only a work plan. Rather, the fundamental purpose of the design is to avoid scenarios in which the data collected does not answer the initial research question. Research design has also been defined as an inclusive work plan for the data collection process utilised in the research project to answer the proposed research question (Bhattacherjee, 2019). It is, in fact, the structure that serves as the framework for the implementation of research methodologies and the analysis of data (Clark, et al., 2021). Research design includes data collection— what is to be gathered, why, and where as well as how the data collected will be analysed (Bhattacherjee, 2019; Easterby-Smith, et al., 2015; Saunders, et al., 2019). According to Clark et al. (2021), there are five different research designs that are associated with social science research, including:

A. Experimental designs utilise random assignment of participants to either an experimental or control group.
B. Longitudinal designs entail gathering samples from the identical population at several time intervals to observe temporal changes and patterns.
C. The cross-sectional design is a research methodology that entails collecting data simultaneously at multiple time points.
D. Scenario study designs involve a meticulous and exhaustive examination of a particular scenario.
E. Comparative designs involve comparing two or more diverse examples using the same methodologies.

Other factors that should be taken into consideration during the research design process include ethical concerns and the methodological choice of quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods (Bhattacherjee, 2019; Easterby-Smith, et al., 2015; Saunders, et al., 2019)

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to *"a system of belief and assumptions about the development of knowledge"* (Saunders, et al., 2019, p. 130). In other words, the research philosophy influences how field work is conducted, ranging from research design, data collection, and analysis, ending with the research discussion (Saunders, et al., 2019).

In broad terms, there are five major research philosophies: positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and pragmatism (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saunders, et al., 2019). Positivism philosophy is often associated with natural science and logically concerns social reality from participants' perspectives rather than a single reality. Positivist researchers usually seek data to confirm or disprove a developed hypothesis for an emerging theory. Critical realism is interested in the underlying structure of reality in terms of what one can

experience and see. For the critical realism researcher, the nature of reality is the most important consideration (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2015; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Saunders, et al., 2019). Interpretivism philosophy is subjective to a richer understanding of the social life context, meaning, and phenomenon. Interpretivist researchers study the meaning and understanding of the world they live in. Interpretivists usually do not test theory as positivists do; rather, they inductively generate a new theory or build on and develop an existing one (Bhattacherjee, 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Matthews & Ross, 2010). Postmodernism *"emphasise the role of language and of power relations, seeking to questions accepted ways of thinking and give voice to alternative"* (Saunders, et al., 2019, p. 149). Pragmatic philosophy is usually aimed at contributing a practical solution to a problem (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2015; Saunders, et al., 2019).

At the first stage of research, the researcher will identify a suitable philosophy for their research. There is not a specific philosophy that is considered the best choice for management studies due to the different assumptions each philosophy makes (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2015; Saunders, et al., 2019). These assumptions include concerns about ontology and epistemological assumptions (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2015; Saunders, et al., 2019). Since this research project is aiming to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices in the case study organisation and to build on and develop an existing theory, the adopted research philosophy was interpretivism.

Ontology

The term *'ontology'* refers to the Greek words *'on'* to describe *'being'* and *'logos'* to describe theory (Bell, et al., 2019). Hence, ontology is the theory of nature that concerns the nature of the phenomena to be investigated, *"the nature of the reality"* (Bell, et al., 2019; Bhattacherjee, 2019; Saunders, et al., 2019, p. 133). Ontology assumptions address reality from two different

positions: objectivism and subjectivism (constructivism) (Bell, et al., 2019; Matthews & Ross, 2010).

Objectivism

Objectivism perceives reality as an external objective phenomenon and believes that there is only one true reality (Bell, et al., 2019). Therefore, the objectivist researcher believes that the existence of reality is independent; thus, objectivists seek to study the truth about the social world and focus on *"the nature of science practices"* (Bell, et al., 2019, p. 30; Matthews & Ross, 2010; Moon & Blackman, 2014). In this regard, reality is quantitatively tested, and there is one true reality that exists (Bahari, 2010). Hence, objectivism consists of phenomena and knowledge facts that can be measured and observed quantitatively. Indeed, objectivist positions limit or eliminate researcher bias (Cohen, et al., 2018).

Subjectivism (Constructivism)

Unlike objectivism, subjectivism perceives reality as subjective phenomena caused by humans, conditions, context, and objectives, and there is more than one reality as well. In fact, the existence of reality depends on humans' actions (Cohen, et al., 2018). Yet, the subjectivist position is affected by the researcher's view and beliefs, which might increase the chances of the researcher's bias. Thus, subjectivists are in-depth researchers who address social phenomena and position themselves in the field to better understand human behaviour. Further, open-ended questions and observation are the methods used to collect data and qualitatively analyse it (Berryman, 2019).

Epistemology

Like ontology, the term 'Epistemology' refers to the Greek word 'episteme' to describe knowledge and 'logos' to describe theory (Bell, et al., 2019). Thus, epistemology is the theory

of knowledge, which focuses on the theoretical approach. Epistemology assumptions concern the nature of the knowledge, how a researcher gets the knowledge, and how this knowledge can be communicated (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014; Bell, et al., 2019; Moon & Blackman, 2014). In other words, in what way would the researcher study the social phenomenon (Bhattacherjee, 2019).

Researchers usually observe knowledge from participants by merging into the case and being part of the field. Thus, the knowledge conducted would be based on the experiences and views of participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). There are two broad epistemological streams that a researcher can take: positivism and interpretivism (Bell, et al., 2019; Bhattacherjee, 2019; Moon & Blackman, 2014). However, Creswell & Poth (2018) classified positivism as 'postpositivism', in which they believe that cause and effect are probabilities that might or might not occur. There are a number of important differences between both philosophies, ‘positivism’ and 'interpretivism', primarily in the research methodological choice, research design, and data collection method (Weber, 2004).

Positivism

Positivism is an epistemological objective position associated with natural science that seeks reality as an external objective phenomenon that needs to be observed and measured deductively (Bell, et al., 2019; Bryman, 2016). From an objectivist point of view, researchers seek to address the facts of the social world. According to Weber (2004), reality provides human knowledge; therefore, positivist researchers intend to address and understand the cause and effect of human action quantitatively (Bell, et al., 2019; Berryman, 2019; Moon & Blackman, 2014) In fact, the positivist position sees reality as objectively existing rather than generated by human behaviour or actions (Berryman, 2019). Therefore, the positivist researcher seeks to find objective results by testing a theory numerically (Berryman, 2019).

Indeed, there are advantages and disadvantages to applying the positivism stream. One of the major advantages of positivism is that the study findings are generalizable due to the large number of respondents (Cohen, et al., 2018; Pham, 2018; Mack, 2010). Since positivist researchers structurally predict and measure social phenomena and evidently support their findings (Cohen, et al., 2018; Pham, 2018), therefore, the chances of error are limited (Pham, 2018). One major drawback of this approach, on the other hand, is that the knowledge limitations and findings about sustainability in human behaviour are unpredictable (Weber, 2004). Another drawback is the difficulty in measuring humans' intentions and attitudes due to a lack of flexibility (Pham, 2018).

Interpretivism

Interpretivism, on the other hand, is an epistemological subjective position that seeks to in-depth address and understand the meaning of a social phenomenon. Thus, it seeks to show that reality is subjectively generated by human actions and not objectively existing (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014; Bell, et al., 2019), and the findings are influenced by the researcher's beliefs (Bahari, 2010). Interpretivism research is not anticipated to test a theory as in positivism; rather, it develops a subjective meaning of a phenomenon and inductively builds or develops a theory (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Hence, the interpretivist researcher addresses the social phenomenon in context and observes the participants' behaviour while searching for subjective meanings (Berryman, 2019; Cohen, et al., 2018; Weber, 2004). Indeed, an interpretivist researcher aims to in-depth understand and explain the meaning of the addressed social phenomenon, as reality should be objectively addressed from the inside (Cohen, et al., 2018). Conversely, Mack (2010) argued that the interpretivist researcher seeks to understand rather than explain a phenomenon. Certainly, interpretivist researchers cannot generalise the results as positivists (Mack, 2010), but they could draw an authentic picture of the studied phenomena. Though Pham (2018)

argued that the findings of the interpretivist researcher might be affected by the researcher's beliefs and views, consequently, the researcher's bias could negatively affect the research outcome (Cohen, et al., 2018).

Approaches to Research Methodology

There are three common approaches to research methodology that researchers consider: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Bryman, 2016). The most common methods utilised in management research are quantitative and qualitative. Both methods have their difficulties and advantages (Saunders, et al., 2019). Qualitative and quantitative research methods also require different choices in relation to the research philosophy, designing the research, data collection, and data analysis.

Quantitative Method

The quantitative method is a research approach that focuses on collecting and analysing numerical data in order to draw conclusions and make predictions (Banwell, et al., 2022). The quantitative method is a positivist epistemology position that is expounded to natural scientists (Bryman, 2016). It often relies on a deductive approach—to test an existing theory—and an inductive approach as well—to develop a theory (Bryman, 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019).

According to Rademaker and Polush (2022), there are several designs that correspond to the quantitative approach. These designs include experimental and quasi-experimental designs, correlational designs, and descriptive designs.

The primary objective of experimental and quasi-experimental designs is to evaluate the impact of a specific intervention, treatment, programme, or policy on the phenomenon under investigation. This involves comparing two or more groups, with one group acting as the control variable. The independent variable, which is manipulated, is responsible for causing

changes. The designs also aim to ensure control over other factors and to establish the generalizability of the findings. A correlation design is utilised in order to assess the relationships that exist between the variables that are being investigated in a study. Furthermore, the descriptive design is utilised in order to explore the interactions that are related to a particular attribute of a phenomenon and to provide an explanation for that attribute (Rademaker & Polush, 2022). Through the utilisation of quantitative data analysis approaches, these designs can be analysed and characterised through the utilisation of statistical analysis with quantitative designs. These analysis methods encompasses the application of statistical methodologies to quantify and comprehend data, enabling researchers to identify patterns, correlations, and trends (Rademaker & Polush, 2022). It usually involves statistically testing the relationship between two or more variables (Saunders, et al., 2019). Quantitative methods data is collected using a structured interview, such as a survey. Like any research method, the quantitative method has its strengths and weaknesses (Baškarada & Koronios, 2018). Baškarada & Koronios, (2018) argue that the results of a quantitative method in social science are not as absolute as in natural science because they depend on human behaviour. Indeed, human behaviour is unpredictable, and it could affect the results over time, which could be considered a drawback of the quantitative research method in social science (Baškarada & Koronios, 2018). However, through the utilisation of the quantitative approach, researchers can acquire unbiased and dependable outcomes, as the data gathered is based on numerical measures (Bryman, 2016). This approach provides a scientific and organised strategy to analyse vast sample sizes, making it well-suited for carrying out extensive surveys or experiments (Banwell, et al., 2022).

Qualitative Method

The qualitative research method, on the other hand, is a research strategy that focuses on understanding and analysing behaviours, experiences, and perspectives (Taylor, et al., 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019).

Qualitative research includes the gathering and examination of non-numeric data, such as interviews, observations, images, videos, and textual analysis, in order to identify the underlying significance, patterns, and themes (Taylor, et al., 2016). These methods are often connected to an interpretivism philosophy as they are subjective to a richer understanding of individuals' ideas, emotions, and behaviours (Taylor, et al., 2016). This approach enables researchers to effectively investigate complex phenomena and obtain in-depth data on the social and cultural context in which they take place (Saunders, et al., 2019). The qualitative method gives the researchers the opportunity to analyse the phenomenon that is being investigated by considering it from the participants' perspective and by utilising their own personal experiences (Rademaker & Polush, 2022). According to Rademaker and Polush (2022) and Taylor et al. (2016), qualitative research is associated with a number of different approaches. These approaches include, but are not limited to: ethnography strategy, action research strategy, grounded theory strategy, case study, and narrative inquiry approach.

Further, this method often relies on an inductive approach to build a theory or develop an existing one. A deductive approach could also be applied, which is testing an existing theory through the qualitative research method (Taylor, et al., 2016). In addition, the qualitative method recognises the subjective aspect of reality and embraces the concept that multiple truths and interpretations can exist simultaneously, resulting in a more inclusive and comprehensive investigation (Bryman, 2016; Taylor, et al., 2016). Therefore, researchers usually choose a qualitative or quantitative method, depending on their research philosophy and design.

Researchers within the management field often combine both methods in their research under the mixed methods approach (Bryman, 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019).

Mixed Methods

Mixed methods approaches have been defined by Udo Kelle at (Johnson, et al., 2007) as a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in terms of the data collection and analysis. Since the mixed method is a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, mixed method research is designed from the characteristics of both methods (Saunders, et al., 2019). Thus, mixed methods assist researchers to comprehensively address and understand a phenomenon rather than a single method (Cohen, et al., 2018).

Mixed-methods design could be employed in two ways: either fixed or emergent mixed methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). A fixed-methods approach means that the researcher designed the research to include both quantitative and qualitative methods in their research. The emergent mixed method approach, on the other hand, was applied when the researcher faced any difficulties while applying one method to another (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Nevertheless, there are three characteristics of mixed-methods research: concurrent, sequential, and embedded mixed-methods research. Concurrent is where the qualitative and quantitative data are collected separately in one period. Sequential is where the data collection is done in more than one phase. Sequential exploratory refers to a process in which qualitative data collection precedes quantitative data collection. Sequential explanatory is when the quantitative data collection precedes the qualitative. Embedded mixed-method research is where both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to support each other and the conclusions of the research (Saunders, et al., 2019).

Research Approach for This Study

This research aims and objectives is to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. It identifies within the literature factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. Thus, the research design chosen is an inductive, qualitative approach (Saunders, et al., 2019), in which in-depth data is collected from participants during the fieldwork time period. This research is not aiming to build a new theory. Rather, it seeks to advance and build on and add to our understanding of existing theoretical approaches in the area of shared leadership. It seeks to identify and empirically investigate the key factors that have the most significant effect on the development of shared leadership practices. Given that interpretivism was the chosen research philosophy in this study, a qualitative research approach would be appropriate.

Selecting a qualitative approach is congruent with an overarching philosophical orientation of social constructivist epistemology (Creswell & Poth, 2018), selected because of the subjective and socially constructive meaning of shared leadership and its effect on a process of organisational change. According to Grint (2000), leadership is fundamentally a social phenomenon that can be subjectively interpreted by individuals. For example, a case study conducted by Slantcheva-Durst, (2014) explored the development of shared leadership practices through the utilisation of cooperation, incorporating three key aspects that promote cooperation in groups: a) shared purpose and vision; b) group work; and c) empowerment. Others such as, Edelmann et al. (2023) employed a qualitative methodology and performed 35 in-depth interviews to examine the benefits and challenges associated with the implementation of shared leadership practices. In their qualitative study, they gain rich, detailed insights into

the factors and conditions affecting different implementation of shared leadership. Therefore, the qualitative approach will allow for a focus on the richness of the data and a better understanding of the research problem, as well as increase the credibility of the research findings (Cohen, et al., 2018; Saunders, et al., 2019).

The first step within the qualitative research process starts with the research question, followed by the site and subject selection, then data collection, interpretation of data, conceptual and theoretical work, finishing with findings written up and drawing conclusions (Bryman, 2016). According to Bryman (2016), one of the foremost steps in qualitative research is selecting a relevant site for the study to apply it to, including relevant research participants. Therefore, the case for this research was carefully chosen after several interviews with the organisation's CEO, who had already noted the existence of shared leadership behaviours and practices within the organisation. The opinion of the CEO was significant because this indicated that the organisation was a potentially good match for the research project and had already demonstrated what the CEO regarded as an appreciation of the practices of shared leadership. These formal indications included an indication that group members need to be involved in the organisation's decision-making process and strategic plans, taking into consideration their discipline, speciality, and experience for better success (Pearce, et al., 2018). This was an important point to establish and was crucial in making the early stages of the research project viable. Thus, the target population for this research were branch managers, heads of departments, and branch members working in commercial organisations in the service sector within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabian context, covering three Saudi regions: the Central, Western, and Eastern regions.

Research Method

This section explores an overview of the chosen methodology, highlighting its significance and explaining how those choices connect to the overarching research strategy devised to answer the research question. It includes a review of the data collection methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations (Bhattacherjee, 2019).

Quantitative research is often associated with two strategies, including experiments and surveys (Banwell, et al., 2022). Multiple designs align with the quantitative methodology. The designs encompass multiple categories such as experimental and quasi-experimental designs, correlational designs, and descriptive designs (Rademaker & Polush, 2022). Further, the design employed in the quantitative method is a descriptive design to investigate the interactions associated with certain characteristics of a phenomenon and offer an explanation for that attribute (Rademaker & Polush, 2022). By employing quantitative data analysis methods, these designs can be examined and described using statistical analysis with quantitative designs. The analysis methods examined involve the use of statistical techniques to measure and understand data, allowing researchers to identify patterns, correlations, and trends (Rademaker & Polush, 2022).

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is associated with several strategies, including ethnography, action research, grounded theory, case study, and narrative inquiry (Rademaker & Polush, 2022; Taylor, et al., 2016). And the mixed method is a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the associated strategies are often mixed and may include archival and documentary research and case study methods (Saunders, et al., 2019).

For example, an ethnography strategy is a qualitative method that is used to study a cultural or social group. In fact, ethnography is one of the earliest qualitative strategies, and its main

purpose is to observe human behaviours to understand them (Taylor, et al., 2016). An action research strategy is one where the researcher is aiming to design and develop a solution to a real organisational problem (Saunders, et al., 2019). Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) assume that action research is not a fixed social phenomenon but an incessantly changing one. Action research themes are: a) the purpose of the research; b) the research process; c) participation and cooperation; d) knowledge; and e) implication. Grounded theory method refers to *"the data collection technique and analytic procedures that it uses"* (p. 205). Narrative inquiry strategy refers to *"a story; personal account, which interprets an event of sequence of events"* (p. 209), or, in other words, storytelling. This strategy contains both assumption ontology and epistemology (Easterby-Smith, et al., 2015; Saunders, et al., 2019, pp. 205-209). A case study is defined as *"empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident"* (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) defined a case study as an in-depth study that focuses on one or more small cases in a specific period, including organisations or individuals. Since this research is aiming to empirically investigate the impact of shared leadership on a process of organisational change and the research methodology is mainly qualitative, a case study approach is intended to be applied in this research project.

Yin (2009, pp. 27–28) described five basic components to be applied in designing a case study: a) a study question, in which the question form needs to be in terms of "who," "what," "where," "how," and "why"; b) *"the case proposition, if any"*; c) the unit of analysis, which addresses what the case is; d) linking the data to the proposition logically; e) *"the criteria for interpreting the findings."* Additionally, according to Yin (2003), a case study does not only use exploratory strategies; in fact, there are three strategies that are associated with the case study method: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. An exploratory case study allows the researcher to build or develop a theory by observing a social phenomenon. An explanatory case study,

according to Yin (2003, p. 23), *"usually involves the formation of a hypothesis of a cause-and-effect relationship."* Whereas a descriptive case study is mainly not describing a theory as a cause-and-effect relationship, however, *"it covers the scope and the depth of the object"* (Yin , 2003, p. 23). Further, Yin (1994, p. 4) discussed three conditions when using each case study strategy: a) *"the type of research question posed"*; b) *"the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events"*; and c) *"the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events."* Hence, this study is neither seeking an explanation for a hypothesis nor describing the depth of an object. It is, in fact, seeking to explore the impact of the social phenomenon *"shared leadership"* on an organisation, which is going through a process of organisational change. Thus, an exploratory case study is the most appropriate method for this investigation.

Yin (2009) argues that there are four broad categories of case study design in the form of a 2x2 matrix. Each type of case study design is concerned with the analysis of the context condition related to the case. There are single and multiple case studies, and each one has a unique way of analysing the data. For instance, 1) a holistic single-case study design; 2) an embedded case study design; 3) a holistic multiple-case study; 4) an embedded multiple-case study. Researchers' choice of single or multiple case studies depends on the research question and the type of data needed to address the proposed question. According to Yin (2009), a *single* case study is a reasonable design because it is a critical case in testing a well-formulated theory and represents a unique case, representative case, revelatory case, and longitudinal case. Another significant aspect of a single case study is that more than one unit of analysis is considered an embedded case study design. For instance, the context is a single organisation, and the data analysis includes different organisational departments and employees. However, the complexity or drawback of the embedded case study design is that it focuses on the data analysis of the subunits while ignoring the data analysis of the main context. In contrast, a

holistic case study design includes *"the case study examined only the global nature of an organisation or of a program"* (Yin, 2009, p. 50). Yin (2009) argued that knowing the unit of analysis when conducting a single case study is the most important step. On the other hand, a multiple case study is more than one case study design included in the same study, which means one study involving multiple contexts. In fact, multiple case study design is similar to the single case study, which includes holistic and embedded designs; however, the major difference is that they involve more than one case in the same study (Yin, 2009).

Since the embedded case study contains multiple units of analysis in one context, an embedded case study approach is the method to be applied to this study. An approval has been granted for applying the case to a commercial organisation located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where the primary data was collected. Additionally, the study applied to branch managers, heads of departments, and branch members. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, which consisted of a set of questions about the intended study, and an interviewer was expected to draw significant information or data from the interviewees (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saunders, et al., 2019).

Negotiating Access

According to Saunders et al. (2019, p. 232), *"Access and ethics are critical aspects for the success of any research project."* Researchers need to gain access to an appropriate case for data collection; in fact, gaining access is associated with several challenges that the researchers faced during the normal times (Friesl, et al., 2022). Nevertheless, throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, obtaining access became increasingly challenging, particularly due to governmental restrictions and adherence to social distancing protocols. Due to the qualitative nature of this research project and the need for direct engagement with the individuals involved in the case organisation, it was necessary to get in-depth data for this study (Friesl, et al., 2022).

The type of access required for this research is traditional access, which involves face-to-face interaction to conduct interviews, observations, and focus groups (Saunders, et al., 2019).

Regarding this matter, the research application was turned down by four major organisations located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a result of the Saudi government's regulations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the enforcement of social distancing measures.

The initial attempt was made through one of the leading organisations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The researcher approached the Research and Development manager of that organisation. A proposal was submitted outlining the research aims and objectives. The request was rejected, marking the initial denial of the access journey. The reason for the denial was the research subject, as they did not permit any researcher to conduct interviews or any kind of qualitative research on the site that related to the leadership field. Their justification was the potential effect on the organisation's leadership. In fact, the organisation's research and development reported that they would accept any other research subject not related to leadership. However, the Research and Development manager informed the researcher that other method of data collection would be accepted such as survey and questionnaire distribution if needed, which is not applicable to this research project.

As the search for a case continued, the researcher approached a Saudi / Swiss manufacturing organisation in a second attempt. The researcher had an initial meeting with the regional sales manager. At that meeting, the proposal was submitted and initially accepted but had to be reviewed by the organisation's CEO in Switzerland. Two weeks later, in a follow-up phone call with the sales regional manager to discuss the access progression, the researcher was informed that the proposal had been submitted to the legal department at the organisation's headquarters for further evaluation. As a result, the researcher had to wait for approximately three more weeks. Following that, the proposal was rejected for reasons that were not known.

The researcher approached a third organisation that was recommended by the sale's regional manager at the second organisation. Again, the proposal was submitted and initially accepted, but three weeks later, it was turned down because of the COVID-19 pandemic status. Given the methodology employed for data collection, the researcher has sought permission for access to the premises in order to conduct in-depth face-to-face interviews with relevant parties involved. The access request was denied due to Saudi government restrictions in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prohibit granting access for observation or conducting interviews, in accordance with the execution of social distancing measures. The researcher informed the case management that the researcher would require access at a later date, specifically eight months after the government easing the COVID-19 restrictions. However, the researcher did not receive any response from them, leading to the conclusion that the request for access was denied.

The ongoing effort to gain approval for accessing an organisation for the purpose of data collection continued, as the search for access appeared to be a challenging task. Due to the complex nature of the research subject and the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher continued to experience difficulties in obtaining reliable access.

As a part of the Saudi government's plan to support Saudi researchers in obtaining access to the government's facilitation to collect their initial data via any data collection approach, including semi-structured interviews, observation, or the distribution of surveys and questionnaires, the Saudi government has implemented an initiative to support Saudi researchers. As a result of this initiative, the researcher approached a governmental authority that has recently undergone a transformation into a ministry in order to use it as the case study for this research project. An email was sent to the Director of Institutional Excellence

expressing interest in collecting the initial data for the research project, and the Director has approved the initial proposal.

The Director then sent an email to the researcher, requesting a phone interview as a requirement for gaining access. A phone call was received from the director, who requested additional information regarding the research topic in order to gain a better understanding of the information that is required for access. During the phone call, the Director stated that the organisational structure is now undergoing a transformation and that the expected participants were neither hired nor possessed relevant experience and the transformation would need at least six months to be completed. In addition, the director explicitly indicated that there would be no interviews conducted with higher-level administrators, such as the minister and the vice minister. The researcher explained that the targeted sample were middle-line managers. The researcher explained to the director that access would be required at a later date, specifically eight months after were the transformation would be completed. Therefore, the director promised the researcher that he would grant the approval letter and email it to the researcher in one to two weeks. Two weeks later, the researcher did not receive any response from them, leading to the conclusion that the request for access was denied.

Ultimately, it took more than seven months to grant access for the field study. The fifth attempt happened after meeting a CEO of a commercial organisation, who held a PhD in Political Economics and Financial Risk Management, at a virtual conference. The researcher reached out to him, discussed the research project, and expressed an interest in conducting field work at the organisation. The CEO requested a written proposal to be directed to him. The proposal was sent to his email, and three days later, a phone call was received from the CEO's office manager stating that the proposal was accepted by the board and a confirmation letter would be sent within 24 hours. The following morning, the letter was received, and the case board

formally requested an ethical approval letter from the Queen's Business School Research Ethics Committee. Additionally, they specified that they required a sixty-day notice period before being granted full access. The letter was requested from Queen's Business School Research Ethics and submitted to the organisation with a notice period of sixty days (See Appendix F).

Data Collection

Data collection is the primary method to gather valid and reliable data to answer the research question, aims, and objectives (Saunders, et al., 2019). Each research methodology has its own method of data collection; this study is primarily qualitative, and the qualitative method of data collection was applied. There are several basic approaches to collecting qualitative data:

A. Semi-structured interviews where the researcher prepares a list of arguments and some questions that the researcher needs to cover during the interview; more importantly, the list of arguments and questions could be used differently depending on the flow of the interview.
B. Unstructured interviews are an informal way of collecting data, which is an in-depth interview to explore a particular area that the researcher is interested in.
C. Questionnaires are the most used method in the survey strategy (Bryman, 2016)—a set of questions that the respondents are asked to respond to.
D. Observation There are several basic approaches to observations, such as: complete participants, where the researcher usually merges into the organisation's social life and becomes a member of their working group; complete observers, unlike the complete participants, where the researcher does not participate in the organisation's working group; observers, where the main role is observing and the researcher would be known to the studying sample; and participants as observers, which is a combination of both

participating as a group member and a researcher as well (Bryman, 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019).

Interview

A qualitative interview is an interaction between the interviewer and interviewee to highlight the needed knowledge to answer the research questions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is a technique used to collect empirical data regarding the social context of individuals. This is achieved by offering individuals the opportunity to provide in-depth data about their lives (Liamputtong, 2020). Thus, an in-depth interview is a specific form of interaction that involves multiple individuals, such as the researcher and the participants, with the purpose of obtaining data. This type of interaction requires careful listening and proactive questioning (Liamputtong, 2020). The interview protocol, on the other hand, is that the interviewer asks questions in an understandable way to the interviewee (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The reliability of the interview protocol helps the researcher obtain a rich collection of data since it increases the efficacy of the interview throughout the prescribed time period (Yeong, et al., 2018). For example, Castillo-Montoya (2016) proposed four stages for interview protocol refinement (IPR): ensuring interview questions align with research questions, constructing an inquiry-based conversation, receiving feedback on interview protocol, and piloting the interview protocol. These steps would help the research develop a set of consistent interview questions that are understandable by the participants (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

According to Jacob & Furgerson (2012), researchers need to know what the research literature has to say about the subjects they are investigating prior to posing the initial question. Acquiring this demographic data might potentially inspire the development of an interview technique that enquires about the perceptions of potential participants (Jacob & Furgerson,

2012). Conversely, in order to attain a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, researchers direct their attention toward broadening the unexplored domain of the subject. In contrast, a quantitative interview consists of a series of predetermined inquiries formulated by the investigator for the participants to reply to (Saunders, et al., 2019).

According to Creswell & Poth (2018) there are two approaches of conducting interviews: standardised and non-standardised. In a standardised interview, a set of questions is developed and managed by the researcher, such as in a structured interview. A non-standardised interview is an open-ended question developed by the researcher to in-depth interview the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Examples of non-standardised interviews are semi-structured and unstructured interviews, which include one-to-one interviews, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, virtual interviews, and one-to-many interviews such as group interviews and virtual group interviews (focus groups) (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saunders, et al., 2019).

Structured interview

A structured interview is generally employed in quantitative-approach research (Brinkmann, 2013). This form of interview involves a set of structured questions with predefined answers, wherein the researcher leads and maintains control over the conversation. In order to obtain reliable analysis, structured interviews necessitate an extensive number of samples (Hussein, 2022). Researcher-completed questionnaires and self-completed questionnaires are the most frequent methods of conducting a questionnaire as a data collection method (Bryman, 2016). A researcher-completed questionnaire is completed with the researcher present; the researcher's role is to read the exact questions to each participant and record their answers (Brinkmann, 2013; Bryman, 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019). In contrast to a researcher-completed questionnaire, a self-completed questionnaire is completed by the participants themselves without the presence of the researcher (Bryman, 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019).

Unstructured interview

Unstructured interviews are different from structured interviews in a number of respects. The interviewer is not pre-developing any structured questions for the interviewee. The interviewer is starting the interview with an opening statement and gathering the most important information from the interviewee. Actually, the interviewer could interrupt the interviewee for additional details to clarify the story (Brinkmann, 2013). In addition, the researcher has no control over the outcome of the interview, unlike in the case of a structured interview. The respondent possesses significant autonomy in shaping their responses to the researcher's questions and may direct the conversation according to their own discussion (Hussein, 2022). However, this particular interview format would yield substantial and comprehensive reliable data, but it would generate challenges in terms of managing and analysing the collected data (Hussein, 2022).

Semi-structured interview

Conversely, semi-structured interviews utilise open-ended questions and focus on verbal information rather than numerical data (Brinkmann, 2013; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). It is, in fact, a blend between structured and unstructured interviews (Liamputtong, 2020). Hence, the interviewer possesses the control to guide the conversation in a manner that emphasises the most crucial details pertaining to the research inquiries (Brinkmann, 2013; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Liamputtong, 2020).

Four important components of a semi-structured interview were highlighted by Brinkmann (2013): the purpose, descriptions, the real world, and meaning interpretation. The interviewer's intentions, which are to address the research questions and achieve the research’s aims and objectives, are referred to as the "purpose." Instead of evoking personal experience, the

interviewer helps the interviewee through the process of describing their replies through the use of descriptions.

Researchers usually conduct semi-structured interviews in two ways: either one-to-one or as a group (focus group) (Brinkmann, 2013; Bryman, 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019). A focus group is made up of more than one participant attending the interview (Brinkmann, 2013). There is no ideal or standardised number of focus group participants. Generating several thoughts from the participants regarding the addressed issue is the greatest advantage of conducting a focus group (Brinkmann, 2013). Hence, exploratory research is best suited to focused group interviews, according to Brinkmann (2013, p. 27), *"…since the dynamic social interaction that results may provide more spontaneous expressions than in individual interviews."* Individual interviews, on the other hand, are interviews between two people—the interviewer and the interviewee (Hussein, 2022). The advantages of an individual interview are that the interviewer would have more control over directing the interview; he or she could direct the discussion to the research questions and objectives. Another advantage is that it can build a trusting relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer in terms of responding to sensitive questions (Brinkmann, 2013; Hussein, 2022; Saunders, et al., 2019).

Accordingly, for this study to reach the aims and objectives of the research, the data collection method was face-to-face semi-structured interviews. There are two reasons why the researcher decided to conduct face-to-face interviews rather than relying on virtual interviews, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic period. First, to witness the participants' every gesture, movement, reaction, and facial expression. Second, being flesh and blood in front of the participant helps to establish a relationship of trust, which plays a major role in getting reliable answers (Brinkmann, 2013; Liamputtong, 2020; Saunders, et al., 2019). The interviews were face-to-face with branch managers, departments' heads, and branch members. However, the

CEO interview was conducted virtually due to his busy schedule and travelling purposes. The data collection took place in three Saudi regions: the western, eastern, and central regions.

Interview Questions Development

As discussed in the literature review above, there is a considerable amount of existing research on the factors that constitute shared leadership. Of particular significance as noted in the literature review in Chapter 2, Brussow (2013) developed the Shared Leadership Measure, which formed the basis for the shared leadership interview questions. It contains 20 questions to measure shared leadership practices. The question covers four areas: cooperation, vision, delegation, and culture (Brussow, 2013). Using this set of questions as the foundation, the researcher developed the interview questions to be consistent with the research questions and objectives described above and converted them to cover wider domains. As we have seen above, multiple studies investigated the elements that influence the development of shared leadership practices, regarded them as antecedents to shared leadership practices, and grounded the development of these domains. For example, Fausing et al. (2015) and Perry et al. (1999) found that group members cooperation, which is the level of task interdependency between group members, influences the development of shared leadership practices; Carson et al. (2007, p. 1222) found that shared purposes, such as shared objectives, which refers to a common understanding of the primary aims and collective goals of the group; and social support, which refers to *"group members' efforts to provide emotional and psychological strength to one another",* including skills and knowledge, and accomplishment recognition of their peers, including knowledge, skills, and accomplishment recognition, are significant; and Small & Rentsch (2010) found that trust, which is the level of confidence between group members, is a factor that affects the development of shared leadership practices within the group's internal environment. Group external environments, on the other hand, Sweeney et al. (2019)

recognised the following in their systematic review as components of the group external environment, such as authority sharing including delegation, which determines the level of responsibility assigned to group members during their tasks (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014); empowerment including autonomy and self-leadership, which refers to a leader's capacity to exert influence over followers by encouraging them to take on leadership roles, and providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015), autonomy refers to the level of independence provided by the role in terms of allowing employees significant freedom in scheduling their work duties and determining the approach to completing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015; Hackman & Oldham, 1974); self-leadership refers to the capabilities and abilities of group members to manage and influence themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005); and supportive culture, which relates to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), in this study it focuses on the elements of collective decision-making (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and the leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002).

The set of questions went through an extensive review to ensure their validity, including a series of informal tests with three different individuals in order to ensure that they were consistent and clear throughout the interview process.

Data Collection Approach for this Study

A proposal expressing interest in using the company as a research case was submitted to the Chief Executive Officer on March 16th, 2021. An email of approval was received on March 21st, stating that there is a 60-day notice period before the scheduled start date. The data

collection method selected was one-to-one semi-structured interviews, supplemented by a group interview as well. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the suitable approach to gain a deeper understanding of the interviewee's responds, arrange thoughts systematically, and explore topics that the interviewer may not have initially considered. This approach was particularly relevant at it is regarded as leading to a richness of valuable data (Liamputtong, 2020; Ruslin, et al., 2022). Additionally, a semi-structured interview plays a crucial role in fostering a trusting relationship between the researcher and the subject (Brinkmann, 2020). Moreover, the interviews were captured using an audio recording device subsequent to obtaining the permission of the participant. The interviews were performed in Arabic as a result of the organisation's insufficient number of English speakers.

The objective was to conduct 31 interviews, ensuring a minimum of 31 participants throughout all three regions. Nevertheless, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were carried out and consisted of 24 interviews involving 26 individuals. These participants included the CEO of the organisation, five branch managers, three heads of departments representing middle-line managers, and 17 branch members representing lower-line management. For a detailed overview of study participants, please refer to Appendix A. It is worth noting that one of the interviews was conducted as a group interview. The duration of each interview varied between 15 and 60 minutes. For a detailed overview of the participants' structure, please refer to Appendix C.

Prior to commencing data collection, a notification was sent to the organisation's CEO, providing a 60-days advance notice of the intended commencement date. The researcher travelled to Saudi Arabia on October 20th, 2021, for fieldwork and data collection. On October 26th, 2021, the researcher conducted a meeting with the case Chief Executive Officer at the Western Region branch, located in Jeddah city, based on case's CEO request. During the

meeting, a plan outlining the process of data collection was initiated, with the first focus being on collecting data from the Jeddah branch located in the western region, followed by the branches in Al-Khobar and Alahsa in the eastern region, and finally from the central region, Riyadh branch. The sampling strategy adopted in this research is purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers select participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research question (Campbell, et al., 2020). This strategy allows researchers to intentionally choose participants who have the characteristics or experiences that are most likely to provide valuable insights into the research topic. By using purposive sampling, researchers can ensure that their sample is representative of the population of interest and can gather in-depth information from individuals who are knowledgeable about the subject matter (Campbell, et al., 2020) (Palinkas, et al., 2015). This approach is particularly useful in qualitative research, where the focus is on understanding the nuances and complexities of a particular phenomenon.

Western region— Jeddah

In relation to the volume of clients serviced, the western region branch is regarded as the organisation's second-largest branch. At the earliest convenience of seven individuals, they were asked to an interview.

The data collection process started in Jeddah as the initial branch. The branch manager and staff were introduced to the researcher by the organisation's CEO, who also assigned the researcher an office space. The researcher had to understand the branch routine and the hierarchical structure during the initial week. After a span of ten days, the researcher sent an invitation to the branch manager for an initial interview at a time that was most convenient for him. The subject matter of the interview was shared leadership practices. In order to accomplish the goals and objectives of this study, which is seeks to empirically identify and investigate

shared leadership practices in the case study and to explore how shared leadership practices affect transformative change in the case study, interviews with group members occupying non-managerial positions were crucial. The non-managerial employees served as the primary group engaged in the organisational transformative process and played a crucial role in implementing shared leadership practices throughout the change process. In order to mitigate potential bias during participant nomination by the manager, the researcher assessed many criteria for the branch manager, such as the duration of their experience within the organisation and whether or not they have undergone the organisational transformative process or were employed prior to the commencement of the organisational transformation process. The primary objective was to conduct interviews with individuals who had undergone the transformation process first-hand and had a significant impact on it. Thus, the researcher requested that the branch manager nominate candidates for the interview with at least three years of experience in the organisation and prior experience with the organisational transformation process. Six group members were nominated for interviews by the branch manager; three of them were interviewed individually, with their discipline and group role being taken into account. For the group interview invitations were extended to three additional group members. The interviews were arranged over the course of three weeks and were carried out at convenient times and dates for every participant. Sixty days were devoted to the gathering of data in the first region (the western region).

Eastern region— Al-Khobar and Alahsa

The case headquarter is situated in Al-Khobar city in the Eastern region. Three operational divisions exist (auditing, legal, and quality assurance departments). The headquarters is regarded as the most sizable division inside the organisation, in terms of staff count, departmental magnitude, and volume of clients serviced. Twelve individuals were invited to

participate in an interview at their earliest convenience from the Al-Khobar branch. Specifically, two were invited from the quality assurance department, four from the legal department, and six from the auditing department. Conversely, Alahsa branch, the second branch in the Eastern region, has three operational departments—human resources, finance, and auditing—and two individuals—the branch manager and the head of finance—were invited to participate in interview schedules at their earliest convenience.

Following the completion of interviews— with employees from the branch in Jeddah, the researcher proceeded to have a one-hour and fifty minutes trip to Al-Khobar city, situated in the eastern region of Saudi Arabia. In contrast to Jeddah, Al-Khobar possessed a far more complex branch infrastructure, including the company's headquarters, two acting branch managers, and a quality assurance department. Two branches were established within the larger branch: auditors' accountants and legal accountants (henceforth referred to as branches "A" and "B"). Each branch manager was assigned autonomous accountability for their respective branch.

Both branch managers were introduced to the researcher by the CEO, who also assigned the researcher an office. Due to the variations in branch architecture, the researcher invested considerable effort in comprehending the configuration and operational procedures of every branch.

One week later, the researcher scheduled an appointment with branch A manager at his earliest convenience. Upon discovering that it was proposed that the interview be recorded, he declined to partake in the interview, citing conflicting obligations, "*I have not been informed by the CEO that the interviews will be recorded… I have to get my manager's (CEO) permission before responding to any question, will have to reschedule for next week*" P6C. In fact, the researcher has obtained explicit consent from the CEO to record each interview. The researcher

extended an interview invitation to branch B manager instead of branch A manager, who was rescheduled for the subsequent week. The duration of branch B manager interview was around sixty minutes.

Subsequently, the researcher requested that the branch manager nominate participants who had undergone the organisational transformation process and had been employed by the organisation for a minimum of three years. The manager of Branch B nominated three individuals for the interview process. The researcher invited the first members of the group for interviews. The researcher considered their professional standing and disciplinary responsibilities. The researcher conducted one interview with a participant every day.

One significant drawback of the conducted interviews is that one participant appeared to be involved in a personal disagreement with the organisation. This was an outlier interview and not representative. This participant interview lasted about 13 minutes, which was less than anticipated; his responses lacked specificity. The responses, particularly when it came to his immediate manager, were uncomplicated and lacking in specificity, despite the researcher's efforts to refocus the questions in order to determine the nature of the conflict he was experiencing; for instance, when the researcher asked, *"Describe to me how enabling is your assigned manager?"* Participant 3A responded, *"He is not."* Despite the efforts the researcher made to get the participants to reveal information, the answers were short and simplified. In contrast, the interviews with the remaining two participants ranged between 35 and 45 minutes.

Nevertheless, branch manager A obtained authorisation from the case CEO to record the interview, and the interview took place at his earliest convenience. Due to the comparative size of branch A and branch B, the researcher requested that the manager nominate a minimum of six individuals who had undergone the transformation process and had been employed by the organisation for a minimum of three years. Six candidates were nominated by the branch

manager and extended invitations to attend interviews at their earliest convenience throughout the course of the week. Two female respondents declined the invitation of the researcher on account of the recording, which constituted an additional obstacle. The interviews were done after the participants were subsequently persuaded of the researcher's intention to maintain their privacy during the recording process.

Since this research targeted branch managers, heads of departments, and branch groups, the researcher invited two heads of department from the quality assurance group. The researcher extended invitations to two department heads from the quality assurance group, as this study specifically targets branch managers, department heads, and branch groups. Both individuals were under the direct supervision of the Chief Executive Officer.

The researcher was invited by the CEO of the organisation three weeks later to the second branch in the Eastern region, situated in Alahsa city, a two-hour drive from Al-Khobar city. The purpose of the visit was to conduct an interview with the branch manager and the head of the finance department. Furthermore, the researcher arranged further interviews with three group members from the human resources department and the department director. The researcher received a text message from the director of the human resources department, verifying that COVID-19 cases had been detected inside the department and that the planned interviews would be called off. The interviews that were originally planned were cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused participants to remain in isolation for a minimum of 14 days. The fieldwork journey in the eastern region spanned a duration of forty days in order to gather the necessary data.

Central region— Riyadh

The branch located in the central region of the case organisation is regarded as the smallest with respect to both the number of staff and the number of clients supported. Four individuals were requested to attend an interview at their earliest convenience.

The last branch that the researcher visited in order to gather data was the Riyadh branch, located in the central region of Saudi Arabia, and four hours' drive from Al-Khobar city. Riyadh branch is regarded as the smallest branch structure in the case, in contrast to the branch structures of Al-Khobar and Jeddah. The branch manager, who was anticipating the researcher's arrival, was greeted by the researcher upon his arrival. The CEO proceeded to brief the branch manager on the rationale behind the researcher's visit. Following that, a meeting was held with the anticipated participants, considering their roles, levels of expertise, and the requirement that each individual have worked for the organisation for a minimum of three years and have undergone the transformation process. The researcher justified the significance of the interviews and the objective of the study. One of the participants made the following remark: *"Since these interviews are for the benefit of the company, we have to be as honest as possible in responding to the interview question."* Participant 1R. The branch manager was asked for an interview at his earliest convenience, which was scheduled two days later. The interviews with the remaining participants were arranged for the days that followed the branch manager's interview at their earliest convenience. The data collection process from the Riyadh branch spanned a duration of 10 days. The researcher then drove an eight-hour distance to Jeddah, his place of residence, before preparing to return to Belfast.

The CEO of the organisation was ultimately the last person with whom an interview was carried out. Due to his demanding schedule, the researcher was obligated to arrange an interview with

the case CEO thirty days later; it was conducted using Microsoft Groups. The expedition to get the data was conducted for a total of 110 days (See Appendix G).

After conducting interviews with 26 participants, the researcher reached data saturation as no new themes or information emerged from the interviews. The researcher have achieved a comprehensive understanding of the studied topic, and further interviews are unlikely to yield additional insights.

Researcher Reflexivity

The concept of researcher reflexivity is crucial in qualitative research as it involves the active examination of how one's own position, viewpoints, and actions have impacted the research process and outcomes (Hibbert & Cunliffe, 2015). Thus, *"researchers need to increasingly focus on self-knowledge and sensitivity; better understand the role of the self in the creation of knowledge; carefully self-monitor the impact of their biases, beliefs, and personal experiences on their research; and maintain the balance between the personal and the universal"* (Berger, 2015, p. 220).

Being a Saudi Arabian citizen and male, my personal background had both advantages and disadvantages during the research journey. On an advantageous note, it allowed me to have a deeper understanding and connection with the participants during the interviews. As a part of the same culture, I was able to establish a high level of trust and relationship, which in turn made it easier to have open and honest discussions. In addition, my implicit understanding of the local setting allowed me to comprehend the fundamental societal factors that influenced the perspectives and experiences of the participants.

By considering the varied cultural norms of the many regions in Saudi Arabia and the participants who are not from Saudi Arabia, I managed to acquire significant and precise

responses while also showing my respect for their culture. Ultimately, the combination of being culturally aware and drawing from my personal experiences resulted in more effective and enlightening interviews. This enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the organisation's perspective on leadership.

However, some negative aspects were also apparent. Despite attempts to reduce bias, it is possible that my own subjective experiences and viewpoints may have influenced the formulation of questions and the interpretation of results, potentially adding bias to the research. However, by actively seeking feedback, I was able to mitigate this risk. In addition, my awareness of my personal biases allowed me to approach the research with a critical and open mind-set. Furthermore, the nature of my relationship with the CEO of the organisation could potentially have positive as well as negative effects on the interview process. Establishing a solid connection with the CEO could potentially increase the probability of acquiring crucial information and valuable perspectives. Conversely, once the participants become aware of that relationship, they exhibit hesitation in providing their answers. In order to address this issue, I have repeated the study's ethical guidelines and emphasised the need to maintain the confidentiality of participants' responses.

This self-reflection and willingness to challenge my own assumptions helped me effectively reduce any potential bias that might have existed. In general, while it is not possible to completely eliminate bias, my efforts to acknowledge and mitigate it significantly improved the objectivity and accuracy of the research findings. This reflexivity as a researcher allowed me to critically analyse the gathered data and provide an in-depth understanding of the research findings.

Research Evaluation

According to Connelly (2016) it is crucial to ensuring the rigor and trustworthiness of qualitative research. Trustworthiness refers to the reliability of a study, which is contingent upon the degree of confidence that can be placed in its methodology, interpretation, and outcomes (Connelly, 2016). Reliability and validity encompass four primary dimensions that improve the research's credibility: Credibility, Dependability, Confirmability, and Transferability (Cohen, et al., 2018; Connelly, 2016). In qualitative research, credibility is the degree to which the results accurately reflect the perspectives and experiences of the participants (Connelly, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). In order to promise the credibility of the data collected and accurately represent the participants' experiences, the researcher maintained a protracted level of engagement with the participants in the fieldwork. Dependability, on the other hand, refers to the consistency and reliability of the study findings (Cohen, et al., 2018; Connelly, 2016). To establish validity for this research project, the researcher carefully documented the interviews conducted, data transcripts, and analysis to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the acquired data. Moreover, confirmability pertains to the degree to which the findings of a study can be replicated by other researchers (Cohen, et al., 2018; Connelly, 2016). Thus, the researcher maintained a clear audit trail and detailed records of data collection and analysis methods. In fact, this can increase the findings' reliability and validity. Transferability is the degree to which the findings of a study can be applied to other settings (Connelly, 2016). Despite the development of shared leadership in practice model, this study was limited to a single case study. The challenges and limitations section of the conclusion chapter provides a comprehensive explanation of this study's limitations.

Ethical Consideration

"Ethics refer to the standards of behaviour that guide your conduct in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of the work or are affected by it" (Saunders, et al., 2019, pp. 252-253). In qualitative research, data collection procedures (e.g., interviews, observation, etc.) require the researcher's actual presence at the place being studied. In qualitative research, researchers frequently encounter ethical challenges that need resolution; these obstacles may take the form of a range of problems (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

This research project was carried out in a commercial organisation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in order to empirically investigate the role of shared leadership throughout a significant organisational transformation. Prior to data collection, an ethical form was submitted to the Queen's Business School Ethical Committee for clearance. The data for this study were obtained in a manner that adheres to ethical standards; thus, the form was approved, and a corresponding letter was issued and forwarded to the organisation.

The researcher upholds social research ethics by adhering to the subsequent ethical principles: a) demonstrating regard for others (participants), while maintaining a relationship founded on trust and respect; b) preventing harm, encompassing mental or physical harm, emotional distress, and disruptions to social or group cohesion; c) safeguarding the privacy of participants; and d) ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of data collected (Bryman, 2016; Saunders, et al., 2019).

The interviews utilised in this research were in a semi-structured format. Participants from several divisions of the organisation comprised the attendees, which included branch managers, department heads, and branch members. Therefore, confidentiality is upheld regarding privacy protection and anonymity, which shall not be disclosed to any party except participants at their

explicit request. Therefore, the study design incorporated measures to protect participant confidentiality and privacy, as well as to minimise any potential harm that could result from participation. By carefully considering these ethical dimensions, the researcher were able to conduct a study that was both systematically rigorous and ethically sound.

Recognising the presence of several ethical considerations is crucial, notwithstanding the fact that the data for this study was collected during the COVID-19 outbreak. Surmiak et al. (2022) highlighted numerous significant challenges that researchers in the social sciences faced throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges included, but were not limited to, the following: the possibility of harming interviewees in in-person interviews; the difficulty of guaranteeing the confidentiality of interviewees in remote interviews; the anxiety and lack of motivation felt by researchers; the discontinuation or postponement of research projects due to these factors; and uncertainty and variations in research ethics (Surmiak, et al., 2022). Due to the incomplete resolution of the COVID-19 outbreak, there was still a possibility of getting the infection. The researcher exercised caution during the interviews by maintaining a safe distance from participants, routinely undergoing COVID-19 testing, and acknowledging the potential need to reschedule or postpone interviews in the event of participant infection.

In the following section of the research methodology, we will discuss how the acquired data were analysed and the methods used to operationalise them. Additionally, we will identify the specific units of analysis within the case study organisation.

Data Analysis

The fundamental purpose of data collection and analysis is to address the research question and accomplish the research objectives. The researcher must comprehend the significance of the qualitative data in order to analyse it properly. Saunders et al. (2019) and Woolf & Silver (2018, p. 4) contend that when dealing with unstructured data, researchers must interpret the subjective

and social construct associated with the investigated phenomena, *"giving meaning to mass unstructured data"*. Moreover, qualitative data is mainly dependent on social interaction, which makes it varied, elastic, and complex. Researchers obtain comprehensive and detailed data when they have the opportunity to investigate the subject matter in authentic, real-world scenarios (Saunders, et al., 2019).

Woolf and Silver (2018) posit that researchers are confronted with two distinct categories of data: completely structured and unstructured. As an illustration of a quantitative data approach, the structured data are pre-organized into number categories. On the other hand, unstructured data comes from qualitative data collection methods like audio and video recording, taking notes during observations, and using historical materials. To analyse this data, the right descriptive and inferential tools must be used.

Given the qualitative nature of this research approach and the inclusion of qualitative data, the Qualitative Research Analysis NVivo software was utilised. NVivo is a software application designed to facilitate the management and organisation of gathered data, project planning, piloting of research activities, results presentation, and interview recording management to ensure that no vital information is lost or overlooked. In addition, it enhances the structuring and management of ideas by establishing connections between the empirical evidence supporting the study and the theoretical understanding developed during the research process (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Woolf & Silver, 2018). The utilisation of such software facilitates a more standardised, structured, and manageable analytical procedure. Woolf and Silver (2018) assert that NVivo is not designed for data analysis purposes; instead, its functionality pertains to the management and organisation of this data.

Units of Analysis

As highlighted previously, the embedded case study encompassed three Saudi regions. Subsequently, the following section presents a thorough analysis of the comprehensive data that has been obtained from the case. The data were analysed at two levels—middle-line managers and non-managerial employees. The middle-line managers serve as representatives of department heads and branch managers, who in turn represent the whole organisation. In contrast, the branch group member is represented at the regional level by the non-managerial employees (see Appendix C for full structure).

Middle-line Managers

The middle-line managers' level represents the individual who occupies a managerial position in the case study organisation, such as branch managers and heads of departments in the organisation across three different Saudi regions: Western, Eastern, and Central.

Non-managerial Employees

The non-managerial level represents the group-working employees in the branches across three different Saudi regions: the Western, Eastern, and Central regions.

Data Analysis Approach for This Study

The widely employed qualitative six-thematic analysis approach was utilised to analyse the data, which is *"a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data"* (Braun & Clarke , 2006, p. 79). The six-thematic analysis approach provides a systematic and flexible approach for identifying patterns in data and presenting them in reports. It can yield profound findings that are situated within a specific context and can enhance the researcher understanding of the phenomenon (Braun & Clarke , 2006). Moreover, this approach

is used to organise and describe a dataset in great detail. The analysis method consists of the following steps: a) data familiarisation, which entails transcribing the data and making initial notes; b) initial code generation, which entails systematically coding the data into sets; c) theme identification and arrangement of the gathered data according to their respective themes; d) theme review to verify that the codes and the data sets are pertinent to the theme and generate thematic map of analysis; e) defining and naming themes to clearly define and name each theme; and f) producing the report, which is linking the data analysis to the research proposed question and the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In accordance with the format of semi-structured interviews, the qualitative data was documented on audio recordings. In light of the organisation's lack of English-speaking personnel, the interviews were carried out in Arabic.

Transcription and Translation

During the data transformation from the recording device to the computer, one recorded interview was lost, the Riyadh branch manager interview. One interview was also exempt from the analysis due to the participant's partial answers.

McLellan et al. (2003, p. 65) referred to the fact that transcription *"should be independent,"* which means that the transcribed data has to be understandable and applicable to other researchers. As a form of data observation, the transcribing process includes the researcher examining the recording, becoming familiar with it, and writing initial thoughts (Bailey, 2008; Braun & Clarke, 2022). The recorded data were transcribed by the researcher with great attention to detail. Three distinct software programmes, including Microsoft Word, Transcriber, and Maestra, were utilised for this purpose.

Every software has advantages and disadvantages. For instance, Microsoft Word transcribes each sound of the recording with limited accuracy in understanding Arabic words, thereby requiring the researcher to allocate additional time for script revision. The second software,

Transcriber, also had the drawback of being non-immediate nature of the transcription process, which was time-consuming. Ultimately, the third software, Maestra, emerged as the most optimal option in terms of both time efficiency and accuracy of the Arabic text. Thus, the researcher transcribed the recorded data using "Maestra" as the transcribing tool.

Three phases were required to finish the transcription in preparation for translation and analysis. The recorded interviews were transcribed in the first stage without any modifications. The interviews were transcribed verbatim from the original recordings. In stage two, some filler words and utterances, such as "umm," were deleted from the transcribed interviews. In step three, the language was modified from a colloquial to a classical Arabic dialect. Due to the fact that the participants were Egyptian and Saudi nationalities with distinct accents and speech patterns, this procedure was required to ensure that the data could be translated effectively.

Irrespective of the researcher's dual proficiency in Arabic and English, the transcribed data could be subject to researcher bias, which could alter the meaning of the participants' responses (Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996). Consequently, the researcher was compelled to outsource the data translation in order to mitigate this risk. Following an exhaustive and reputable search for a translator, the researcher initiated communication with a PhD candidate specialising in translation (specifically, Arabic-English translation) at Queen's University Belfast, who was willing to convert the transcribed data. A confidentiality agreement was signed by the translator in accordance with the agreement between the researcher and the translator to convert the transcribed data from Arabic to English (See Appendix D). The translator consumed more time than initially agreed, which prevented the translator from finishing the translation; as a result, the researcher was compelled to find an alternative certified translator to finish the translation. This was a significant obstacle that the researcher encountered throughout this process. The

newly hired translator signed a confidentiality agreement as part of the arrangement with the researcher to translate transcribed data (See Appendix E).

Analysis Process

According to the first step of the six-thematic analysis technique (Braun & Clarke, 2022), which is to make initial codes in a planned way, the researcher started making initial codes using the Arabic version of the transcribed data while they were being translated. Code in qualitative data refers to *"a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns summative, salient…attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data"* (Saldaña, 2021, p. 5). Coding the data in their original language allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the respondents' perspectives; Saldaña (2021, p. 54) holds the view that data needs to be coded in its original language for *"a more trustworthy analysis."* Conversely, Saldaña (2021) proposed that the coding of the data might occur either before or after translation, with the decision ultimately resting with the researcher. Thereby, the data were translated into English after being coded in their original format for greater clarity.

There are three possible approaches to data coding: deductive, inductive, or a combination of both orientations. Deductive coding is a theory-driven approach in which the researcher generates codes while analysing their data for the first time. Inductive coding, on the other hand, is a data-driven approach in which pre-developed codes by other researchers are utilised (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Saldaña, 2021). Creswell & Poth (2018) and Saldaña (2021) both propose that the optimal number of codes falls within the range of 25 to 30.

Due to its theory-driven nature, the pre-developed code is deemed appropriate for this study as it facilitates the development of an established theory rather than developing a new one (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Saldaña, 2021); thus, the deductive coding approach was implemented by the researcher. By employing the deductive approach, the researcher gains insight into the code list

that more effectively resolves the study topic at hand, enhances comprehension of the data, and establishes more robust connections between the codes and the gathered data (Saldaña, 2021).

The factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices within the group's internal environment include, cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999), shared purposes, such as shared objectives, which refer to a common understanding of the primary aims and collective goals of the group; social support, which refers to group members attempt to provide mutual emotional and psychological support to each other, including knowledge, skills and accomplishment recognition (Carson, et al., 2007), and trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010). On the other hand, Sweeney et al. (2019) recognised the following in their systematic review as components of the group external environment that influences the development of shared leadership practices include, authority sharing including delegation, which determines the level of responsibility assigned to group members during their tasks (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014); it also includes empowerment, which involves autonomy and self-leadership, which refers to a leader's capacity to exert influence over followers by encouraging them to take on leadership roles, and providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015), autonomy refers to the level of independence provided by the role in terms of allowing employees significant freedom in scheduling their work duties and determining the approach to completing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015; Hackman & Oldham, 1974); self-leadership refers to the capabilities and abilities of group members to manage and influence themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005); and supportive culture, which refer to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), in this study it focuses on the elements of collective decision-making (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007;

Erkutlu, 2012), and the leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002). The codes utilised as evaluation criteria for shared leadership practices in the group internal environment in this study are as follows: *a) cooperation; b) shared purposes, such as shared objectives; c) social support, including knowledge and skill recognition; and d) trust.* On the other hand, the codes utilised as evaluation criteria for shared leadership practices in the group external environment are as follows: *a) authority sharing; b) empowerment, which encompasses autonomy level, and self-leadership; and c) supportive culture, which encompasses collective decision-making, participation in the decision-making, and leader's support in decision-making.*

The researcher employed the qualitative analysis programme NVivo to facilitate the organisation of the gathered data and the generation of themes and codes for this study. The initial codes were produced with the deductive coding approach, which is a theory-driven orientation (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Saldaña, 2021). Deductive codes, which have been pre-developed by prior scholars, enable the researcher to develop a comprehensive overview of the theory under investigation; then, each code was thereafter given to the corresponding theme that was created. Multiple reviews were conducted on the codes and themes in order to eliminate codes that were duplicated and consolidate codes that fulfilled the same function. By verifying that the codes and the data were pertinent to the designated topics, the researcher examined the themes and constructed a comprehensive diagram of the data analysis. After establishing a connection between the findings and the literature review, the researcher generated a report that addressed the research question and accomplished the study objectives (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

The researcher compiled a comprehensive participant list, including their occupations and branches of work, as well as a table that briefly outlined the themes and codes of the study. The

findings were followed by a discussion chapter that provided an interpretation and explanation of the results, as well as a connection to the literature review (Braun & Clarke, 2022); the research contribution was illustrated through the development of a summary of the findings and discussion; following this, the theoretical and practical implications of shared leadership and organisational transformation were elaborated.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the methods used in this research project and introduced the proposed research questions and objectives. It also includes the methodological approach and the selection justification to reach the research aims and objectives. The research design for this project is elaborated as is the method of data collection, including the challenges faced in gaining access, a reflection of the approaches to collecting data during the COVID-19 pandemic is included, as well as the difficulties faced during the field work. Further, it has described the data analysis methods used in this research project and how they answer the research questions. It has also summarised the challenges confronted by the researcher during the data arrangement for analysis, and described the difficulties that confronted the researcher while analysing the collected data. Finally, it considers ethical issues in general and how they arose in the relation to the research.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings of this research study and provide a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the collected qualitative data. The chapter will begin by presenting an overview of the data collected and the participants involved in the study. It also discusses in some detail the method of analysis, themes, and codes used for this research, utilising the interviews conducted. The aims and objectives of this study is to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. It identifies within the literature factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. The finding of this study are based on face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 26 participants. The participants were from three Saudi regions, Eastern, Western, and Central region. The participants included the organisation's Chief Executive Officer, five branch managers, three head of departments, and 17 non-managerial employees working in the case study. Seven participants were from the western region, fourteen from the eastern region, and four from the central region (participants detailed in appendix A).

Case Study Organisation

The case study organisation is a Saudi Commercial organisation operating in the service sector. The organisation was founded over three decades ago and underwent a recent transition from being solely owned to a corporate entity following the death of its original founder in November 2020. The case study organisation employs 51 technical staff members across three

regions in Saudi Arabia, as well as several non-technical employees, including human resources professionals, quality assurance, and finance personnel.

According to Bernuzzi et al. (2023) and Burnes (2017) organisations implement change for several reasons, such as gaining a competitive advantage, improving the organisation's capabilities (Moran & Brightman, 2000), or confronting crises (By, 2005). The institution experienced a transition in November 2020 after to the death of its founder, and the process of transformation was completed within a span of around 12 months. Throughout the process of transition, the organisation encountered several obstacles and challenges in sustaining its business operations. Due to the firm being solely owned, Saudi regulations require that the owner possess a professional certification (Ministry of Commerce of Saudi Arabia, N/D). Following the death of the institution's founder and owner, the institution was granted a period of time to resolve its legal standing with the Ministry of Commerce in Saudi Arabia (Ministry of Commerce of Saudi Arabia, N/D), which the new owner converted it from a solo-owned institution into a corporate entity. This research fieldwork started on 26th of October 2021, and during the fieldwork, the organisation was still going through a process of transformation. Therefore, the empirical investigation which was originally conceived as an investigation to shared leadership more generally, was amended to also take into account the practice of shared leadership on organisational change in the case study organisation. By doing so, the research explores the factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices, and identify the impact of these factors on the process of organisational change.

Themes and Codes

To assess the shared leadership practices in the case study organisation, a deductive coding method was utilised. This involved using pre-developed codes derived from the literature. Two

main areas of leadership practices were identified within the literature: Group Internal Environment (Carson, et al., 2007) and Group External Environment (Sweeney, et al., 2019).

Within Group Internal Environment three main areas of coding were identified— 'Social Support', 'Shared Purposes', and 'Group'. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Social Support— Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition, and Trust; Shared Purpose— Shared Objectives; and Group— Cooperation.

Group Internal Environment: the coding procedures employed Carson et al.'s (2007) group internal environment model, which consists of: *Social Support*, encompasses both the reciprocal emotional and psychological assistance offered by group members and the acceptance of leadership approaches demonstrated by their fellow members (Carson, et al., 2007). The sub-codes associated with this are: *Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition*, according to Carson et al. (2007) and Serban and Roberts (2016), when group members recognise and acknowledge one another's skills, abilities, and accomplishments, it greatly influences the development of shared leadership; and *Trust*, which encompasses group members trust in their peers' capabilities, expertise, and knowledge, which is a fundamental aspect of shared leadership in groups (Small & Rentsch, 2010). *Shared Purpose* represents a similar understanding of the group's common objectives and goals (Carson, et al., 2007). Sub-code associated with this is *Shared Objectives*, which regarded as mechanisms that influence the development of shared leadership practices within groups (Bligh, et al., 2006). *Group* refers to utilising the mutual influence between group members on leading one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). The sub-code associated with this is *Cooperation*, which refers to the level of task interdependency between group members, and their willingness to support and collaborate with their fellow colleagues in fulfilling their assigned duties (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

Within Group External Environment three main areas of coding were identified— *'Sharing Authority'*, *'Empowerment'*, and *'Supportive Culture'*. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Sharing Authority— Delegation; Empowerment— Autonomy and Self-leadership; and Supportive Culture— Collective Decision-making, Participate in Decision-making, and Leader's Support in Decision-making.

Group External Environment: Sweeney et al. (2019) recognised the following factors in their systematic review, which considered as group external environment. These factors include: *Sharing Authority*, which refers to the authority distribution among group members (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014; Manz, et al., 2013). According to Cox et al. (2003), Fletcher & Kaufer (2003), and Pearce & Sims (2002), shared leadership practices encourage group leaders to distribute authority to their followers so that they can carry out their duties and make decisions related to their job. The sub-code associated with authority sharing is *Delegation*, which refers to the level of responsibility assigned to group members during their tasks (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). *Empowerment*, refers to a leader's capacity to exert influence over followers by encouraging them to self-lead themselves, and providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015). The sub-codes associated with this are: *Autonomy*, which refers to the degree of freedom that enables group members to carry out their designated responsibilities and make crucial decisions related to their work and their group (Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015; Hackman & Oldham, 1974); and *Self-leadership*, which refers to the capabilities and abilities of group members to manage and influence themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Group leaders need to enable group members to lead themselves by utilising their skills, abilities, expertise, and specialisations, wchih influnces the development of shared leadership (Cox, et al., 2003; Manz & Sims Jr., 2001). *Supportive Culture*, which refers to to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation,

collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012). The sub-codes utilised in the supportive culture include: *Collective Decision-making* (Erkutlu, 2012); *Participation in the Decision-making* (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012). Carson et al. (2007) emphasise that the development of shared leadership is influenced by the participation of group members in the decision-making process; and *Leader's Support in Decision-making Process,* Yukl (2002) suggests that leaders should delegate minor administrative decisions and issues to their followers in order to allocate more time for group planning and direction. According to Cox et al. (2003), Fletcher & Kaufer (2003), and Pearce & Sims (2002), shared leadership practices encourage leaders to distribute authority to their followers so that they can make decisions related to their job and be a participant in the decision-making process.

These pre-existing codes, based on established theoretical principles, was deemed appropriate for this study since the aim of the study is to advance and build on an existing theory rather than generate a new one (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Saldaña, 2021). The study was particularly interested in how these aspects of shared leadership operated in an empirical setting and during a process of change. The codes may be found in Table 2.0.

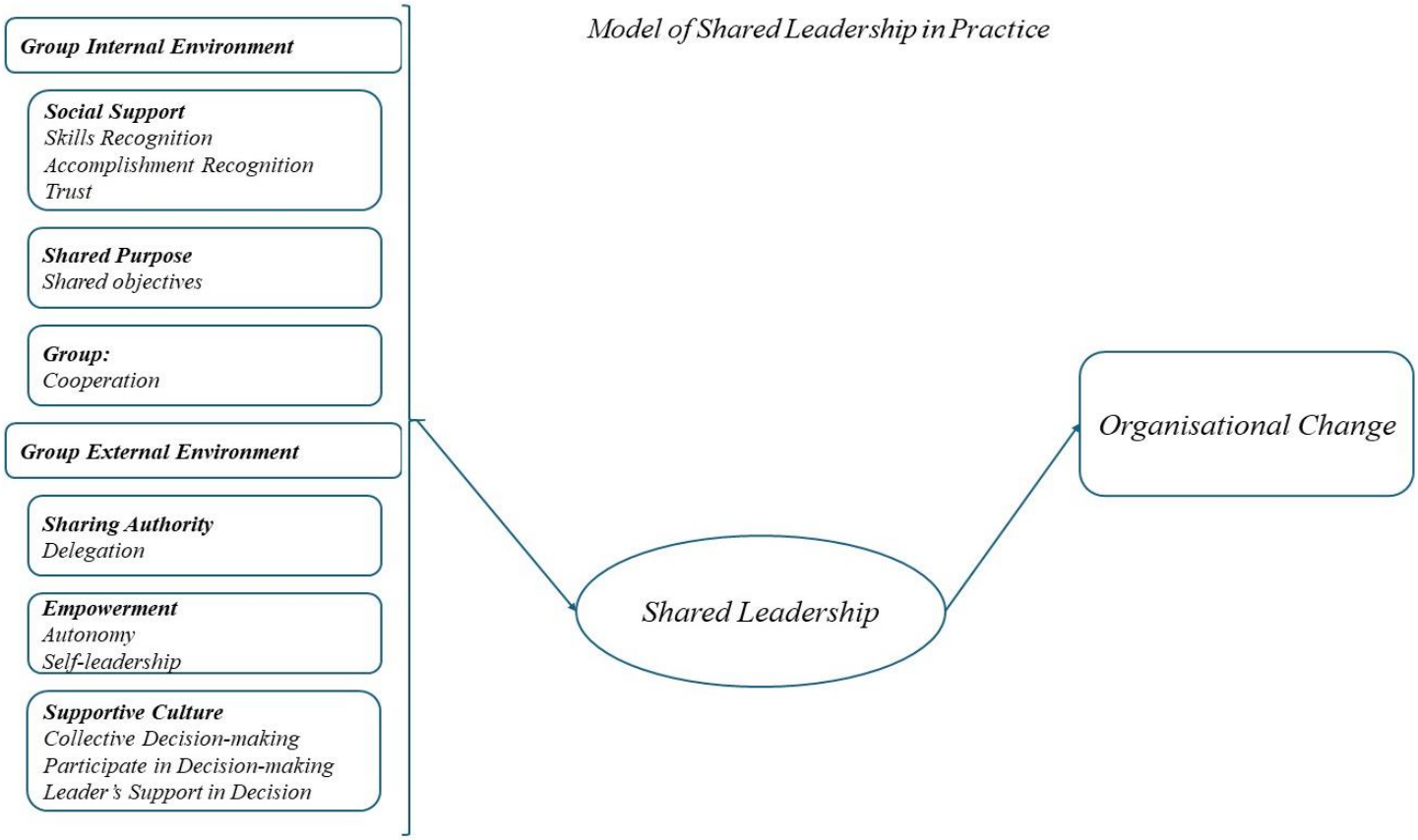
Participants Codes Explanation

Participants Code	Explanation
P	Participants
Jeddah	Jeddah City
KBR	Al-Khobar City
AHSSA	Al-Ahssah City
RYD	Riyadh City
AUDIT	Auditing department at the case
Legal	Legal Department at the case
Manger	Branch manger
HEAD	Head of department at the case

Table 2.0

Theme	Main Codes	Sub-codes	Description
Group Internal Environment	***Social Support*** (Carson, et al., 2007; Small & Rentsch, 2010)	*Knowledge and skills recognition* (Carson, et al., 2007)	Group members recognise their peer's knowledge and skills
		Accomplishment Recognition (Carson, et al., 2007)	Group members recognising peers' accomplishment
		Trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010)	The level of trust between group members
	Shared Purpose (Carson, et al., 2007)	*Shared objectives* (Carson, et al., 2007)	Do group members share the same objectives and goals?
	Group (Gockel & Werth, 2010)	*Cooperation* (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999)	The level of cooperation between group members while processing their duties
Group External Environment	***Sharing Authority*** (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014)	*Delegation* (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014)	Level of responsibility assigned to group members while performing their duties
	Empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Fausing, et al., 2015)	*Autonomy* (Carson, et al., 2007)	Group members level of freedom to act on their or her own values and interests
		Self-Leadership (Pearce & Manz, 2005)	Group members' capabilities, and abilities to manage and influence themselves
	Supportive Culture (Erkutlu, 2012)	*Collective Decision-Making* (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012)	Decisions that made by the whole group members related to a shared task
		Participating in Decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012)	Group members participating in decision making with their manager
		Support in Decision-making (Yukl, 2002)	Group leader's support to the followers successful and unsuccessful decisions

Figure 1: Conceptual Model for Identifying Shared Leadership in Practice



The interviews were conducted with two different levels of employees within the case study organisation: middle-line managers and non-managerial employees. The reason for selecting these two categories as research samples was their significant participation in the organisational transformation process. The branch managers, for example, played a crucial role in facilitating the organisational transformation process, especially during the COVID-19 outbreak. During this time, the organisation was given a period of time to address its legal status with the Ministry of Commerce in Saudi Arabia following the death of its founder and owner. The non-managerial employees, on the other hand, were the primary group that was involved in the organisational transformation process and played a crucial role in the organisational change implementation. Next, we will examine these in further depth below.

Middle-line Managers

The middle-line managers' level represents the individual who occupies a managerial position in the case study organisation, such as branch managers and heads of departments in three distinct Saudi regions—the Western, Eastern, and Central regions.

Group Internal Environment

It is established that the group internal environment is a factor that affects the development of shared leadership within groups (Carson, et al., 2007). The components encompassed in this context are: *a) cooperation* (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999)*; b) shared purposes including shared objectives* (Carson, et al., 2007)*; c) social support including knowledge, skills, and accomplishment recognition* (Carson, et al., 2007)*; and d) trust* (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Cooperation refers to the willingness of group members to support and aid fellow groupmates in completing their assigned responsibilities in order to achieve the objectives of both the group and the organisation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999). Shared objectives refer to a common understanding of the primary aims and collective goals of the group (Carson, et al., 2007). Social support refers to which refers to group members attempt to provide mutual emotional and psychological support to each other, including skills and knowledge, and accomplishment recognition of their peers (Carson, et al., 2007). Trust, which refers to the level of confidence between group members (Small & Rentsch, 2010). The study examined the many aspects of group work that have an impact on the development of shared leadership. The following will present the findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

Social support refers to which refers to group members attempt to provide mutual emotional and psychological support to each other, including skills and knowledge, and accomplishment recognition of their peers (Carson, et al., 2007). It is critical for the success of a group structure that group members have trust in one another skills, abilities, acknowledge the expertise and knowledge of their groupmates, and consider them significant contributors to the group. We will now look at these in more detail below.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Knowledge, and Skills Recognition

This sub-code related to the group members' acknowledgment of their peers' expertise and abilities, as well as their perception of them as valuable contributions to the group. The participants demonstrated their proficiency and knowledge, proving that group members had the necessary abilities and expertise to successfully accomplish their task. Participant 4A verified that group members possess expertise and proficiency, making significant contributions to both the group and the company. However, the only obstacle they encountered was their language skills, which, in reality, do not have a big impact on their professional development.

> *"Some members are highly knowledgeable of course; others are brilliant admins while others are professionally and technically remarkable. Take for example Mr. B. Most judges in courts know him in person for his technical and professional excellence. On the administrative level, Mr. C is really good and he could restore old (tasks) lawsuits and contracted new clients. In Al-Ahsa branch, for example, Mr. M is technically outstanding. In Riyadh branch, Mr. Z has vast intelligent technical experience. I believe we fall short in English speaking skills when we meet with foreign clients" P4 Manager AUDIT KBR Male.*

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Accomplishment Recognition and Trust

Group members recognising peers' accomplishments and having trust are essential elements of successful group work, as they represent the degree of confidence that exists between group members (Small & Rentsch, 2010). The participants in the study examined the many aspects of group work that have an impact on the development of shared leadership practices. In fact, participants demonstrated the existence of reciprocal trust among group members, and their achievements are acknowledged by both their peers and top management.

> *"Of course, we all know and trust each other, we all had past experiences together and we all come from the same environment… all our experiences are with known offices in Egypt, therefore, trust is mutual between us" P1H Manager AHSSA male.*

> *"…we had a complicated task when Mr. N passed away… It was a complicated task because we were involved with contracted clients who had been waiting for their budgets to be completed. With the owner's death, we couldn't have them approved because the firm was a professional institution. It was a nearly impossible tasks to finish particularly when the executive manager cooperated with other offices to complete the tasks because these offices were not aware of the situation. The task was, however, completed in a short time which the biggest achievement was" P4A Manager AUDIT KBR Male.*

Occupying a managerial position is essential as it signifies that an employee has the necessary skills to fulfil the responsibilities of a managerial position. The transformation crisis clearly demonstrated the group members' proficiency in managing that crucial circumstance.

> *"Each one certainly has a specific way of working, there is the quick performer, there is the slow or the slackly slow and there is the average performer. This depends on the*

individual… They are surely efficient in all the tasks; this is why the manager cares about finding solutions for all tasks and a work plan also, he also anticipates outcomes… I surely evaluate them as very good in terms of meeting the needs, but I still demand development of the tasks due to the rapid advancement taking place now in the Kingdom, I therefore see them as very good, which means that they have an acceptable level to fulfil the needs yet there is new advancement daily and this definitely requires effort from their side to reach a higher evaluation" CEO Male.

According to participants 2H and 6J, branch managers and heads of departments had a significant impact on the change process. As a result, their achievements were acknowledged by both their colleagues and the senior management of the company.

"Each one of the group members is qualified for the position he occupies, which means that he can cover his administration completely, therefore, confidence in him depends on the outcomes that we noticed in the past, they were all good and nice outcomes, so trust goes beyond the required limit" 2H Head of Department AHSSA Male.

"How can I not trust a branch manager trusted and appointed by the general manager? He did not reach this post except after passing many tests and managed to lead his group, then he is a leader who can head any one of the branches. A leader leads the place, therefore, in case group members are rotated to lead any branch, he will handle it very well… If he is not efficient, he would not be in this position" P5J Manager Jed Male.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

Shared Purpose is another factor in the group internal environment that influence the development of shared leadership practices represents a similar understanding of the group's common objectives and goals (Carson, et al., 2007).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

Shared refers to a common understanding of the primary aims and collective goals of the group (Carson, et al., 2007). The branch managers and department heads demonstrated a mutual understanding in their goals, including the development of the company, enhancing work productivity, and fostering company progress, particularly in the aftermath of the transformational crisis.

> *"We have one goal, which is to grow the company and make it one of the biggest four companies in the KSA, so each member of the group tries hard to make the company's name one of the best working companies in KSA, we therefore do not accept any case that does not fit the name and weight of the company" P5J Manager Jeddah Male.*

> *"We all share the same objective, which is to lift the company and increase profit because definitely, the main goal of any institution's is to gain profit and grow, so we all pursue this, and we cooperate with each other… we try to improve the work's efficiency, and as I told you, the general manager considers the company as four companies rather than one, so each branch tries to improve its status, but our objective is eventually one, which is growth and profit increase for the company" P1H Manager AHSSA Male.*

Shared objectives play a crucial role in shaping the group's internal dynamics as they impact the development of shared leadership practices among group members.

"We all share the same objective, which is to lift the company and increase profit because definitely, the main goal of any institution is to gain profit and grow, so we all pursue this, and we cooperate with each other… the aim of growing the company and increasing its profits" P4A Manager AUDIT KBR Male.

"Sure, 100%, the main objective is achieving the general benefit of the company, and everyone performs their required role perfectly" 2H Head of Department HASSA Male.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Group refers to utilising the mutual influence between group members on leading one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). In addition, group members need to be communicative and coordinative between them to influence the development of shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010; Liu & Werblow, 2019).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

One aspect of the internal environment of the group that is regarded as a factor that influences the development of shared leadership practices is cooperation. Cooperation is a crucial aspect of group structure, as it refers to the group members' willingness to providing support to one another while carrying out their designated responsibilities in order to achieve the objectives of both the group and the organisation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

The organisation had encountered difficult conditions following to its founder's death in 2020 and its transformation into a corporation. The organisational transformation was deemed a crisis due to the fact that Saudi regulations instruct that the immediate termination of a professional service institution's permit occurs upon the death of its founders. Such an outcome leads to the termination of operations for a business (Ministry of Commerce of Saudi Arabia, N/D). As the organisation's CEO noted.

"As a 34-year-old company, going through a transformation from an institution to a modern company that will be two years old in six months, it is normal to face several problems, it is also normal for managers to face difficulties in the first year. Guaranteeing continuity when starting any project comes before success… This issue came under investment risks and the leader, my father -may Allah rest his soul- passed away, so no one could authorise the financial lists, hence we succeeded in the transformation period from an institution to a company that practices the same work in addition to other work, as lawyers and trustees of bankruptcy. However, in the first year of the transformation, yes it happened, but the managers succeeded and it was expected. This depended on the work style of the manager… We in fact obtained three financial licenses and two accounting licenses. The employees this way managed to keep their clients, which is the main reason of failure on top of the pandemic that has invaded the world" CEO Male.

The participants engaged in a discussion regarding their cooperation during the transformation, perceiving it as a challenging endeavour. Participant 4A demonstrated the necessity of cooperation in order to effectively overcome the situation.

"Yes, we had a complicated task when Mr. N passed away. We were allowed 6 months to finalize all pending budgets. The general manager coordinated with an accounting office and we hosted them in Jeddah branch with Mr. C. The general manager instructed us to travel to Jeddah to finalize these budgets within a week to 10 days. One employee was assigned from each branch. Mr. C worked on facilitating all difficulties; picked us from the airport, drove us from the hotel to work every day in the morning. We worked till midnight" P4A Manager AUDIT KBR Male.

Indeed, cooperation is a crucial component of group dynamics as it strengthens their mutual trust and facilitates the acknowledgment of their respective skills and capabilities. Moreover, it motivates individuals to contribute their knowledge and skills in order to accomplish the group and organisational goals.

> *"We faced a problem in the previous era relating to the General Council of Accountants, and we all had a say in this problem as members of a group. Each one capable of giving help did because the problem was related to the entire organisation rather than a specific branch. We first ask for a meeting with the higher management via Zoom, we studied the points of complication, proposed a working schedule and what will be discussed. If a group member has a query about any issue, it gets posed in the beginning of the meeting and each member studies it and offers suggestions in the next meeting until we reach a solution to this problem, and it gets transferred to the higher management. In case we could not reach a solution, we seek help from the general manager" P5J Manager Jeddah Male.*

Several participants demonstrated the existence of cooperative group work among group members, which is facilitated by their respective areas of expertise. In essence, the workload would be distributed among group members, with each person contributing based on their area of expertise.

> *"The work group generally, everyone has a specialty that they do, each field differs from the other, so through the entire group, all the leaders in the company cooperate to achieve the objectives of the institution, and to do so, the higher management granted independence that suits each individual in the administration" P2H Head of Department AHSSA Male.*

"… On mutual things, for example, Mr. B works on lawsuits and uses his connections to recommend us to the companies he handles their lawsuits to deliver their general budget requirements. One more thing, we get two types of clients; one wishing to liquidate the company and the other one wishes to prepare a budget, we distribute work between my colleague, the head of lawsuits department, and myself because we are not authorized by SOCPA to provide liquidation services and are only licensed to prepare financial and accounting statements. So, this client ends up transferred to my colleague who is specialized in liquidation. This actually happened last year between Mr. B and myself" P4A Manager AUDIT KBR Male.

The findings of the group's internal environment indicate that group members perceive themselves as a cohesive group. Particularly during the period of change, they collaborate with one another to maintain the business. The findings demonstrate that group members collectively pursued shared goals and provided social support for one another in order to achieve both group and organisational objectives. Moreover, group members are inclined to collaborate with their colleagues in order to accomplish the organisation's goals and enhance their own achievements.

The following will present the findings associated with group external environment and their codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Group External Environment

The external environment theme consists of dimensions that reflect the group leader's support to his or her group members. The components encompassed in this context are: *a) authority sharing includes delegate, b) empowerment including autonomy and self-leadership, and c) supportive culture including collective decision-making, participation in the decision-making,*

and the leader's support in decision-making process. These factors influence the development of shared leadership practices. Authority sharing which involves the group leader delegating authority to the followers (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). Empowerment including autonomy and self-leadership, which refers to a leader's capacity to exert influence over followers by encouraging them to take on leadership roles, and providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015). Autonomy refers to the level of independence provided by the role in terms of allowing employees significant freedom in scheduling their work duties and determining the approach to completing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1974). Self-leadership refers to the capacity and skills of group members to independently manage themselves and carry out their activities without the presence of their designated leader (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Supportive culture, which pertains to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and the leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002). We will now look at these in more details below.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

Sharing authority is a factor in the external environment that influences the development of shared leadership practices (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). In accordance with their expertise and experience, the top manager of the organisation granted authority to group members to oversee their branch.

> *"Work is divided into two parts, today the manager is the one responsible for his employees… This allows the manager to exercise his authority and control the branch.*

However, the manager in this case becomes the contact point between the employees and the heads to solve their problems. If the problem can be solved without involving the higher management, then no problem, if not, it gets directed to the relevant authority and, if needed, it gets transferred to the higher management" CEO Male.

Indeed, participants mentioned that, with the exception of financial matters, the branch managers delegated complete authority over every administrative and technical aspect.

"… Some managers do not have the authority to do certain tasks, issues that depend on how big the branch is, for instance, Jeddah's branch has authorities within the work area it has without transcending the higher management, each branch works according to this" CEO Male.

"Our direct leader is the general manager. The power of branch managers follows him directly. When it comes to enabling, he grants us all the moral, technical, and administrative powers, not the financial, no collective decision can be made about it except after the higher management considers it" P5J Manager JED Male.

"The general manager authorized and granted us great power to manage everything about the branch, in terms of the work group, you choose it, which means that you select the group that you want to work with you to be able to carry out the duties that you are appointed to do" P1H Manager AHSSA Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

The top manager of the organisation maintained each branch as an independent entity within the organisation, delegating complete authority and control over their branch to their group (branches managers). The participants demonstrated that the chief executive officer of the organisation delegated the majority of branch-specific decisions. Indeed, they are granted

complete autonomy in managing the branch operation in accordance with their area of expertise and complete accountability for their branch work.

> *"He grants me absolute power to take decisions as I mentioned earlier, I am the one who takes decisions as I deem suitable in the cases we work on. In my branch surely, it is a matter of mutual consultation, which means that when we have a task or a certain case, I do not prefer making decisions alone without consulting my employees. Nevertheless, I make decisions individually if I find that a problem is about to occur, so I just do it. But when we receive a new case in the first place, I look at it then assign one of the employees who has worked on a similar case previously and I assign two other members to assist him in finishing the task" P5J Manager JED Male.*

> *"He delegates this authority to branch managers whom he views as executive managers. He supports any decision and if there are any comments, they are usually made between the branch manager and the direct manager and not in front of all group members" P6L Manager CHART KBR Male.*

Similarly, levels of delegation and authority have been assigned to department heads. As demonstrated by Participant 2H, the finance department head, the group leader delegates full responsibilities to the group members with respect to the tasks they are assigned with, executes essential decision-making processes, and oversees activities in accordance with the group members' areas of expertise.

> *"In general, since you have the power to make decisions, you are also responsible if failure happens or even if anything happens, you are responsible before the general management that is why the leader gave you power to handle the cases in your field. He grants you within the limits of what you do, which means as required from you. If*

you succeed in your duties, you do what is required, but if you fail, you handle the responsibility of its consequences" P2H Head of department AHSSA male.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Empowerment is an element of the group's external environment where group members perceive their leader's influence over them and are encouraged to take on leadership roles within the group, providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015). The participants in the case organisation generally acknowledged that they were empowered by the organisation's top manager.

"I was in charge of the most difficult branch for a very simple reason; your credibility before the clients that Mr. N the principal owner passed away and we had the budgets signed by external offices, the part which had not been completed yet and the branch manager, at that time had file his resignation. It was really difficult. I have shouldered the responsibility since then and the general manager has been supportive and motivating and entrusted me with the responsibility during that period in 2020. We overcome the crisis and could attract new clients even in my private time to ensure sustainability of work in this branch" P4A Manager AUDIT KBR Male.

"Our direct leader is the general manager. The power of branch managers follows him directly. When it comes to enabling, he grants us all the moral, technical, and administrative powers, not the financial, no collective decision can be made about it except after the higher management considers it" P6J Manager JED Male.

Branch managers and heads of departments have significant autonomy in carrying out their responsibilities, relying on their experience, skills, and knowledge. They also have the

authority to make essential decisions related to their respective branches and departments. However, the level of autonomy varies between branches depending on the managers' or department heads' administrative expertise, technical knowledge, and years of experience. This main code served as the foundation for autonomy and self-leadership development. These sub-codes were significant because they reflect the degree of indecency that group members perceived while progressing their duties and encourage them to self-manage themselves and increase their sense of responsibility towards their assigned tasks.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

Autonomy is the sub-code of the leader's empowerment that refers to the level of independence provided by the role in terms of allowing employees significant freedom in scheduling their work duties and determining the approach to completing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1974). The participants within the case organisation contended that they possess autonomy in overseeing the functioning of their respective branches and departments and have the authority to make essential decisions pertaining to the responsibilities they are assigned. Consequently, following the transformation, the top manager of the organisation treats each branch as a separate entity, granting the branch manager a significant level of autonomy.

> *"Each branch is independent. We have 4 branches across the kingdom. Each one of them operates in full and complete independence with no interference from the direct manager in our work except for discussing the conclusions of our reports and work outputs" P6L Manager CHART KBR Male.*

> *"The general manager of the company here, as he understands general management, grants independence, or allows some decision making for certain purposes for each administration or each branch. For us here, I consider independence here within the*

permitted extent for the fulfilment of the department's specific objectives" P2H Head of department AHSSA male.

"The general manager considers the branch manager as the chief or relies on him for everything, which means that he contacts him for everything. The branch manager to him is the leader whom he will hold accountable and punish for anything that happens in his branch. He gives very good authority to the branch manager so that he can hold his employees accountable, no one can bypass the branch manager to reach the general manager, only through the branch manager" P1H Manger HASSA Male.

As previously noted in relation to the organisational transformation, one of the group members did not anticipate the amount of autonomy offered to the branch managers. Participant 1H indicated that the previous branch manager was misusing the authority granted to them by the institution's founder. Consequently, he inferred that it should be either limited or placed under the supervision of the top management, rather than being granted excessive autonomy, in order to prevent the misuse of authority.

"There is great freedom, but I think that it should be somewhat controlled" P1H Manger HASSA Male.

"Interviewer: Why should it be controlled?"

"Because issues happened previously where the general manager does not see in the branch anything except the branch manager, and does not see the employees in the branch except through the manager, which means that he sees their achievements as presented by the branch manager. The problem here is that the employee exerted effort to perform his work efficiently and the branch manager does not convey this to the general manager, and in case he does not give a full transparent image to the general

manager about the branch members' performance, the employee will not be able to deliver it to him. This was a note about the absolute freedom" P1H Manger AHSSA Male.

However, participant 5J pointed out that the autonomy he received from the top manager of the organisation was reflected in his branch group. He provides a sense of autonomy to his branch group, allowing them the necessary freedom to carry out their duties.

"Regarding the group's independence, of course the general manager has given us total independence to make the decisions of the branch. From my side, I convey this independence to the employees to take decisions after consulting with me… there is surely a limit set to us by the higher management… thus we have the freedom to set the price that we think is suitable according to the value of the case and the balance sheets to be reviewed to the clients. In the meantime, the general manager granted us our own space… while trying as best as we can to keep the client amid the competition between auditing companies in the Kingdom of Saudi" P5J Manger Jeddah Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

The second component of the leader's empowerment is self-leadership, which refers to the group members' capacity and ability to effectively manage and exert influence among themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Undoubtedly, the leader had delegated authority to the group members, allowing them to carry out their jobs autonomously.

"As I said in the beginning of the interview, the general manager grants full power to all branch managers. Hence, evaluation comes at the end of the year, which shows the achievement of the branch through the revenue and other matters. In addition to this, with modern technology we can get access to the general manager at any time, the

COVID-19 pandemic had disadvantages, but it also had advantages. Transactions in courts have become digital rather than on paper, and when needed, signature and its documentation are sent to the general manager to sign, seal, and resend to be sent to the legal authority" P5J Manager Jeddah Male.

The absence of a group leader is a frequent occurrence that group members commonly experience. In this scenario, their conscientiousness towards their job and the delegation of power allowed them to adopt self-leadership techniques and progress on their assigned tasks. Participant 2H indicated that the group members felt a greater sense of responsibility in the absence of their leader.

"It happened more than once in the case of travelling or other cases, he could be away and each one of us becomes responsible for his administration and the issues that affect the company's work in general. Communication between us and the administration continues through electronic correspondence, each group member presents their daily reports, what happened, the problems he encountered and the way to solve them? And so on" P2H Head of Department HASSA Male.

Indeed, the abilities and capabilities of group members have a direct impact on their self-leadership behaviour. Therefore, it may be inferred that shared leadership approaches are supported.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

The final main code of the group external environment that influence the development of shared leadership practices is supportive culture, which pertains to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012),

participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002). We will now look at these in more details below.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making

Collective decision-making is the process in which several group members engage in making a decision collectively (Erkutlu, 2012). In fact, decisions made by group members on their allocated responsibilities involve a group decision-making process that is linked to a shared task. Furthermore, group members participate in the decision-making process by expressing their knowledge, skills, and expertise. Certainly, the crucial decision that impacts the whole organisation requires the process of collective decision-making.

> *"The big decisions are of course one of the things that affect the company's work in general, it is a direct impact with big decisions specifically. Therefore, it means there is consultation of everyone, each one gives their opinion about the decision to be taken or the decision that was supposed to be taken by the general manager, which means that the company's manager is the one to take the decision and this will have great impact on the company generally. Each member says what they think if this impact will affect the employees from an administrative or a technical aspect, which in turn will affect the outside client and the job market. It means that each member gives an opinion and a view, and the general management will have the final say about this matter, so you think if the final view will affect the client and the employee in the company or not, and if there is an effect, will it be positive or negative" P2H Head of Department AHSSA Male.*

> *"Since I became a branch manager, all decisions are collective, even in the way reports are prepared, then they are revised by reviewers until we meet as group members and*

present the whole work about the case on the big screen and the decision is made because responsibility is held by all group members" P5J Manager Jeddah Male.

Indeed, collective decisions are beneficial for both the group and the organisation's objectives. However, the responsibility for these decisions lies with the whole group rather than a single individual. Undoubtedly, group members generally prefer collective decision-making due to its ability to provide appropriate decisions since it relies on the trust they have placed in their peers' assessments.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Participate in Decision-Making

Participating in the decision-making is the second sub-code of the supportive culture that refers to group members engaging in the process of the decision-making process. In fact, group members who actively engage in the decision-making process have a significant impact on the implementation of shared leadership practices (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012). As revealed by the data, the top manager of the organisation involved his group members in significant organisational decisions. Indeed, he actively promotes the exchange of viewpoints among members regarding various issues relevant to the success of the organisation. For instance, technical concerns related to the branch in terms of their expertise.

"All the time. As Quality Department we are responsible for the software used in the accounting processes and are consulted by the general manager in most of the decisions which are usually based on our opinions and the mechanisms we have been following for long. So, we recommend the decision and the general manager approves it" 1Q Head of Department KBR Male.

"As I told you in the previous question, we meet via Zoom and decide collectively which allows us to see some issues and what should be done because for some previous

decisions taken relating to appointments at certain posts in some branches, I saw that adding these posts was not as needed as now due to the limited numbers of employees now, so the general manager gave me the liberty to structure the branch that I manage, unlike other branches" P5J Manager Jeddah Male.

Indeed, the involvement of group members in decision-making processes associated with group objectives has an influence on the development of a group's shared leadership practices.

In addition, the Eastern region branch manager was asked the same question and clarified that their involvement in the decision-making process is mostly focused on branch-specific issues rather than organisational matters.

"The general manager used to meet with branch managers and their deputies and listen to their opinions on some issues. But over the year, decision-making processes were about the branches, branch needs and impressions of the managers regarding their branches" P4A Manager AUDIT KBR Male.

When a group leader involves his group members in the decision-making process, he encourages them to contribute to a task that falls within their area of expertise. Although it contributes to the success of the organisation as a whole, it also boosts the self-efficacy of individuals and fosters the development of shared leadership within groups.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Leader's Support in Decision-Making

Leader's support in the decision-making process is the third sub-code of the supportive culture, which refers to the leaders' support for the decisions implemented by group members, whether they were successful or not. According to the data, the leaders' support for the decisions implemented in each branch in each branch, regardless of their success or failure, was a topic of discussion among the participants in the case study organisation.

"Since my start of work at this company, I do not think anyone ever disagreed with any decision I made, I was contrarily supported in all the decisions that I made. Yes, I would face some arguments and discussions, but the decision would be taken. I might take a decision that I think is correct but is not from the manager's point of view, we discuss it and clarify our views and take the decision accordingly" P5J Manager Jeddah Male.

"… In the event that I take successful or unsuccessful decisions, the general manager is flexible. If a decision is made it's usually supported by the general manager who is flexible enough to correct any mistakes if one client is approved and then is discovered to be unacceptable; he approves it. The most considerable factor to the general manager is the employee's loyalty to the company" P4A Manager AUDIT KBR Male.

Regarding unsuccessful decisions, group member 2H noticed that the leader supported decisions that did not provide desired outcomes before being held responsible for them. Indeed, he would encourage them to address the matter and correct their unsuccessful decision.

"… I made many decisions and there were views by the administrative manager, or the branch had to make the decision, and in fact the general manager was very supportive of the unsuccessful decisions, and for problematic decisions, he would support us at first before holding us accountable or questioning us, how do you solve this problem first, and it happened more than once" P2H Head of Department AHSSA Male.

Indeed, the support of a leader in the decision-making process has a significant impact on the development of shared leadership practices. This is because it motivates group members to utilise their extensive knowledge and skills in making essential decisions.

Therefore, there are several potential explanations for the managerial level group's findings on the external environment, specifically pertaining to the degree of autonomy, support in

decision-making, and delegation of power to group members. Delegating power to group members, for instance, had a significant role in shaping the implementation of shared leadership practices. Providing group members with the authority to manage their respective branches using their capabilities, proficiency, knowledge, and specialised skills supports the influence of developing shared leadership in groups. These factors significantly influenced the implementation of shared leadership methods among group members in the case study organisation. The group members' experience, abilities, skills, and knowledge supported the application of these criteria.

Summary of Middle-line Mangers Group Findings

In terms of the cooperation element in the group internal environment, the findings of the study revealed that group members encountered an organisational transformation challenge and exhibited a notably high level of cooperation as a cohesive group. In the context of the transformation crisis, operational managers and members of the group demonstrated a cooperative effort in order to maintain the company's operations and commit to the successful implementation of the organisational change initiative. The organisational transformation crisis fostered greater confidence and resilience among group members, increased their trust in each other's abilities, and created greater group work and cooperation to overcome these challenges.

Based on the findings, it was determined that group members had a similar understanding of the primary objectives of the group and committed themselves towards achieving those goals. Participants in the interviews provided evidence that members of the group worked together with the intention of achieving the growth and development of the organisation both during and after the process of organisational transformation.

The group members demonstrated social support by acknowledging each other's achievements and having confidence in their peers' capabilities, knowledge, and expertise. During the process of addressing the crisis of the organisation's change, group members exhibited a high level of mutual trust in each other regarding their skills and abilities, which resulted in creating an appropriate environment that enhanced the group's shared leadership practices.

On the other hand, based on the findings of the group's external environment, shared authority, and delegation elements, it has been found that the leader of the group does not pursue power for the purpose of gaining personal benefit. Instead, he delegated responsibility to members of the group according to their capabilities, areas of specialty, skills, and years of experience. The findings suggest that individuals in the group have been given the authority to govern their respective branches and departments, which has therefore influenced the development of shared leadership practices. Moreover, group leaders distributed responsibility to branch managers, taking into account the size of the branch as well as the capabilities and expertise of the branch manager and head of the department. There is no doubt that the branch managers and heads of departments hold a large amount of authority over matters pertaining to their respective divisions and branches.

The group leader demonstrated a high level of empowerment towards the group members in reference to the level of autonomy provided to them to manage their branches the ways they deemed. In fact, group members expressed having a significant level of autonomy in managing their individual branches or departments. An interesting finding reveals that one group member believed his colleagues were granted an excessive level of autonomy, which the general manager should have limited. The findings of the self-leadership revealed that the organisation's top management granted the authority as well as necessary trust for group members to autonomously lead themselves and their departments.

In terms of the supportive culture, the group leader provided a significant amount of support for both successful and unsuccessful decisions. This involves having control over any operational decisions necessary for their branch or department.

Conclusion of Middle-line Managers

The findings of the analysis of the group's internal environment indicated that group members perceived themselves as a cohesive group. The organisation has experienced a transformative crisis following almost three decades of operation. During the transformation crisis, the middle-line managers collaborated to preserve the business and achieve success in the process of organisational change. The findings also demonstrated that group members possessed a congruent understanding of the group's primary objectives and had common goals. In addition, group members exhibited social support by acknowledging one another's achievements and having trust in their skills, knowledge, and capabilities (Carson, et al., 2007).

Moreover, the findings obtained from the group external environment revealed that power is not exclusively vested in the group leader; rather, authority is delegated to group members in accordance with their respective years of experience, abilities, skills, and knowledge (Cox, et al., 2003; Yukl, 2002). Furthermore, with regard to autonomy, the group members perceived their leader as having granted them a significant degree of empowerment, enabling them to exercise independence and make decisions concerning their specific role (Carson, et al., 2007). However, an interesting finding that drawn from the one of the participants that the level of autonomy granted to the team member were extremely high and should be controlled. As indicated that the previous branch manager was misusing the authority granted to them by the institution's founder. Consequently, the participant inferred that it should be either limited or placed under the supervision of the top management, rather than being granted excessive autonomy, in order to prevent the misuse of authority.

The level of assistance provided by the leader to the group members regarding both successful and unsuccessful decisions was notably substantial with regard to decision-making (Yukl & Becker, 2006). The aforementioned elements constituted a credible rationale that influenced the development of shared leadership within the middle-line management group of the aforementioned organisation. Additionally, it is plausible that the years of experience, expertise, knowledge, and skills of the group members were pivotal elements that facilitated the implementation of these qualities (Pearce & Sims, 2000; Seers, et al., 2003). Hence, the provided data seems to substantiate the expansion of shared leadership within the group of middle-line managers in the organisation under investigation.

Non-managerial Employees

The non-managerial employees served as the primary group engaged in the organisational transformative process and played a crucial role in implementing shared leadership practices throughout the change process. The non-managerial employees represent the workforce in the branches across three distinct regions of Saudi Arabia—the Western, Eastern, and Central regions.

Western Region

The western region branch considered as the second largest branch in the organisation in term of the number of assisted clients. Six participants were invited for an interview (excluding branch manager) at their best convenient time.

Group Internal Environment

Within Group Internal Environment three main areas of coding were identified from the literature review— 'Social Support', 'Shared Purposes', and 'Group'. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived from the literature. These were Social Support— Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition (Carson, et al., 2007), and Trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010); Shared Purpose— Shared Objectives (Carson, et al., 2007); and Group (Gockel & Werth, 2010)— Cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

Social support refers to group members' attempts to provide mutual emotional and psychological support to each other, including skills, knowledge, and accomplishment recognition from their peers (Carson, et al., 2007). Trust, which refers to the level of confidence that exists between group members (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Shared objectives refer to a mutual understanding of the main purposes and collective objectives of the group (Carson, et

al., 2007). Cooperation is the act of group members willingly supporting and helping one another in fulfilling their given tasks to accomplish the objectives of both the group and the organisation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999). The participants in the study examined the many aspects of group work that have an impact on the development of shared leadership. The next section will present the findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

It is critical for the success of a group structure that group members have trust in one another skills, abilities, acknowledge the expertise and knowledge of their groupmates, and consider them significant contributors to the group. We will now present the findings associated with the corresponding sub-codes.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Knowledge, and Skills Recognition

The group members' acknowledgment of their peers' expertise and abilities, as well as their perception of them as valuable contributions to the group. The participants demonstrated their proficiency and knowledge, proving that group members had the necessary abilities and expertise to successfully accomplish their task. Participant 1J demonstrated that group members possess the requisite expertise and experience to effectively complete their assigned task.

> *"The group members have good experience. For instance, Mr. X has a professional certificate in accounting, Mr. Y and other group members have good experience and broad knowledge" P1 Jeddah Male.*

Though, participant 2J demonstrated that not all of his peers had the necessary knowledge and expertise. In fact, some of his peers have low knowledge but extensive experience, while others have limited experience but possess a high level of knowledge.

> *"For group members, each one has an advantage and a disadvantage. Some members have an advantage which is that they exert great effort, but they have a low level of comprehension or knowledge. Some members have skills to write reports and do research, but their technical experience is low, so as a group we complete each other and exchange the experiences with each other" P2 Jeddah Male.*

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Accomplishment Recognition and Trust

It was demonstrated by the participants that there is a mutual trust between members of the group, particularly throughout the process of organisational transformation. Additionally, they acknowledge the successes of peers who accomplished tasks collectively.

> *"We went through a stage of great development lately, development in the level of the group members, yes there are some shortcomings in some individuals but there is constant development. In the meantime, we can depend on the group members and the percentage of achievement and efficiency reaches 80% and I follow work with them until achievement is complete" P2 Jeddah Male.*

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

The existence of shared goals among group members significantly impacts the development of shared leadership practices within the group. Group members are motivated to have a positive impact and enhance the organisation's outcomes through their assigned tasks. The use of these

strategies was evident in the organisational resilience displayed as it transitioned from an institution to a company following the death of its founder.

> *"With regard to this question, I think that it is a very important one because we are an extension of the founder office who passed away in November 2020 and we are now going through a tough stage since transferring from the founder institute to X company happened in one year. Therefore, the name of the founder's office is known around the Kingdom and in order to maintain the same reputation and continue the journey, it is hard work for us as a group at this stage. The CEO exerted great effort to maintain the entity as it transformed from an institute to a company. Through these hardships, the current common objective among all the group members is to grow the company's reputation, develop it and be back to the same old reputation" P4-A Jeddah Male.*

However, participant 3J referred to a minor conflict within the group in terms of the shared objectives.

> *"I feel that we do, but with some people, not with others because their objectives are to accomplish their tasks only" P3 Jeddah Female.*
>
> *"Interviewer: What is the objective that you aim at?*
>
> *"Honestly, I sometimes miss the soul of the group in some people because their goals centre around finishing the case that they are assigned, and they do not operate in a group. I sometimes feel that their objectives are materialistic rather than success or developing work" P3 Jeddah Female.*

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Indeed, reciprocal influence that members have on one another when it comes to leading is one approach to evaluating shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

Participant 1J emphasised the significance of cooperation as an essential factor in attaining group and organisational objectives.

> *"If there was no cooperation, we would not be able to achieve objectives. Therefore, there should be cooperation, if there is cooperation amongst group members, desired objectives will be met. If there is no cooperation between group members, work will be affected considerably. The weight of the cases that we work on here at the company always requires work by more than one member, so if I was not cooperative with the group members, we will face great difficulty to achieve the objectives of a task" P1 Jeddah Male.*

On the other hand, participant 3J revealed that not all group members are inclined to collaborate with one another due to their emphasis on individual responsibilities rather than cooperating with their colleagues.

> *"Some of them are very cooperative at accomplishing tasks and this is what I noticed while working with them, others are sometimes demoralized, saying that we cannot accomplish this task" P3 Jeddah Female.*
>
> *"Interviewer: How do you handle these members?"*
>
> *"I was given a case last year… and it added a lot to me in my work. One of the members was complaining about how big the case is and that we cannot get it done, but in this*

period, I did not comment on these members, Mr. X was the motivating member in the group, and he encouraged the group saying that they can accomplish this task. I was responsible for the legal aspect, and being a beginner in this field, I would meet a few experienced lawyers and the fact that they have confidence in my legal views causes me some tension. However, if I face the same issue again, I will focus on the positive sides" P3 Jeddah Female.

In contrast, when a group encounters a complex assignment, the entire group demonstrates a willingness to collaborate with one another in order to resolve that complex situation. Indeed, when group members have difficulties finding an appropriate solution, they turn to their leader for guidance.

"When we face any complicated case, we have conversations and discuss positively, and each member gives his opinion, then if there are conflictual or unclear views, we refer to the direct manager to guide us or give a second opinion, or back the view of one member over the other. The best solution for complicated or unclear cases is positive rather than negative discussion" P1 Jeddah Male.

The group members perceived themselves as a cohesive group, and when confronted with a challenging job or situation, they supported one another in finding a solution.

The following will present the findings associated with group external environment and their codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Group External Environment

The external environment theme consists of dimensions that reflect the external dimensions that affect the development of shared leadership practices. The components encompassed in this context are*: a) authority sharing, including delegation; b) empowerment, including*

autonomy and self-leadership; and c) supportive culture, including collective decision-making, participation in the decision-making process, and the leader's support in the decision-making process.

For example, authority sharing refers to the leader delegating authority to their followers (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). Empowerment includes autonomy and self-leadership, which refer to a leader's capacity to exert influence over followers by encouraging them to take on leadership roles and providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015). Autonomy is the degree of independence a role gives employees in terms of scheduling their work duties and choosing how to complete tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1974). Self-leadership refers to the capacity and skills of group members to independently manage themselves and carry out their activities without the presence of their designated leader (Pearce & Manz, 2005). A supportive culture is an organisational environment that encourages the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making process (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and the leader's support in the decision-making process (Yukl, 2002). The findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes will be presented in the following section.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

In situations where the work at hand was relevant to the members of the group's area of expertise, the leader delegated authority to those members. In point of fact, participant 1J made reference to the fact that authority is not solely held by the leader of the group; yet, the manager is responsible for the outcome of the task. There is, in fact, a limit on authority in the sense that decisions are restricted to the responsibilities of the members of the group.

"When we are assigned a case or a task, power is not exclusive for the leader, and he is not the sole leader, power is shared amongst group members, and he gives them the freedom to express their viewpoints about the case… Some cases were assigned to one of the BIG 4 companies to audit specific balance sheets that would normally take a year to finalize… I was asked to audit a five-year balance sheet in four months for instance… I divide the work amongst the group members, and we collect the work with each one keeping an eye on the other and revising his work. This way, work becomes cooperative between group members and trust is mutual as well between group members" P1 Jeddah Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

The branch managers in the Western region retained a certain amount of power for themselves while assigning some of the authority to their group members within the branch. The participants argued that their direct line manager had delegated some authority to his group on the basis of their respective areas of expertise.

"When we are assigned a case or a task, power is not exclusive for the leader, and he is not the sole leader, power is shared amongst group members, and he gives them the freedom to express their viewpoints about the case… Some cases were assigned to one of the BIG 4 companies to audit specific balance sheets that would normally take a year to finalize… I was asked to audit a five-year balance sheet in four months for instance… I divide the work amongst the group members, and we collect the work with each one keeping an eye on the other and revising his work. This way, work becomes cooperative between group members and trust is mutual as well between group members" P1 Jeddah Male.

"He is willing to authorise, but unofficially, which means it could be between him and myself. Full authorisation to each situation is to guarantee the flow of work… I want to clarify a point in this regard, since my direct manager is not specialized in law, I see him depend on my opinion in many cases, this I think puts me under some stress" P3 Jeddah Female.

Main: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

Participants in the case organisation claimed that they are independent in the performance of their tasks, which are based on their expertise, and that they have the capacity to make decisions that are essential within the context of the cases that they work on. On the other hand, there is a restriction on the degree of independence they have, and that is the fact that the branch manager must intervene when it is necessary.

"Whenever someone is assigned a task, he becomes completely responsible for it. At the outset, I start contacting the parties of the case, then devise a work plan because I have to finish the task within a known period of time, thus the leader gives me the space to finish the job independently, like with contacting colleagues, writing and preparing reports" P1 Jeddah Male.

"Regarding the independence issue, Mr. C, Mr. X and the rest of the members always have independence in any case in the auditing department when taking a case for instance. We feel extremely independent, and no one imposes views on the other. However, Mr. C (the direct manager) surely gives special instructions of the case, then we start discussions with Mr. X and each one performs his role" P4-A Jeddah Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

When a group leader encourages his group to practice self-leadership, it has an impact on the leadership practices that are shared among the members of the group. In fact, it gives people more strength, improves their self-confidence, and causes them to feel more capable of accomplishing their goals.

> *"We as group members put a plan before we start performing any task, the plan goes a certain way depending on the weight of the task. As I mentioned earlier, most of our work is related to courts so they set a deadline to submit the documents and the relevant reports of the case after receiving it and checking it by the client. So, in case the assisting leader is absent, work is slightly affected but it does not stop because we have scheduled our work and set our objectives, making the whole group see a road map to accomplish a task" P1 Jeddah Male.*

> *"Doing professional work continues as if the manager is there because I am eventually responsible for technical work in the company whether the direct manager is present or not because required tasks are bound to be done by a certain deadline. Thus, work is not affected by the manager's absence" P2 Jeddah Male.*

> *"It is the same principle with Mr. X and Mr. C, when we discuss a case or a specific problem and reach a solution, he decides who will prepare the report. For instance, I will prepare the report, Mr. X will revise and present it to Mr. C (the direct manager), so that the way work runs is clear and I have the ability and power to perform tasks the way I deem suitable according to what was agreed upon in the way to finish the task, then revision is done by Mr. X and Mr. C" P4-A Jeddah male.*

Main Code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

Supportive culture is another element of the group external environment that influences the development of shared leadership practices. We will now look at these in more details below.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making

It was discussed among the participants that significant decisions regarding a challenging task need to be taken collectively. P1J, and P2J went over the procedure that they use to arrive at a solution and the method that they use when making significant decisions.

> *"Big decisions cannot be made in a very brief time, so when we need to take hard decisions, big or crucial decisions, we meet several times to make the decision and there should be discussions and dialogue amongst the group members, which means that there should be knowledge and awareness about all the aspects affecting the decision-making process" P1 Jeddah Male.*

> *"Interviewer: Could you tell me about one of these decisions and how was the decision-making process and its outcomes?"*

> *"In case we are working on a specific case and took a specific decision, we present a synopsis of the case to the leader in a certain form and if he approves the proposed decision, it means that the decision is successful and did not face any obstacles. Our feeling as group members was very good for reaching this stage" P1 Jeddah Male.*

> *"From my personal experience, the first case I took as the responsible manager for auditing was a very big case, I felt very overwhelmed because I became responsible for the decision and the opinion given about the case. I felt very anxious, but I exerted effort and tried with the group members to deliver the best performance to succeed at the*

mission and we eventually succeeded in this task. I spent days unable to sleep because of anxiety as the task was difficult and the feeling was very difficult, but it was accomplished successfully at last" P2 Jeddah Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Participate in Decision-Making

Participating in the decision-making is another factor of the supportive culture that refers to group members engaging in the process of the decision-making process. Participant 3J asserted that their direct line manager involved them in the decision-making process; nonetheless, she disclosed that the direct line manager was not taking their viewpoint into consideration. Instead, he will put his initial idea into action, which will have a detrimental effect on her desire to take part in the decisions that will be made in the future.

"Based on the cases that I handle; we partook in decision making many times. However, I need to clarify a certain aspect in the beginning before I tell you how I feel, just so the picture is clear. The manager allows us to participate in decision-making but with a specific view in his mind that he implements whether he consults us or not. In the beginning, I used to be excited to give an opinion and investigate a matter, but recently and to be fully honest, I lost the desire to participate because he will eventually follow what is in his mind whether the group reaches a certain decision or not. He does what he sees proper. Sometimes, he has a specific view and I think it is incorrect in general for instance, but I notice that he has certain views in decisions. Therefore, I started not to take group decision-making seriously as I know no matter how much I try, he will decide as he sees proper" P3 Jeddah Female.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Leader's Support in Decision-Making

Leader's support in the decision-making process refers to the leaders' support for the decisions implemented by group members, whether they were successful or not. Participants 1J made the following comment:

> *"He also supports me but in a different way, he tells me that we are all prone to make mistakes and take unsuccessful decisions, in an encouraging way, and at the same time he tries not to let you lose your self-confidence so that it does not affect your focus on your work and lower your potential. He contrarily tells me that it is normal and that we all make mistakes in certain situations. Thus, when I find that my direct manager is by my side in unsuccessful decisions, it gives me comfort and happiness because he knows that I am hardworking and that deficiency is unintentional, so he is extremely supportive in this respect" P1 Jeddah Male.*

However, participant 3J had a different perspective on the leader's support in terms of decisions that were successful and those that were not.

> *"Generally, he is supportive, but when it comes to failures, there is reprehension. Support is not absolute" P3 Jeddah Female.*

Summary of Non-managerial Employees Findings (Western Region)

The findings of the non-managerial employees in the western region demonstrated that the contributions of branch groups were substantially responsible for the major completion of the transformation process that the organisation has been undergoing. Their cooperation with one another makes the process of transformation easier to accomplish. Group members viewed themselves as a cohesive group, and when confronted with a challenging task or situation, they supported one another in finding a solution. It was noticed that not all group members received

the same amount of cooperation from their colleagues, since some of them were primarily focused on their individual jobs.

In terms of the shared objectives, not all members of the group have a common understanding of the objectives of the group. Nevertheless, number of individuals have indicated that their major goals are similar, which were described as the growth and development of the organisation. The most significant disagreement emerges when members of the group do not have a shared understanding of the aims of the group, as they prioritise their own objectives that were based on the completion of their duties.

When it comes to social support, the findings of the study indicated that group members in the western region demonstrate a high degree of social support, accept the expertise and capabilities of their peers, acknowledge their accomplishments, and have a high level of trust in each other's capabilities.

The group's external environment demonstrated that the leader of the group distributed authority to his group members, relying on their knowledge, skills, abilities, and expertise to address the situation to the best of their ability. In fact, the branch manager delegated power to his group members when the task aligned with their specialist knowledge and abilities.

In addition, the findings revealed that the branch group does not have complete autonomy in the operations that they carry out. The direct manager possesses the ability to intervene and provide the group with particular direction regarding the case that they are working on as well as the decision-making process that is associated with the matter.

Despite the fact that the manager of the branch invites group members to participate in the decision-making process, he places limitations on how their proposals are implemented. The findings also demonstrated that members of the group have a strong sense of accountability for

the duties that they have been assigned. Even if their direct-line manager is not present, they continue to carry out the task at hand. One particularly disturbing finding is that the branch manager would actively intervene in guiding his branch staff in the execution of certain cases.

Eastern Region

The headquarters of the case are located in Al-Khobar City, which is located in the eastern region of Saudi Arabia. There are three operating departments (auditing, legal, and quality assurance departments). The headquarters is considered the largest branch in the organisation in terms of the size of the departments and the number of employees. There were total of eight participants from the Al-Khobar branch who were invited to participate in an interview at their best convenience. Five of them were from the legal department, and three were from the auditing department (excluding branch managers and heads of departments).

Group Internal Environment

The participants in the study examined the many aspects of group work that have an impact on the development of shared leadership practices. The following will present the findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

It is critical for the success of a group structure that group members have trust in one another skills, abilities, acknowledge the expertise and knowledge of their groupmates, and consider them significant contributors to the group. We will now look at these in more details below.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Knowledge, and Skills Recognition

The group members' recognition of their peers' skills and abilities, as well as their perception of them as valuable contributors to the group is crucial. Participants 2L and 5L demonstrated

that their peers are exceptionally proficient in the requisite knowledge and abilities. They continuously sought to expand their knowledge and improve their abilities.

> *"Some colleagues are remarkably outstanding, because they are always familiar with the systems, and are always following up on updates. Of course, most of the regulations are found on the site of the Council of Experts, which is the main reference for us, along with SOCPA and the updates it issues related to standards. They are knowledgeable and we share these developments with each other to improve our work. The final product is issued only by people who are knowledgeable in most relevant aspects" P2 LEG KBR Male.*

> *"Mr. Y is remarkable outstanding, not only for his work but because he is well-informed. Mrs. A is mainly specialized in business management but she has good experience in accounting; she can deliver when entrusted with an accounting task. Generally speaking, our group members are special" P5 LEG KBR Female.*

However, participants 2A and 3A from the auditing department indicated that neither of their colleagues has the abilities that are needed for demonstrating leadership behaviour.

> *"Interviewer: Can you think of a colleague who has leadership skills or can be a group leader?"*

> *"Leadership requires many qualifications. Can you lead professionally? Can you make good revenues? Can you communicate with the clients in general? Can you communicate with the other branches? And most importantly, can you communicate with the group you are leading? Sad to say that I personally don't see anyone who has these qualifications. I hope this doesn't influence my relationship with my colleagues" P2 AUDIT KBR Male.*

"We used to have extremely brilliant members but unfortunately they left work and we are trying to recruit other employees at the same level" P3 AUDIT KBR Male.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Accomplishment Recognition and Trust

Recognising the successes of peers and having trust in each other are crucial components of effective group work, as they indicate the level of trust that exists among group members. Participants demonstrated their trust in their colleagues' ability to effectively carry out their responsibilities in both departments. Nevertheless, participant 1A from the auditing department holds concerns regarding the ability of his colleagues to competently fulfil their designated responsibilities.

"I trust the majority if not all of the group. But for accomplishment of work, I trust part of the group… I have confidence in some of the group but not in everyone. When I entrust part of the group with a task, I know how they think and that they will be able to sort it out, but I don't feel the same about the rest of the group" P1 AUDIT KBR Male.

On the other hand, participant 4L from the legal department has a different perspective with regard to the trust she has to place in her peers.

"I trust those who can accomplish. So, I trust that person or that group who are known for the ability to complete the tasks, paying attention to the details and for performing their duties in cooperation. This creates confidence that those members accomplish their tasks and are concerned with it" P4 LEG KBR Female.

Furthermore, participant 1L has limited trust in his colleagues due to their work behaviour. In a similar way, participant 2L stated that he primarily trusts his peers, but that when it comes to the completion of tasks, it varies from person to person.

"Employees are different from each other. Some employees view work as duties that must be fulfilled. Others view it as 8 hours that I have to spend behind my desk and then I leave the office; honestly, I don't trust them" P1 LEG KBR Male.

"I trust them in principle, but delivering the tasks differs from one person to another; some need to be followed up on to have things fulfilled. There is confidence between us in Al-Khobar branch. It happens sometimes of course that maybe one colleague forgets when I assign them to task because of the huge volume of work. But my straight clear answer is that there is a great deal of confidence mainly in delivering the main objective, the product that we offer to the beneficiaries" P2 LEG KBR Male.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

Following the organisational transformation, P2L demonstrated that group members allocated their objectives towards developing their responsibilities in the most effective manner, hence prioritising the organisation's overall success as their primary purpose.

"We all aspire to deliver work in best quality because eventually I represent the firm and I would like to get several members involved in my decision-making process. The ultimate objective is the firm's success. We strive not to be accountable for common mistakes in the field of accounting as an accounting firm. Accounting is a meticulous field and every word makes a difference … I believe it's the result of work. People may differ in terms of the fields they are aware of. I, for example, never interfere with accounting matters but I can eventually understand the accounting results showed to us because they are presented in the end in the name of the firm. So, yes we share the same goals" P2 LEG KBR Male.

"One time we met to discuss how to restart working after the crisis we went through in a certain period. We agreed as group members with all the employees that our goal would be to progress as a branch and to return better than ever … Our common goal is to survive and continue to work. We share many aspects although each one of us has their own beliefs" P5 LEG KBR Female.

The members of the group did, in fact, benefit from the transition crisis after it occurred. P2A demonstrated that their common goals contribute to the sustainability of the organisation, but that they also have values and goals that are distinct from one another as individuals.

"Of course, we share the same goals: firm sustainability, success, independence and overall progress… We definitely have different beliefs and therefore different objectives. Some of us aspire to a better professional status of the office while others aim at financial increases. Revenues anyways have priority over professionalism; it's different from one person to another" P2 AUDIT KBR male.

P1A, on the other hand, demonstrated that he does not have any shared goals with his peers, as their individual goals are more important than the group's overall goals.

"Speedy accomplishment of tasks and efficient communication with the clients. On the level of personal non-collective objectives, every person has their policy and way of thinking for problem solving; their mechanism. They may or may not consult with you; or maybe they go directly to the group leader" P1 AUDIT KBR Male.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

As previously indicated, cooperation is a crucial component of group structure. Participant 2L from the legal department emphasised the crucial nature of cooperation among group members due to its impact on the final results of their work.

> *"We cooperate a great deal on achieving the goals. I can tell you that we cooperate on different matters especially with employees who work on tasks assigned by the leader… We share information without being requested. Once I come to know information that could affect the final product, I inform my colleagues of any updates or new decisions of a ministerial entity or foreign body or any new decisions. We share information a lot and this reverts back in a positive way" P2 LEG KBR Male.*

Conversely, participant 3L asserted that his peers should not rely on the assistance of others in order to progress their work within the scope of cooperation.

> *"Surely we cooperate. But you shouldn't condition your achievement by my cooperation. I work mainly to fulfil my duties and you need to fulfil yours by yourself. We can cooperate in case there are some deficiencies or on a specific issue, but within certain limits" P3 LEG KBR Male.*

Unlike the legal department, participant P1A from the auditing department demonstrated that not all members of their group are inclined to collaborate. However, they are eager to offer assistance only when it is required of them.

"Not everyone, but the majority of the group does. I mean, part of the group work together on solving the problems they face. Others don't participate and are rather introvert; they would only provide a solution when asked for it" P1 AUDIT KBR Male.

The following will present the findings associated with group external environment and their codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Group External Environment

The external environment theme consists of dimensions that reflect the group leader's support to his or her group members. The following will present the findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes

Main code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

Sharing authority is an external factor that influences the development of shared leadership practices. The manager of the legal department granted his group members the authority to handle activities that related to their area of expertise, including the decision-making process. Participant 2L and participant 5L demonstrated that their line manager granted the group authority to proceed forward with the tasks that were allocated to them without any enforcement.

"Honestly, we can feel this. The administration believes in freedom in decision taking particularly in your field and regarding your followers since you are the one following up on them directly. If you are not driven by personal impressions and only work for the better of the work, your manager gives you freedom. Ultimately, it's the manager's assessment who gives freedom when he judges that a member doesn't allow personal impressions to interfere with work. Eventually, as I mentioned, it's beneficial for both the employee and work. We never take it personal" P2 LEG KBR Male.

"At first, I started learning the basic steps like any other new employee. After I learned and mastered the skills needed, I completed the tasks assigned to me freely in light of the resources available to me; no one imposed anything on me" P5 LEG KBR Female.

Similarly, in the auditing department, participant 2A demonstrated that his direct manager grants him the authority to progress in his work in the manner that he sees appropriate. On the other hand, whenever he was confronted with a difficult circumstance, he referred it back to his manager for direction.

"Due to my position, I am granted complete freedom by the direct manager in all the tasks related to my work as a reviewer. I do the work in my way then if we have disagreements on certain points, he directs me right away" P2 AUDIT KBR Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

Participant 1L demonstrated that the leader's delegation was limited prior to the organisation's transformation and that he was required to communicate the work to his manager before moving further.

"Well, it depends. In some cases, for example, and particularly before Covid 19, we had to consult with Mr. B and ask for specific directions and we were not allowed to try to work out something we didn't know much about; we should have preferably deliberated with him" P1 LEG KBR Male.

"Interviewer: What I get from you is that you need to get back to Mr. B on some cases but… you have to deliberate with him in most cases before taking any action?

"No, sometimes I consult with Mr. B and he tells me to do whatever I like" P1 LEG KBR Male.

On the other hand, participant 2A referred to the fact that their manager does not delegate authority to the group members; in fact, they only carry out their assigned tasks and then await approval from their manager.

> *"There is no absolute or even partial delegation of authority to the group members. Each member is assigned to a task; each reviewer is responsible for their tasks. After we finish, we sit with the boss to deliberate and see whether the tasks have been completed as required" P2 AUDIT KBR Male.*

Main code: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Empowerment refers to the aspect of the group's external environment in which group members recognise the influence of their leader and are encouraged to take on leadership roles within the group.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

Participants P2L and P5L in the legal department stated that each group member's autonomy level is influenced by their experience and expertise.

> *"Group's independence varies according to the experience of each member. We have outstanding employees in a certain field or in a certain work; they may have their own independent opinions and notify the manager of what has been achieved. But when it comes to the sensitive issues that require involving higher ranks in leadership, we must consult with the manager on such issues because in our line of business there are almost monthly regular updates such as the digital revolution in the ministry of justice. Our business is directly related to them… Most group members follow up routinely on such updates; my colleague and I follow up and update each other. Consequently, sensitive*

issues require that we consult with the manager to ensure work quality…" P2 LEG KBR Male.

"Everyone has their independence and their space. We all have freedom in doing our tasks and in expressing our opinion. We have our independence as a group as well… Honestly… I have the space where I feel comfortable. I can say my professional opinion with complete freedom and without restrictions. I have all the freedom" P5 LEG KBR Female.

However, the participants from the auditing department noted that the group's autonomy is limited. Participant 3A argued that the potential limitation they may encounter is not an internal influence (such as a manager) but rather an external influence (such as the market). Though participant 1A mentioned that the limitation on autonomy is a result of the manager's contingency.

"Sometimes, the reviewers do their work in complete independence and have the freedom to take decisions unilaterally. In some other cases we are governed by market needs like when the client objects to writing a reservation on their accounting files, although it goes by the book that a reservation should be written. The manager says no; if we write it the client will transfer their work to a competitor who will do them as they wish. So, we are not completely independent and sometimes we have to follow the dictates of the market and not even the direct manager" P3A AUDIT KBR Male.

"Well, my group enjoys partial independence but not full independence. Some conditions and limitations are there. We need to get back to the branch manager on certain matters because of their experience, for administrative reasons or for communications with the clients" P1 AUDIT KBR Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

It was argued by participants 3A, 2L, and 5L that the level of self-responsibility among members of the group was high and that the progress of the task was unaffected by the presence or absence of the manager.

> *"… The manager isn't involved anyway in our work; it's us who do all the steps. Each member is responsible for a group of clients with whom he communicates and finishes his work whether the boss is present or not; it doesn't matter. After we finish the tasks, we submit them to the person in charge to collect the revenues of the firm" P3 AUDIT KBR Male.*

> *"Now with the modern means of communication you can hardly be absent… We can also check the procedures followed in previous tasks especially the recent ones which have followed nearly the same procedures. What did we do with the previous task? What were the measures we adopted? Do they fit for this task? We also consult our colleagues who have experience in this matter. If it were a very sensitive issue, I would consult the executive manager or another branch manager. In the end, as I said before, the final product has the highest priority" P2 LEG KBR Male.*

> *"Work doesn't stop and the tasks are completed in the same quality and efficiency as if the manager were not absent" P5 LEG KBR Female.*

Main code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

A supportive culture is characterised by an environment that fosters mutual responsibility and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012). The following will present the findings associated with corresponding sub-codes.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making

When it comes to making significant decisions, participant 2L highlighted the process that they undergo and how they reach a problem-solving solution.

> *"On major decisions, we must have a meeting with our direct manager and his deputy, consult with legal experts and request their legal opinions and sometimes consult the more experienced people in the field because we need to be aware of all aspects and consequences of the decision. We need to make sure whether we have taken the correct decision or the transaction was avoidable and we could have struck another more rewarding deal. Considering the nature of business we need time. Time is money for us. We sometimes need to choose between two operations that are not highly rewarding but one of them requires more time. It's different. The biggest decision is whether to enter into this or that deal? Who is going to be with me on the group? Are they ready to join me in this group? Yes, we take major decisions but we must be careful with these things and study them from different angles" P2 LEG KBR Male.*

Participant 3L stated that whenever his group was confronted with challenging situations, they would get together and talk about the problem. During these meetings, each member of the group would provide their thoughts based on their own personal experiences and areas of expertise.

> *"We need to discuss it first as a group and to allow every member to express their opinion. Then we discuss the suggested solutions and decide and discuss the objectives through which we can fulfil the tasks" P3 LEG KBR Male.*

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Participate in Decision-Making

Participants 4L and 5L provide an explanation of the procedure for taking part in the decision-making process, particularly during the period of the company's transformation.

> *"We have discussions and exchange opinions and ideas and search for criteria when we are involved in the process of making major decisions to help furthering the decision and excluding other options. We share ideas and opinions… I remember when we were in the process of the transformation from an institution to a company, we had a meeting and each member made their proposal for the firm's name. This is a simple manifestation of the decision-making process" P4 LEG KBR Female.*

> *"One time we all were invited to attend a meeting to discuss a new measure in the firm. All group members expressed their opinions and the direct manager gave us the space to do so. If one group member felt shy to speak in front of the rest of the group or didn't prefer to present their ideas before their colleague, they could send an email with their ideas to be shared with the upper management" P5 LEG KBR Female.*

Participants 2A and 3A revealed that they do not participate in any major decision-making procedures because they believe that it is the role of the management to make such decisions.

> *"We don't participate in major decision making because it's part of the duties of the branch manager. It's the branch manager who takes a major decision to deal with an important client or to end a certain operation" P2 AUDIT KBR Male.*

> *"We don't. Major decisions are the jurisdiction of the management; not us" P3 AUDIT KBR Male.*

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Leader's Support in Decision-Making

An aspect that is regarded as supportive culture for the members of the group is the support that the leader provides during the decision-making process whether they were successful or not. Participants 1L and 2L illustrated that the level of support they perceived from their leader when it comes to decision-making. Participants 1L and 2L illustrated the level of support they perceived from their leader when it came to decision-making.

> *"As I said, he praises the idea or action in a situation. Even if it were a wrong decision, he deals like a friend or the like. He doesn't blame you but rather discusses the issue with you like an older brother teaching you how to deal in similar situations" P1 LEG KBR Male.*

> *"…in average I have great support in this aspect. I always feel supported because he trusts me in this field. We have been through different situations that I can't mention here which have really been challenging. I have always made the correct decisions and I have been supported in these tasks either from the direct manager or from the top management" P2 LEG KBR Male.*

> *"If the decision is successful, I am praised for the success. If unsuccessful, I am praised for exerting efforts and the mistakes are corrected. He tells you this decision is characterized by so and so or is not suitable for a certain reason" P4 LEG KBR Female.*

Participant 3A revealed that their manager did not provide them with enough support in terms of the decision-making process.

> *"Actually, it rarely happened either with successful or unsuccessful decisions" P3 AUDIT KBR Male.*

"Interviewer: Can you elaborate why you think there isn't enough support?"

"Usually in labour market, the worker is rarely thanked for their effort. I am not talking about myself here but I mean in general this tends to be the case. Efforts of the workers are not appreciated. You have to work with the client's professionally, weak accountants who have limited capacities able complete the tasks. Dealing with clients is really tiresome and much effort is needed to get useful information that would help me prepare a complete file. Still, the manager finds "deficiencies" with your work and doesn't appreciate your efforts to have the file completed and finish the job" P3 AUDIT KBR Male.

Summary of Non-managerial Employees Findings (Eastern Region)

There was a clear indication that members of the group held contrasting perspectives regarding the value of group work. According to one point of view, group work is such an important aspect that it has a significant impact on the total result of the group. In order to successfully carry out their duties, members of a group should not rely on the support or aid of their fellow group members, according to the second point of view. In addition, the data revealed that certain individuals within the auditing department have a propensity to work with their colleagues, while others would only engage in cooperation when specifically requested to do so.

The members of the group who have been involved in the process of organisational transformation have a common understanding of the group's objectives, which include the success and sustainable growth of the company, as seen from the perspectives of both the legal and auditing departments. There is a possibility that other group members will concentrate on their own goals alone rather than attempting to align them with those of their colleagues.

The study was unable to provide conclusive evidence that members of a group provide social support to one another by acknowledging each other's abilities and contributions to the group, especially in the auditing department. It was difficult to demonstrate since there was a lack of trust among the members of the group regarding their abilities and skills. The data from the legal department, on the other hand, demonstrated that members of the group were socially support one another and acknowledged the abilities, skills, and accomplishments that their peers brought to the group.

In regard to the group external environment, it was noticeable that the heads of both departments delegated power to their group members, placing trust in their knowledge, skills, abilities, and expertise. The personnel of the auditing department have been authorised to progress in their duties independently. However, in the event of a disagreement, they are required to seek guidance from their direct-line manager. The leader's delegation was noticeable throughout the course of the organisation's transformation; this could be considered a significant aspect of the fact that shared leadership practices have an impact on the process of conducting the transformation of the organisation. According to the findings, there appeared to be trust difficulties between the manager of the auditing department and the members of his group in terms of their skills and capabilities.

Moreover, the findings indicate that the degree of autonomy among members of the legal department group is contingent upon their level of experience and expertise, and the majority of the group members have their own space while carrying out their responsibilities. In addition, the group members in both departments exhibit a noticeable sense of responsibility, and the efficiency of work is unaffected by the presence or absence of the group leader.

The findings suggested that the head of the legal department actively encourages his group members to express their viewpoints regarding matters within their area of expertise during the

decision-making process. The group members in the auditing department have a limited degree of independence since the group leader lacks confidence in their judgement to grant them the authority to make decisions.

Central Region

The branch of the case organisation that serves the central area is regarded as the smallest branch in terms of the number of employees and the number of clients that it assists. A total of three participants, with the exception of the branch manager, were invited to participate in an interview at their earliest convenience.

Group Internal Environment

It is established that the group internal environment is a factor that affects the development of shared leadership within groups. The participants in the study examined the many aspects of group work that have an impact on the development of shared leadership. The following will present the findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

For a group structure to be successful, it is crucial that group members have trust in each other's skills and abilities, recognise the expertise and knowledge of their groupmates, and view them as valuable contributors to the group. Now, we will examine these in greater depth below.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Knowledge, and Skills Recognition

Acknowledging the skills and knowledge of other group members and considering them to be valuable contributors is a crucial element of effective group work. The examples provided by participants 1R and 2R demonstrated that not all members of the group are eager to expand their knowledge in order to improve their skills; rather, they prefer to stay within the boundaries of the information they already possess.

> *"For the level of knowledge, some of them continue to do vocational learning and gain experience and knowledge and this surely affects the technical level, and it actually*

happened. And some of them want to remain where they are, they are not willing to take in new information. Of course, our work is active, which means that there are new information every day, new learning, you have to work for it, but there are those who want to improve and those who do not want" P1 RYD Male.

"It is high, since we have experience, with differences in the level of knowledge because, as you know, there are members who update their knowledge and skills constantly and others who do not, and some on a very slow pace, so it varies. What creates balance here is the group work, solidarity, and cooperation among the group members, if I know something, I directly share it with the group members and there are constant professional discussions between them when we exchange information that benefit everyone, until there is plenty of information to enrich the conversation and the results" P3 RYD Male.

On the other hand, participant 2R held a divergent perspective from that of the other participants. He perceived that all of his peers had sufficient experience as well as the appropriate knowledge and skills for the responsibilities that were being performed.

"They all have long experience, like Mr. A, he has long experience, and Mr. S as well." P2 RYD Male.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Accomplishment Recognition and Trust

All of the members of the group are acknowledging the achievements of their colleagues because this has been the concept of the organisation ever since it was established by its founder.

"All of us honestly, each one as I mentioned works to accomplish his work. We are used to this since the days of Mr. N -may Allah rest his soul- that he trusts that the balance

reaches his office and he signs it without revising, because he trusts the effectiveness of our work as group members and its manager. Therefore, we try to accomplish our work with high efficiency, accuracy and faithfulness so that there is no negative impact on our work" P2 RYD Male.

As a matter of fact, participant 1R is of the opinion that the degree of accomplishment of the task achieved by his group members is sufficient rather than effective.

"Satisfactorily, the level of effectiveness is not for everyone, some members perform effectively and others satisfactorily, but I cannot say effectively, only in a way the gets them out of the problem" P1 RYD Male.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

Shared objectives are a key element in the group's internal environment that influences the development of shared leadership practices. As participants 1R and 3R demonstrated that both their colleagues and themselves have a shared objective, which is the achievement of the company's success. Participant 1R emphasised that shared objectives are needed for the long-term sustainability of the organisation.

"Surely, even if achieving the objective or the method of realizing it differs, we generally prioritize a general objective, which is the success of the institution, and this is a common objective that we all must agree on or we will not last" P1 RYD Male.

"Of course, there is a set of objectives that my colleagues and I share, of course aside from each one of us having personal objectives whether at work or personally.

However, our common objective is to improve the company, our group is in one train or one boat, if one of us slows down, it will affect the entire group" P3 RYD Male.

On the other hand, participant 1R elaborated on the various approaches that he and his peers had used in order to implement the shared objectives.

"…The method of realizing this objective, a member could pressurize himself to achieve it, or, and this is most likely, to achieve the goal within the possibilities, which means that I am required to work on a duty within eight hours, but it could take me 16 hours, I am limited within the eight hours. I consider myself responsible for the objective, which means that management is with the objectives rather than with time. Managing objectives means that you are assigned several operations to finish in the best quality possible and the ultimate benefit to the office, time is up to you, you either put pressure on yourself and work from home, there is no problem with that because you will reach and achieve the goal at the end of the day. However, some colleagues work within what is possible which is that they receive a salary for 8 hours of work per day, and since there is nothing as overtime, I will work within time only and if work time is up, whether the objective is realized or not, I will not work outside the working time and put pressure on myself to achieve the goal, and this happens with everyone" P1 RYD Male.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

Participant 2R and 3R demonstrated that even after the death of the company's founder, the members of the group continue to collaborate to ensure the ongoing achievement of the company.

"Cooperation, we are all cooperative honestly, even with work, we normally deal with numbers, so we cooperate to revise for each other… We are cooperative with everything, like in having more clients for the office, we cooperate to keep our current clients and attract new ones especially after the crisis we experienced when Mr. N - may Allah rest his soul- passed away… If someone faces a complicated duty, whoever can offer help will assist him, including the branch manager and the smallest employee in the branch, we all help each other, which means that whoever encounter a complicated problem, we do not leave each other alone, we all help each other" P2 RYD Male.

"Our staff specifically is cooperative, we always cooperate to produce work that is accurate and clear, but either way, you are totally independent and there is no pressure on you to reject anything that is supposed to be accepted or accept anything that is supposed to be rejected" P3 RYD Male.

Participant 1R, on the other hand, revealed that there is a limited level of cooperation among group members because they place a higher priority on their own responsibilities than they do on working together with others. In fact, he believes that the management needs to be held accountable for any lack of performance that may occur as a result of the limited resources that he encounters while carrying out his duties.

"They are cooperative within limits, the limits of work time, the limit of their sense that responsibility is not placed on them eventually, I mean that the problem at the end is that responsibility is placed on the management, this is within the limits of us executing and deciding everything, but at last, the branch's administration is responsible, and the main responsibility eventually is on the company's management as a whole. If I was

blamed for lack of performance or effectiveness, there are such and such obstacles and I function within the available possibilities" P1 RYD Male.

As a matter of fact, when the researcher inquired about the willingness of participant 1R to cooperate with his peers in the event that assistance was needed from him, he stated that he was willing to do so.

"Of course, without a doubt, I leave my work if there is a need to be with someone to solve a problem, and this is important to me, I must do it. I do this work since I am the senior in the group and at the same time the oldest and more experienced with certain issues. I surely seek their help, but I never lag, although it bothers me that I handle the responsibilities of some members and participate in solving their problems, yet they do not do the same with me, this annoys me. It makes me sometimes not cooperate with them until I finish my duties if one of the colleagues asks me for help, I ask him to wait until I finish my work if I have time, this is because they did not cover my duties when I requested a leave of absence, which delayed business and annoyed the clients due to this, at the end of the day, I have to cooperate with them" P1 RYD Male.

The following will present the findings associated with group external environment and their codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Group External Environment

The external environment theme consist of dimensions that reflect the group leader's support to his or her group members. The following will present the findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

According to the argument made by participant 3R, the leader of the group is willing to share authority to other members of the group based on their level of experience and expertise. We will now examine these in greater depth below

> *"… he is fully willing to give authority. If Mr. Z is not personally there, he authorizes the group's top member, Mr. A who is like a deputy branch manager. He was technically the deputy branch manager, since if Mr. Z is on leave or not there, Mr. A becomes responsible for the branch with official issues, but we dealt with general issues as in the place of responsibility, we all appreciate how big this responsibility is and are treated accordingly" P3 RYD Male.*

Similarly, participant 1R argued that group leader is willing to share authority with group members but with limitation.

> *"In fact, he grants full power except for some administrative aspects that have to do with him. It means he might consult you, previously there was no actual consultation, it was decisions and execution, but to be honest, now things improved, and we became responsible in one position, one boat, so he gathers us always and consults us, I will do this, his decision can be tough, so we try to mitigate it. Also, in other cases we suggest a solution when we disagree with a certain decision and give a new one to discuss. Consultation can be about matters that relate to you personally. The direct manager granted us the freedom, but there is mostly cooperation before decisions are taken" P1 RYD Male.*

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

With regard to delegation, the participants reached an agreement that their group leader provided them with the required power to accomplish their tasks, taking into account the members' respective levels of skills, abilities, and experience.

> *"I am granted power in two ways, first to deal with colleagues, the colleague that joins us newly is usually assigned to me for training, so my role is to prepare and educate him, and he helps me with some work, so I have the power to handle any new employee. And the power to take decisions, also with colleagues if they encounter a problem or an issue where they need help or to make a decision, or to guide. This is inside the office, but regarding clients, I am one of the most trusted people by Mr. Z, when there is a new client, he asks me to communicate with him because he is confident that I can handle outside clients, especially the expected ones, that is why I am granted great independence based on the long experience" P1 RYD Male.*

In fact, participant 2R demonstrated that the trust factor is the foundation upon which the willingness of the group leader to delegate authority to the group members.

> *"Mr. Z usually grants us freedom, and it is built on trust. I worked with Mr. Z for 14 years, so there is built trust between us, when he assigns me a duty, he knows that I can accomplish it, and he gives me the space to take the decisions that relate to this duty and the freedom to act as I deem suitable" P2 RYD Male.*

Main: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Empowerment refers to the aspect of the group's external environment in which group members recognise the impact their leader has on them and are motivated to assume leadership positions

within the group. Empowerment allows group members to have the freedom to fulfil their duties independently. We will now examine these in greater depth below

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

Participants in the central region branch acknowledged that they maintain it while carrying out their responsibilities.

> *"For my group, we are 80% independent, in the current branch indeed, because it is for auditing and we normally need each other, we have full independence to deal with clients, to deal with colleagues and to take decisions, but with some clients who have influence, the administration limits independence and sometimes there is control from it if the client benefits the office… even if there is a decision about an issue, we have the freedom to take it or discuss viewpoints before taking it… I have great freedom to handle my duties because I get assigned a few tasks or a group of clients in the beginning of the season and they mostly do not change except from one year to the other. I have all the freedom to handle them with full independence, I decide the conditions of work, as I mentioned earlier to you the branch manager might interfere for some clients, but mostly I am fully independent to the point where clients deal with me directly" P1 RYD Male.*

> *"The type of work itself, without going into the details of the technical aspects of work, it requires and makes it mandatory to have independence because it needs you to express your opinion about specific issues, so it should be totally independent without influence from another side except if it is for guidance. It comes when you do not have all the information or another way to judge issues from people with experience around you whether the colleagues are younger than you, with less experience, or older, but*

you are independent and your decision due to the type of the job is independent. Our staff specifically is cooperative, we always cooperate to produce work that is accurate and clear, but either way, you are totally independent and there is no pressure on you to reject anything that is supposed to be accepted or accept anything that is supposed to be rejected" P3 RYD Male.

Participant 2R revealed that he had a great degree of autonomy in terms of progressing his duties; yet, when he encountered a problem, he discussed it with the leader of the group.

"With some aspects of work, I mean, we take decisions and are fully independent, and there are other issues where we simply share with the direct manager, which means that we refer to Mr. Z and consult him. I take my decision with my client, but if anything happens from the side of the client requiring reference to Mr. Z, I consult him" P2 RYD Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

The sense of responsibility that group members possess has an impact on self-leadership techniques. When it comes to self-observation and job completion, the sense of responsibility that a group member possesses is great, as demonstrated by participants 1R and 3R.

"Self-leadership is present whether the leader is there or not, by the way, even when he is here, the sense of self-leadership is active because each member sees that he is responsible for his clients, and each member has a group of clients rather than one. We come from one place, but we do not operate within one process only, rather in different processes. Hence, each one is responsible, you work even when the manager is not there, you might even have more freedom to perform duties because usually when the manager is there, he has other demands, for instance, he might ask you to do a certain

operation now and asks you to leave what you are doing now to assign you another duty. The idea is that we achieve if he is there or not, his absence is in contrast better for achievement" P1 RYD Male.

"The leader himself trained us that when he is absent, we accept the challenge not to fail him, because if his absence affects us to a great extent, it means that he did not build a group, did not build a generation" P3 RYD Male.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

We will now examine these in greater depth below.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making

In the process of reaching a major decision as a group, Participant 1R detailed the process that he and his group went through.

"We discuss and put alternatives to the decision because it can sometimes be hasty and tough, and sometimes it is calm, so we agree on one decision at the end, we discuss and agree on one decision. The one decision is presented to the administration, and we say that we agreed on so and so, and this happens most of the times, it is rare that each one has an independent decision about the same issue and each one is responsible for his decision independently, does it or executes it from his viewpoint, but in common decisions, only one decision is issued and we must agree on this decision" P1 RYD Male.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Participate in Decision-Making

In terms of taking part in the decision-making process, participant 3R explains the method that must be followed in order to take part in a decision-making process when the group leader asks for it.

> *"If there is a decision, he encourages the entire group, a meeting is done with the group's leader or the office's manager, Mr. Z, we discuss the issue and, in many cases, we reach a decision together, meaning that we all accept it one way or another. Of course, it includes negotiations, I might let go of something while another member insists on something for the benefit of the group and the place, we call it democracy, i.e. we have discussions among ourselves and I do not remember a time when Mr. Z took a decision about a group member without consulting the group" P3 RYD Male.*

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Leader's Support in Decision-Making

Participant 2R demonstrated that the leader of the group would be dissatisfied if the decision was not successful.

> *"If the decisions are positive, they pass peacefully, you did well, but if the decision is negative, there will be blame from Mr. Z, he says why did not you consult me before taking this decision. However, to say the truth, we always have mutual respect with Mr. Z" P2 RYD Male.*

Similarly, participant 1R revealed that the support of the group leader is dependent on the outcome of the decision. This means that he would not support the group member if the decision would have an impact on his position as the leader of the group in front of the organisation's top management.

"Many times, we are mostly supported, but let us also be honest, this happens without hurting the direct manager, if the direct manager is concerned about his position and he does care about himself, which means that if a problem happens in the higher management like late or unfinished work, he will say that I informed them via official correspondence and sent emails. This bothers me personally because we are a working group including the manager" P1 RYD Male.

"Interviewer: In terms of successful and unsuccessful decisions, do you feel supported?"

"When the decision is not related to a higher decision because he eventually thinks that this is what is advantageous" P1 RYD Male.

"Interviewer: I mean since you have power and freedom at work, you made a decision with one of the clients and it was positive with good outcome for the organisation, does he support you with this decision or not?"

"Of course, and this is for his interest, he supports you for a reason, the negative impact of a decision does not affect you alone, it affects the company itself. He therefore supports you because he will eventually save himself and save the whole office, but if this support will affect him personally, he will not support you, I can relatively say by 75%." P1 RYD Male.

Summary of Non-managerial Employees Findings (Central Region)

According to the findings from the central region indicate that members of the group collaborate with one another; however, the cooperation that takes place presents a number of limitations that must be taken into consideration such as placing higher priority on their own responsibilities than cooperating with one another.

In terms of the shared objectives, it demonstrated that group members in the Riyadh branch have a similar understanding of the group objective, which is the success of the company, particularly after the transformation process has been completed.

A further point to consider is that members of the group have a limited amount of social support for one another, and they believe that not all members of the group possess the needed skills and abilities. They also experienced some challenges in trusting one another, which was another area of concern.

When it comes to shared authority, it was evident that the branch manager shared some authority with everyone on the group and distributed some power to the members of his group. In fact, the branch manager placed his trust in the expertise and understanding of his group members, and as a result, he delegated management authority to them. A good illustration of this would be the branch manager, who relied on one of the group members human development skills. His responsibility was to provide newly hired employees with training and prepare them for the obligations of their jobs. In addition, the findings indicated that the level of experience and knowledge possessed by group members in the central region was correlated with the amount of autonomy that was possessed by those members. The findings also indicated that the majority of the group members have their own personal space when they are engaging in the activities that are associated with their responsibilities.

When it comes to self-leadership, the finding demonstrated that individuals on the branch group are required to have a sense of responsibility with regard to their work due to the nature of the work that they conduct. Consequently, the group members' self-leadership behaviour is constantly present there. The branch manager instructed his group members on the practice of self-management while they carried out their responsibilities.

Conclusion of Non-managerial Employees Level

The findings from the group's internal environment demonstrated that the various regions had varying effects on the cooperation of the group members. In the case of the Western region and the Eastern region's legal department, for instance, they perceived themselves to be a cohesive group. The degree of cooperation that exists amongst group members was notable. On the other hand, it appeared that group members in the other branches were misunderstanding one another, which resulted in a significant internal conflict.

The organisation has undergone a crisis of change, which led to a restructuring of its hierarchical structure. Interesting findings were that the implementation of the restructure modifications resulted in conflict among group members, particularly those from Al-Khobar auditing department and Riyadh branch, whose expectations were not met. The finding also demonstrated that not all group members have a similar understanding of the group's objectives and lack of common goals. Additionally, as some participants described, these problems arose as a result of the internal conflict between some group members and their leadership within the company. Regarding social support, group members in the majority of branches provided social support to one another by acknowledging the knowledge and skill growth of their peers. However, there were trust concerns between group members in the Riyadh branch and group members in the audit department in the Eastern region.

As per the outcomes of the external environment assessment, group leaders throughout all regions delegate authority to their respective group members. In contrast, the manager of the auditing department lacks confidence in his group members' capacity to delegate decision-making authority to them. In regard to autonomy, group members exhibited a considerable degree of flexibility in carrying out their responsibilities. As this was a prerequisite for work fluency, ensuring they had sufficient autonomy was crucial. As a result, group members were

able to observe the level of decision-making support provided by their supervisors; nevertheless, the auditing department in the Eastern region offers relatively limited assistance.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an insight into how the dimensions of shared leadership operate empirically during a process of organisational transformation. The collected and analysed data has yielded a valuable understanding of the factors that influence shared leadership practices in groups, uncovering noteworthy trends and patterns. The chapter provided an overview of the study findings and analysis pertaining to the organisational group members, including both middle-line managers and non-managerial employees. The text examines the analytical approach, topics, and codes employed for analysing the conducted interviews. The findings of this study were derived from in-person, semi-structured interviews conducted with a total of 26 participants, resulting in 26 individual interviews. The next section of this thesis will go through the findings, delve deeper into the data, and draw some conclusion about what this empirical investigation of shared leadership practices adds to our current understanding of shared leadership in the existing scholarly literature.

Chapter Five: Discussing the Findings

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an opportunity to delve deeper into the qualitative data collected and present a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The research discussion chapter serves as a platform to analyse and interpret the findings obtained from the research study. The study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field and provide insights for future research endeavours. In doing this, it will empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. It identifies within the literature the factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors have impacted the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. Additionally, the discussion chapter allows for the identification of any limitations or gaps in the research study, which can inform future research directions.

Discussion

To assess the shared leadership practices in the case study organisation, a deductive coding method was utilised. This involved using pre-developed codes derived from the literature and allowed the development and utilisation of conceptual model. Two main areas of shared leadership practices were identified within the literature: Group Internal Environment (Carson, et al., 2007) and Group External Environment (Sweeney, et al., 2019).

Within Group Internal Environment three main areas of coding were identified— 'Social Support', 'Shared Purposes', and 'Group'. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were

also derived. These were Social Support— Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition, and Trust; Shared Purpose— Shared Objectives; and Group— Cooperation.

Group Internal Environment: the coding procedures employed Carson et al.'s (2007) group internal environment model, which consists of: *Social Support*, encompasses both the reciprocal emotional and psychological assistance offered by group members and the acceptance of leadership approaches demonstrated by their fellow members (Carson, et al., 2007). The sub-codes associated with this are: *Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition*; and *Trust*, which encompasses group members' trust in their peers' capabilities, expertise, and knowledge (Small & Rentsch, 2010). *Shared Purpose* represents a similar understanding of the group's common objectives and goals (Carson, et al., 2007). Sub-code associated with this is *Shared Objectives*. *Group* refers to utilising the mutual influence between group members on leading one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). The sub-code associated with this is *Cooperation*, which refers to the level of task interdependency between group members, and their willingness to support and collaborate with their fellow colleagues in fulfilling their assigned duties (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

Within Group External Environment three main areas of coding were identified— *'Sharing Authority'*, *'Empowerment'*, and *'Supportive Culture'*. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Sharing Authority— Delegation; Empowerment— Autonomy and Self-leadership; and Supportive Culture— Collective Decision-making, Participate in Decision-making, and Leader's Support in Decision-making.

Group External Environment: Sweeney et al. (2019) recognised the following factors in their systematic review, which considered as group external environment. These factors include: *Sharing Authority,* which refers to the authority distribution among group members (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014; Manz, et al., 2013). *Delegation* is the sub-code associated with sharing

authority, which pertains to assigning group members a specific level of responsibility during their tasks (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). *Empowerment*, refers to a leader's capacity to exert influence over followers by encouraging them to self-lead themselves, and providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015). The sub-codes associated with this are: *Autonomy*, which refers to the degree of freedom that enables group members to carry out their designated responsibilities and make crucial decisions related to their work and their group (Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015; Hackman & Oldham, 1974); and *Self-leadership*, which refers to the capabilities and abilities of group members to manage and influence themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005). *Supportive Culture*, which refers to to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012). The sub-codes utilised in the supportive culture include: *Collective Decision-making* (Erkutlu, 2012); *Participation in the Decision-making* (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012); and *Leader's Support in Decision-making Process* (Yukl, 2002).

Middle-line Managers

The middle-line managers serve as representatives for the branch managers and department heads in the organisation, covering three distinct regions in Saudi Arabia: the Western, Eastern, and Central regions.

Group Internal Environment

According to Carson et al. (2007), the group internal environment influences the development of shared leadership among group members. The components encompassed in this context are: *a) social support, including knowledge, skills, and accomplishment recognition, and trust; b) shared purposes, including shared objectives; and c) group, including cooperation.* The following will discuss the findings associated with these codes and their corresponding sub-codes.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

Social support encompasses the efforts made by members of a group to provide each other with emotional and psychological assistance, as well as sharing skills and knowledge and acknowledging each other's achievements (Carson, et al., 2007). It is critical for the success of a group structure that group members have trust in one another skills, abilities, acknowledge the expertise and knowledge of their group members, and consider them significant contributors to the group.

Sub-code: Group internal Environment—Knowledge, Skills, Accomplishment Recognition, and Trust

The group members demonstrated significant social support, which encompassed skills, knowledge, acknowledgment of accomplishments, and trust. The social support was found to

be a predictor of the group's shared leadership practice, according to research conducted by Carson et al. (2007) and Serban and Roberts (2016). Previous research has demonstrated that a group's social support is perceived as a relationship-oriented strategy, wherein group members establish a supportive and encouraging environment that impacts the development of shared leadership (Han, et al., 2018). In addition, researchers have proposed that the efficiency of shared leadership is enhanced in cross-functional groups due to the reliance of group members on the diverse knowledge, skills, abilities, and backgrounds of their peers (Bligh, et al., 2006; Serban & Roberts, 2016). In addition, shared leadership at the management level is considered a managerial shared leadership practice, according to Döös & Wilhelmson (2021).

Consequently, there was a clear and evident presence of a strong sense of trust among group members regarding their expertise, skills, and capabilities to address the organisation's crisis of change. This fostered a favourable environment that facilitated the implementation of shared leadership approaches within the group.

Indeed, the organisational change served as an indicator for group members to rely on their peers' abilities, knowledge, experience, and expertise. This reliance acted as an indication of the shared leadership practices within the cross-functional group because it reinforces their relationship with one another. Furthermore, under such circumstances, while the organisation is undergoing a transformative process, the contribution of each group member and their trust in one another becomes crucial in achieving the objectives of the change process. This finding aligned with the argument of Binci & Cerruti (2016) that shared leadership benefits the leader of the group during the organisational change process because it enables them to effectively capitalise on the shared expertise and experience of the members of the group.

It can therefore be assumed that the presence of social support in cross-functional groups may be inferred as evidence of the emergence of shared leadership within groups. This supports the

perspective put forward by Bligh et al. (2006), who have asserted that the effectiveness of shared leadership is enhanced in cross-functional groups; Carson et al. (2007); and Serban and Roberts (2016), who have stated that acknowledging each other's expertise, abilities, and achievements has an impact on the development of shared leadership; Han et al. (2018), who perceived social support as a method focused on relationship-oriented strategy; and Small & Rentsch (2010), who stated that group members must possess mutual trust in order to effectively complete complex duties and attain the group's designated objective. In this case, the complex assignment refers to an organisational change crisis. Furthermore, the findings align with Döös & Wilhelmson's (2021) concepts of managerial shared leadership, since the participants in this study were representing the managerial levels. Therefore, these findings extended our knowledge of the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices and enhanced the organisational change process. The findings also extends the body of knowledge on shared leadership from the perspective of shared leadership as a managerial practice.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

Shared purpose means that individuals within a group actively participate in the establishment of goals and the development of strategies. This involvement is intended to enhance their understanding of the organisation's aims and offer direction on how to effectively achieve those objectives (Carson, et al., 2007; Luthans, et al., 2007a; Pearce, 2004; Wu & Chen, 2018).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

Shared objectives is another factor in the group internal environment that influence the development of shared leadership practices, which refers to a common understanding of the primary aims and collective goals of the group (Carson, et al., 2007).

Participants stated that the primary goals that group members had in common throughout and following the organisational transformation process were the development and growth of the organisation.

The group members' shared objectives were noticeable as they maintained a mutual understanding of the group's objectives and collective goals. This corroborated with Carson et al., (2007); Serban & Roberts (2016) indication that group members who possessed a mutual understanding of the group objectives were identified as a factor that influences the development of shared leadership practices.

Undoubtedly, the organisational transformation had a noticeable effect on the attitude of group members, resulting in a favourable enhancement of their relationship as a cohesive group. The crisis of transition fostered a deeper understanding of the organisation's objectives, therefore enhancing group members' ability to foster their own aims in order to align them with the company's objectives. This finding is consistent with Denis et al.'s (2001) assertion that the creative thinking and commitment of group members affect the success of the change process. Therefore, these findings extended the knowledge that shared leadership practices is empirically influenced by group members shared objectives. Moreover, it adds to growing body of literature on change that shared objectives enhances the accomplishment of organisational change process.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Group refers to utilising the mutual influence between group members on leading one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). Indeed, reciprocal influence that members have on one another when it comes to leading is one approach to evaluating shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

The current study has employed Carson et al.'s (2007) components pertaining to the internal dynamics of a group, such as shared purpose and social support. Additionally, it has considered Perry et al.'s (1999) concept of cooperation as a predictor of shared leadership. The findings of this study strongly endorse the belief that the internal environment and cooperation within a group have a significant impact on the development of shared leadership within the group.

The study has revealed that the organisation has faced significant challenges during its process of transition. Throughout the process of transformation, the group leader depended on the knowledge, abilities, and experience of his group members in order to accomplish the organisation's objectives for change. In such circumstances, group members must either recognise and accept the consequences of the business closure or demonstrate resilience in order to actively participate in the necessary organisational transformation. As stated in the literature review, group members must possess a significant degree of cooperation, communication, and coordination in order to exert an impact on the development of shared leadership practices within the group (Liu & Werblow, 2019; Perry, et al., 1999). The group of middle-line managers effectively addressed the crisis of the organisational transition, demonstrating a high degree of cooperation, communication, and coordination. The occurrence of an organisational transformation crisis served as an indicator of group cooperation as it strengthened their reliance on each other and their confidence in their capability to overcome the crisis. This aligns with the perspective of Buchanan et al. (2007) that implementing distributed leadership would increase group members' engagement and sense of responsibility towards the change process. This, in turn, would impact their cooperation with one another and coordination to successfully address the challenges generated by the change crisis.

Accomplishing the goals of organisational change was a complicated yet crucial task. They were confronted with a number of challenges, such as resolving issues that were related to their clients, maintaining their clients' trust, and ensuring that their company continued its operation. Thus, this finding aligns with the research conducted by Liu & Werblow (2019) and Perry et al. (1999), which posited that cooperation, communication, and coordination among group members would impact the development of shared leadership. Also, corroborate Döös and Wilhelmson's (2021) view that managerial shared leadership necessitates collaboration among the management group to complete organisational tasks. Additionally, this finding is consistent with the assertion made by By (2005) that change crises are unpredictable, but organisational leadership must respond to them and implement the required changes. Moreover, these findings extended the understanding of shared leadership literature that cooperation empirically influences the development of shared leadership especially during a complex situation. Moreover, it adds to the growing body of literature in change by providing practical evidence that group members' cooperation, coordination, and knowledge sharing have encouraged the effective accomplishment of the organisational transformation.

Group External Environment

The external environment theme consist of dimensions that reflect the group leader’s support to his or her group members. The components encompassed in this context are: *a) authority sharing includes delegate, b) empowerment including autonomy and self-leadership, and c) supportive culture including collective decision-making, participation in the decision-making, and the leader's support in decision-making process.* The development of shared leadership practice influenced by these factors. Authority sharing which involves the group leader delegating authority to the followers (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). Empowerment including autonomy and self-leadership, which refers to a leader's capacity to exert influence over

followers by encouraging them to take on leadership roles, and providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015). Autonomy refers to the level of independence provided by the role in terms of allowing employees significant freedom in scheduling their work duties and determining the approach to completing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1974). Self-leadership refers to the capacity and skills of group members to independently manage themselves and carry out their activities without the presence of their designated leader (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Supportive culture, which pertains to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including open communication, innovation, collective responsibilities, and collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and the leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002). We will now look at these in more details below.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

Sharing authority refers to the group leader's willingness to distribute the necessary power to their followers in order to successfully complete their assigned responsibilities (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). The findings indicate that group members have been given the authority to oversee their own branches and departments. This, in fact, has directly impacted the development of shared leadership in the middle-line managers' group.

Following the crisis of organisational transformation and the restructuring of the hierarchy, the top management transferred authority to group members and observed each branch as a separate entity. Nevertheless, there are certain limitations associated with this allocation of authority, including that financial affairs must be addressed to the top management prior to taking action. This finding corroborated the studies of Cox et al. (2003), Seers et al. (2003),

and Jain & Jeppesen (2014), who asserted that the act of sharing authority has an impact on the development of shared leadership because it motivates group members to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, as well as make important decisions related to their assigned responsibilities. Thus, the findings extend our understanding of shared leadership practices and illustrated that authority distribution contributed to the accomplishment of the organisational change process.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

Regarding delegation, the study further demonstrated that group leaders delegate power to branch managers, considering factors such as the branch's size and the capabilities, and experience of the branch manager. It is evident that the branch managers possess a significant degree of authority when it comes to matters pertaining to their respective branches and divisions. Indeed, each branch manager provided a notable impact on the process of rapid organisational change by effectively leading their group members and successfully progressing the pending tasks that needed to be completed prior to the implementation of the Saudi Ministry of Commerce's regulations regarding the institution's status (Ministry of Commerce of Saudi Arabia, N/D). According to the literature, delegating power to group members fosters the development of shared leadership by facilitating the implementation of a horizontal group structure (Bass & Bass, 2008). Moreover, it is important for group leaders to delegate power to their group members according to their skills and specialisations (Yukl, 2002). Consequently, the case's general manager distributed power according to the group members' specific areas of expertise, experience, knowledge, and ability. Thus, it could be assumed that shared authority, which encompasses delegation, was likely facilitated the development of shared leadership practices. These findings extended the understanding by providing empirical

evidence that leader's power distribution to the group members' specific areas of expertise, experience, knowledge, and ability enhance the process of the organisational transformation.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Empowerment refers to the perception of group members to their leader's influence over them and are encouraged to take on leadership roles within the group, providing them with the necessary autonomy to carry out their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015).

Group members expressed a significant degree of leader empowerment, including autonomy, and encouragement of self-leadership practices. Scholars in the field of leadership have stated that the level of autonomy employees experience during job performance is an empowering factor that facilitates the development of shared leadership (Carson, et al., 2007; Cheong, et al., 2019). Cox et al. (2003) asserted that leaders have an influence on shared leadership practices in groups through their support, empowerment, and encouragement of self-leadership. Further, Yukl and Becker (2006) argued that the implementation of self-management would enhance the group's sense of responsibility and degree of autonomy.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

Autonomy refers to the level of independence provided by the role in terms of allowing employees significant freedom in scheduling their work duties and determining the approach to completing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1974).

The findings indicated that group members had a significant degree of autonomy when overseeing their respective branches or divisions. This involves making any required decisions related to the functioning of their branch or department. In fact, autonomy is a crucial factor in the development of shared leadership since it relies on the members' specialised knowledge

and extensive experience in order for them to independently fulfil their duties. In fact, autonomy is crucial during an organisational change process as well (Buchanan, et al., 2007).

An interesting finding is that one group member had foreseen that his colleagues were experiencing a significant degree of autonomy, which needs to be regulated by the general manager of the case.

A possible explanation for this situation might be attributed to the previous manager's misuse of authority. This was a result of the complete autonomy that he was given by the founder of the organisation prior to the organisational transformation. Therefore, it may be inferred that group members were given autonomy while managing the process of organisational change and continued thereafter. Thus, it could be assumed that this contributes to the development of shared leadership within groups. Thus, our findings correspond with the studies conducted by Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fletcher & Kaufer (2003), Jain & Jeppesen (2014), and Pearce & Sims (2002), who suggested that group members should have a high level of autonomy in order to progress their duties independently, the view of Buchanan et al.'s (2007) who suggested that a group's autonomy level have a positive effect on the process of organisational change. Consequently, this would impact their motivation to take the initiative and enable them to make valuable contributions to their group, particularly in the context of organisational change (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). The finding of this study extended the understanding empirically that autonomy positively influences the development of shared leadership. Moreover, it adds on the growing body of change literature that group autonomy enhanced the accomplishment of the organisational change process as group members were given the needed freedom to fulfil their duties.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

Self-leadership refers to the group members' capacity and ability to effectively manage and exert influence among themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Self-leadership significantly impacts the development of shared leadership as it empowers group members to effectively manage themselves while carrying out their responsibilities without the presence of their designated leader (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Scholars have argued that shared leadership emphasises the distribution of leadership responsibilities among group members. This concept bears a similarity to self-leadership behaviour in terms of assuming responsibility but differs in terms of leadership style and hierarchical structure (Bligh, et al., 2006; Fitzsimons, et al., 2011; Zhu, et al., 2018). In order to sustain shared leadership, leaders have to provide assistance, support, and motivation to their followers to self-manage themselves (Cox, et al., 2003; Fausing, et al., 2015).

The leader's support for followers to self-manage themselves and exhibit leadership qualities within their peer group would have a significant impact on fostering shared leadership (Pearce & Sims, 2002; Perry, et al., 1999). Hence, the findings indicated that the case's general manager distributed the necessary authority to the group members and encourage their self-reliance to self-manage themselves and their own tasks. Throughout the process of organisational change, group members utilised their strengths to successfully navigate the crises generated by the transformation. Despite the organisation's ongoing transition at the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak, group members demonstrated the ability to effectively self-manage themselves in order to advance the organisational change process and achieve effective outcomes.

As a result, this concurs with the viewpoints put forth by Pearce & Sims (2002), Perry et al. (1999), and Fausing et al. (2015) that self-leadership has an impact on the implementation of shared leadership approaches within groups, the viewpoint of Kempster et al. (2014), who

suggested that group members leadership skills are important during the organisational change crisis, and Binci & Cerruti (2016), who asserted that group members self-leadership effectively influences the success of the organisational change process. Thus, these findings extended the understanding by providing empirical evidence that group members' self-leadership serves as an indicator of shared leadership practices in the organisation, which relies on the abilities, skills, and expertise of group members. Moreover, it also extends knowledge of change literature that self-leadership enhances the accomplishment of organisational change process.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

Supportive culture pertains to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including collective responsibilities, collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002).

Sub-codes: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making, Participate in Decision-making, and Leaders Support in Decision-making

The expression of group members' opinions during the decision-making process is an indicator of shared leadership (Carson, et al., 2007). The links between these factors can be attributed to the group's level of autonomy and the leader's encouragement of group involvement in the decision-making process. Multiple studies have demonstrated that group leaders are advised to decrease the number of hierarchical levels by involving group members in the decision-making process (Cox, et al., 2003; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002), as it impacts their capacity to take initiative, make contributions to the group (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014), and foster the process of organisational change (Buchanan, et al., 2007).

Indeed, participating in the decision-making process, particularly in decisions that impact the entire company, has a substantial influence on the behaviour of group members towards their organisation, and the organisational change process. Moreover, the organisational transformative process is considered a complex collective task that everyone has to contribute to in order to accomplish the organisational change. Furthermore, it impacts the process of organisational change by enabling top management to concentrate on the long-term objectives of the business, while delegating operational tasks to lower-level management and give them the needed space to perform it relying on their expertise.

Therefore, it may be inferred that group members were given independency to make decision while managing the process of organisational change and continued thereafter. Thus, our findings correspond with the studies conducted by Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fletcher & Kaufer (2003), Jain & Jeppesen (2014), and Pearce & Sims (2002), who suggested that group members should be independent in progressing their duties and to actively engage in the decision-making process, the view of Buchanan et al.'s (2007) who suggested that a group's participation in the decision-making process have a positive effect on the process of organisational change. Thus, these findings extended to the growing body of literature that the supportive culture empirically influenced the development of shared leadership practices. It also adds to the change literature that supportive culture as a theme includes collective decision-making, participation in decision-making, and the leader's support in decisions, which enhances the accomplishment of the organisational change process.

Non-managerial Employees

The non-managerial employees served as the primary group engaged in the organisational transformative process and played a crucial role in implementing shared leadership practices throughout the change process. The non-managerial employees represent the workforce in the branches across three distinct regions of Saudi Arabia—the Western, Eastern, and Central regions.

Western region- Jeddah

The western region branch is regarded as the second most extensive branch in the company in terms of the quantity of clients served. A total of six participants, excluding the branch manager, were asked for an interview at their best convenience.

Group Internal Environment

Within Group Internal Environment three main areas of coding were identified— 'Social Support', 'Shared Purposes', and 'Group'. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Social Support— Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016), and Trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010); Shared Purpose— Shared Objectives (Carson, et al., 2007); and Group (Gockel & Werth, 2010)— Cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

Social support refers to the group members attempt to provide mutual emotional and psychological support to each other, including skills and knowledge, and accomplishment recognition of their peers (Carson, et al., 2007). It is critical for the success of a group structure that group members have trust in one another skills, abilities, acknowledge the expertise and

knowledge of their groupmates, and consider them significant contributors to the group. We will now present the findings associated with the corresponding sub-codes.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Knowledge, and Skills Recognition

The study's findings demonstrated that group members in the western region branch recognised and valued the knowledge and abilities of their peers. This substantiates Carson et al.'s (2007) assertion regarding the influence of social support on the development of shared leadership. Furthermore, Serban & Roberts (2016) argued that group members relying on their peers' expertise, knowledge, and capabilities have an impact on the development of shared leadership.

It appears that group members acknowledged the knowledge and expertise of their peers and counted on their skills to accomplish the group common tasks. Therefore, this finding aligns with the thought of Serban & Roberts (2016), who suggested that group members who relied on their peers' abilities, experience, and skills had a positive effect on the development of shared leadership practices. These findings extended out understanding of the factors that influence development of shared leadership practices empirically and foster the accomplishment of the organisational change process.

While certain group members may lack the needed knowledge, they possess the necessary abilities to effectively do their assigned duty. Hence, these findings support the views of Bligh et al. (2006) and Serban & Roberts (2016), who asserted that cross-functional groups are essential in complementing each other, thereby impacting the development of shared leadership practices. Moreover, this extends the knowledge empirical understanding in the shared leadership literature that diverse knowledge, experience, and expertise of group members influence the development of shared leadership.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Accomplishment Recognition and Trust

Recognising the accomplishments of each other and having trust are crucial components of effective group work, as they represent the degree of confidence among group members (Small & Rentsch, 2010). The study findings revealed that a mutual trust between group members were present especially during the organisational transformative process. The findings also indicated that group members were acknowledges their peers' accomplishments. This in fact, enhanced the level of trust in one another abilities and accomplishment to their collective duties. This finding is consistent with that of Small & Rentsch, (2010) who argued that shared leadership practices is influenced by the mutual trust between group members, especially when accomplishing complex duties. These findings contribute to the body of knowledge in shared leadership and organisational change that mutual trust between group members in practice influence the development of shared leadership and enhanced the accomplishment of the organisational transformation process.

Thus, it can be inferred that the data from this study support the concepts proposed by Carson et al. (2007) regarding social support, Bligh et al. (2006) regarding cross-functional group, and Small & Rentsch, (2010) regarding trust, as an antecedents that influence the development of shared leadership practices, and the view of Binci & Cerruti (2016), who asserted that the process of organisational change is significantly impacted by the fact that group members shared expertise and experience with one another, which effectively affects the process change. Therefore, these findings extended the knowledge understanding by providing empirical evidence that recognising one another's accomplishments and exerting mutual trust in one another's abilities, expertise, and experience, especially in diverse knowledge groups, influence the development of shared leadership practices. Moreover, it adds to the growing body of

literature on change that social support as a theme enhances the accomplishment of the organisational change process.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

Shared purpose refers to the active participation of individuals within a group in the establishment of goals and strategy development. This involvement is intended to enhance their understanding of the organisation's aims and offer direction on how to effectively achieve those objectives (Carson, et al., 2007; Luthans, et al., 2007a; Pearce, 2004; Wu & Chen, 2018).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

The existence of shared objectives within the group has an influence on the development of shared leadership practices. Shared objectives refer to a common understanding of the primary aims and collective goals of the group (Carson, et al., 2007). The use of these strategies was evident in the organisational resilience displayed as it transitioned from an institution to a company following the death of its founder.

In terms of shared objectives among group members in the branch, it was noticeable that the majority, although not all, shared a common set of objectives. Consequently, this signifies that they possess a similar understanding of the group's goals and objectives (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016). Interviews with group members who share a common understanding of their objectives revealed that their primary objective is to contribute to the success of the organisation after the transformation crisis.

On the other hand, a conflict arose when group members had different understandings of the group goals as they prioritised their individual objectives. It could be argued that a lack of common understanding of group objectives among group members does not impact the development of shared leadership, but it might affect the progress of implementing the shared

leadership, especially during the change crisis. Indeed, the organisation has encountered challenging obstacles in order to sustain its operation, but not all group members shared similar understanding of their objectives. This conflict might potentially impact the group members' understanding of their core mission, which is to address the transformation challenges and prioritise the long-term sustainability of the organisation. Therefore, this contradicts Carson et al. (2007) and Serban & Roberts (2016), who found that a common objective exerts an impact on the shared leadership practices within groups in the western region branch.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Group refers to utilising the mutual influence between group members on leading one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). In addition, group members need to be communicative and coordinative between them to influence the development of shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010; Liu & Werblow, 2019). Indeed, reciprocal influence that members have on one another when it comes to leading is one approach to evaluating shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

Cooperation is an important aspect of group structure, as it pertains to the willingness of group members to provide assistance to one another while carrying out their given responsibilities in order to achieve the objectives of both the group and the organisation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

During the organisation's transformation period, branch group members collaborated to successfully navigate the challenging process of change. Researchers have, in fact, argued that cooperation plays a significant role in shaping the development of shared leadership (Cox, et al., 2003; Fausing, et al., 2013; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Perry, et al.,

1999). Therefore, the involvement of branch groups has been crucial in effectively accomplishing the organisational change process. They collaborated with one another and were assisted by their group leader. Thus, these findings support the belief of Fausing, et al., 2015, and Perry et al.'s (1999) that cooperation influence the development of shared leadership practices. These findings extend the knowledge of the development of shared leadership practices in empirical implementation, especially during the organisational transformation process. Thus, cooperation enables group members to share knowledge, experience, and expertise that contributed to the effective completion of the transformation process (Buchanan, et al., 2007).

On the other hand, some group members did not encounter the same degree of cooperation from their peers. Indeed, there were divergent viewpoints among them with regards to the cooperation. This may be attributed to variations in background, gender, or proficiency.

Sweeney et al. (2019) conducted a systematic review and found that, as Muethel et al. (2012) highlighted, the socio-demographic characteristics of groups have an impact on the development of shared leadership practices. Based on the findings of this study, it was likely that the ratio of females to males has not had a significant influence on the development of shared leadership within groups. Indeed, there was some conflict that arose, but the conflict is unlikely to impact the progress of shared leadership within the group. In fact, the branch manager heavily depends on the skills, abilities, and expertise of his group members to make valuable contributions to the group. Thus, it may be inferred that the gender ratio would not have a substantial impact on the shared leadership within a group, which contradicts the finding of Muethel et al. (2012) that the female-to-male ratio positively influences the development of shared leadership practices in groups. Our findings could not critically measure the influence of the female-to-male ratio on the development of shared leadership practices. Therefore, future

research should empirically investigate the influence of female-to-male ratios in the development of shared leadership practices.

Group External Environment

Within Group External Environment three main areas of coding were identified— *'Sharing Authority'*, *'Empowerment'*, and *'Supportive Culture'*. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Sharing Authority— Delegation (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014); Empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Fausing, et al., 2015)— Autonomy (Carson, et al., 2007) and Self-leadership (Pearce & Manz, 2005); and Supportive Culture (Erkutlu, 2012)— Collective Decision-making, Participate in Decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and Leader's Support in Decision-making (Yukl, 2002).

Main Code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

Sharing authority refers to the group leader's willingness to distribute the necessary power to their followers in order to successfully complete their assigned responsibilities (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014).

The study findings suggest that the branch manager shares authority with his group members and also distributes power to them. Undoubtedly, the manager relies on their perspective when the branch faces a certain circumstance. Previous studies on shared leadership have demonstrated that group leaders were encouraged to allocate power, via delegation, and minimise control, to their followers. This would result in followers being able to engage in decision-making and carry out their tasks independently (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Jain & Jeppesen, 2014; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Pearce & Sims, 2002).

Authority sharing is dependent on the group member's level of experience, skill, and capability. The manager grants the group member the power to make decisions or, at the very least, permits

them to express their opinions on the task. This corroborates the perspective put out by Cox et al. (2003) and Seers et al. (2003) that sharing authority to group members and depending on their skills, abilities, and expertise has an impact on the development of shared leadership within groups. Moreover, these findings extended our understanding of the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices. Also, add to the knowledge that group leader authority sharing enhanced the accomplishment of the organisational change process as each team members was granted the needed power to implement their duty especially during challenging situation.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

Regarding delegation, the study further demonstrated that group leaders delegate power to branch managers, considering factors such as the capabilities, and experience of the branch members.

Occasionally, the manager depends on the group members' knowledge, skills, abilities, and expertise to resolve specific issues that are within their area of expertise. This corroborates Yukl's (2002) argument that the delegation of power is contingent upon the group members' knowledge and specialisation, as well as Jain & Jeppesen's (2014) perspective that group members should be afforded the chance to take proactive measures to enhance the progress of their job. Thus, it can be argued that the presence of shared authority is impacting the development of shared leadership in the organisation being studied (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). This, in fact, corroborates Binci & Cerruti (2016), Canterino et al. (2020), and Canterino et al. (2018) arguments that the dynamics of shared leadership make the process of implementing change a shared process rather than counting on one individual leader. Thus, the study findings extend the understanding of both the empirical development of shared leadership and the delegation influence on successfully accomplishing the organisational change process.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Empowerment is the group members' perception of their leader's ability to influence them and their encouragement to take on leadership roles within the group. This includes granting them the required autonomy to fulfil their obligations (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015).

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

Autonomy refers to the degree of independence granted by the team leader in terms of granting employees substantial freedom in organising their job responsibilities and defining the method of accomplishing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1974).

The findings from the Western region's branch revealed that group members enjoyed a reasonable level of autonomy in executing their duties and making crucial decisions. The findings revealed that the branch group does not possess complete autonomy in their responsibilities. Certainly, the manager has the authority to interfere and offer explicit instructions to the group on the particular instance they were handling and the related decision that has to be taken. Indeed, group autonomy is a crucial element in fostering shared leadership, as it empowers group members to freely contribute their knowledge and apply their skills to successfully complete their given tasks.

Existing evidence suggests that the level of autonomy and engagement in the decision-making of a group has an impact on shared leadership practices. Moreover, these factors exert a beneficial influence on the relationship between leaders and followers (Carson, et al., 2007; Cox, et al., 2003; Fausing, et al., 2013; Seers, et al., 2003; Volmer, et al., 2012; Wu & Chen, 2018; Yukl & Becker, 2006).

Therefore, it is possible to argue that the group's leader determines the level of autonomy for the group, which may have an impact on the implementation of shared leadership within the group. Therefore, it may be inferred that this finding corroborates the argument put out by Carson et al. (2007), who posited that autonomy has an impact on the development of shared leadership. Further, this finding potentially supports the assertion made by Buchanan et al. (2007) that the implementation of shared leadership during the organisational change process fosters the level of autonomy that group members have and has a positive impact on the relationship between the group leader and their followers. Hence, this extends the empirical understanding that the degree of autonomy among group members has an impact on the development of shared leadership within the group. Also, autonomy positively influences the accomplishment of the organisational transformation process.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

Self-leadership refers to the group members' capacity and ability to effectively manage and exert influence among themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Self-leadership significantly impacts the development of shared leadership as it empowers group members to effectively manage themselves while carrying out their responsibilities without the presence of their designated leader (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Thus, encouraging self-management among followers has an impact on the development of shared leadership (Cox, et al., 2003; Fausing, et al., 2013).

The findings demonstrated that group members possess a strong sense of accountability towards their responsibilities. They continue their work whether their manager is present or not. This is because the branch manager fosters a culture where group members are empowered to assume leadership roles and were trusted with decision-making authority. This corroborates the perspectives of Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003) Fausing et al. (2013), and Pearce &

Manz (2005) that empowerment has an impact on followers, encouraging them to exhibit leadership qualities within their group and fostering a greater sense of accountability towards the organisation.

Perhaps the most disturbing finding is that the branch manager would intervene in guiding his branch group on the execution of specific cases. This finding contradicts the definitions of shared leadership provided by Fitzsimons et al. (2011) and Fausing et al. (2013), who described it as a behaviour of self-leading at the group level.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

Supportive culture refers to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including collective responsibilities, collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002).

Sub-codes: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making

Collective decision-making is the process in which several group members engage in making a decision collectively (Erkutlu, 2012). Group members engage in collective decision-making when confronted with a critical situation that necessitates the involvement of more than one group member, relying on their knowledge, skills, experience, and expertise (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Manz, 2005).

As the organisation was undergoing through a transformative process, the branch group were obligated to make crucial decisions relaying on their peers' knowledge, skills, experience, and expertise. The organisational transformative process considered as a complex task that requires more than one member to participate in making the required decision.

These finding reflect those of Buchanan, et al., (2007) who also found that shared leadership practices was essential during a complex organisational transformative process. In fact, the collective decision making greatly relayed on the experience and expertise of the group members. Therefore, this finding further support the idea of Gockel & Werth (2010) and Pearce & Sims (2000) that complex tasks influence the development of shared leadership practices. Hence, these finding extends the empirical understanding of shared leadership practices and their influence on the successful accomplishment of the organisation's change process, which is considered a complex task due to the circumstances that the organisation went through.

Sub-codes: Group External Environment—Participate in Decision-making

The expression of group members' opinions during the decision-making process is an indicator of shared leadership (Carson, et al., 2007). The links between these factors can be attributed to the group's level of autonomy and the leader's encouragement of group involvement in the decision-making process.

The branch manager does encourage his group to participate in the decision-making process, but he limits their ability to carry out their suggestions. This could also have an impact on the group members' motivation to engage in future decision-making processes and restrict their ability to take initiative on their own (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). Therefore, the findings contradict the argument made by Jain & Jeppesen (2014) that group leaders' encouragement of group members to engage in the decision-making process has an extended effect on their willingness to take on future initiatives.

Sub-codes: Group External Environment— Leaders Support in Decision-making

Leader’s support in the decision-making process refers to the level of support of the decisions implemented by group members, whether they were successful or not. By allowing

organisation unit members to make decisions related to their filed of expertise and support their decision, it might strengthen the group, and alleviate pressure. This finding is consistent with that of Yukl (2002) who argued that delegating decision-making authority to organisation unit members, might strengthen the group members efficacy, alleviate pressure, and distribute power more equitably (Yukl, 2002).

Hence, it could be argued that, based on the findings, the degree of group members involvement in the decision-making process has a positive impact on the development of shared leadership within the group, which also aligns with the viewpoints of Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fausing et al. (2013), Seers et al. (2003), Volmer et al. (2012), Wu & Chen (2018), and Yukl & Becker (2006) that the delegation of decision-making authority is a critical factor that impacts the development of shared leadership practices and has a positive effect on the leader-group relationship. Additionally, this aligns with the viewpoint put forth by Erkutlu (2012) who argued that the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members affects the development of shared leadership. Therefore, these findings extends the growing body of literature of shared leadership that supportive culture as a theme influence the development of shared leadership practices. It also, adds in the growing body of literature of change that supportive culture as a theme enhanced the accomplishment of organisational change process.

In general, these findings mostly corroborate the ideas brought out by Carson et al. (2007) regarding the internal environment of groups, Perry et al. (1999) regarding cooperation, and Sweeney et al. (2019) regarding the external environment of groups, including shared authority (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014), empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014), autonomy, participation in decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007), and self-leadership (Pearce & Manz, 2005) as a predictor of shared leadership practice; and Binci & Cerruti (2016) argument that

self-leadership behaviour positively affects the process of organisational change, especially radical change. Thus, these findings adds to the growing body of literature supporting that these factors have empirically influenced the development of shared leadership and encouraged the effective accomplishment of the organisational transformation process.

Nevertheless, several discrepancies arose that could potentially impact the implementation of shared leadership among group members. Includes the conflicts related to the branch manager's authority and the extent of his influence over his group members. Several elements may account for this phenomenon, including socio-demographic features (Muethel, et al., 2012), the group leader's confidence in the abilities and capabilities of the group (Small & Rentsch, 2010), and the organisation's process of change.

Eastern region- Al-Khobar

The headquarters of the case are located in the Eastern Region of Saudi Arabia, in Al-Khobar City. There are three operational departments, including the auditing, legal, and quality assurance departments. The headquarters is considered the most extensive branch within the organisation, in terms of departments' size, employee count, and serviced clients. A total of eight participants, specifically five from the legal department and three from the auditing department (excluding branch managers and heads of departments), were extended invitations for an interview at a time that suits them best. The participants were all from the Al-Khobar branch.

Group Internal Environment

Within Group Internal Environment three main areas of coding were identified— 'Social Support', 'Shared Purposes', and 'Group'. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Social Support— Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016), and Trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010); Shared Purpose— Shared Objectives (Carson, et al., 2007); and Group (Gockel & Werth, 2010)— Cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

Social support refers to which refers to group members attempt to provide mutual emotional and psychological support to each other, including skills and knowledge, and accomplishment recognition of their peers (Carson, et al., 2007).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Knowledge, and Skills Recognition

The findings from Al-Khobar branch revealed two distinct viewpoints about group members' ability to acknowledge and appreciate their peers' assets, including their knowledge, abilities, and achievements. The study has failed to establish the presence of social support among group members through the acknowledgment of their skills and contributions to the group, particularly in the ‘auditing’ department.

A noticeable disagreement was identified in this finding; this conflict arose after the implementation of organisational changes, as previously mentioned, and the crisis of transformation. The change crisis has exposed several conflicts stemming from unfulfilled expectations after the organisation has been restructured. Therefore, it could be assumed that this finding contradicts previous studies that have proposed social support as a relation-oriented approach where group members establish supportive environments (Han, et al., 2018). These environments are believed to impact the development of shared leadership, and the practices of shared leadership are more prevalent in cross-functional groups due to the reliance on diverse knowledge, skills, abilities, and backgrounds of group members (Bligh, et al., 2006; Serban & Roberts, 2016).

Nevertheless, the data from the legal department indicated that group members acknowledge and appreciate the contributions made by their colleagues to the group. Therefore, this finding corroborates Carson et al.'s (2007) belief that socially recognising other knowledge, skills, and expertise influences the development of shared leadership, and Han et al.'s (2018) previous study that proposed social support as a relation-oriented approach where group members establish supportive environments. Thus, these findings extend our understanding that social support as a relationship-oriented approach empirically influences the development of shared leadership.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Accomplishment Recognition and Trust

Recognising the successes of peers and having trust in each other are crucial components of effective group work, as they indicate the level of trust that exists among group members (Small & Rentsch, 2010).

In order to establish strong relationships and foster the development of shared leadership, it is crucial for group members to acknowledge, trust and appreciate the contributions made by their colleagues, especially when the organisation is undergoing transformation crises. In the case of Audit department, the finding revealed that trust is not completely mutual between all group members in terms of accomplishing their task effectively. However, the Legal department group members held different perspective were participants illustrated that there is a mutual trust based on their accomplishment, which results in increase their confidents on them.

These findings are consistent with those of Castellano et al. (2021) and Small & Rentsch, (2010), who stated that trust is a crucial component in shared leadership practices as it fosters cohesion, cooperation, knowledge sharing, and communication. This also accords with Lyndon et al. (2020) earlier observations, which showed that cognitive trust has a positive influence on the development of shared leadership practices. These findings further support the idea of Small & Rentsch (2010) that effective cooperative work is a reflection of the level of trust within the group; thus, it is crucial to acknowledge peers' achievements and build trust among group members. Therefore, these findings extends the empirical understanding to the body of literature of shared leadership and organisation change, as trust is influencing the development of shared leadership, and plays a major role in the accomplishing the transformation process within the organisation. These findings further support the idea of Small & Rentsch (2010) that effective cooperative work reflects the level of trust within the group; thus, it is crucial to acknowledge peers' achievements and build trust among group members. Therefore, these

findings extend the empirical understanding to the body of literature on shared leadership and organisational change, as trust influences the development of shared leadership and plays a major role in accomplishing the transformation process within the organisation.

Overall, these findings broadly support the work of Bligh et al. (2006), Carson et al. (2007), Han et al. (2018), and Serban & Roberts (2016), who found that social support influences the development of shared leadership in groups. Therefore, these findings adds to the growing body of shared leadership and change literature that social supports including acknowledging peers' knowledge expertise, and accomplishment, as well as trust empirically influence the development of shared leadership and enhance the accomplishment of organisational change process.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

Shared purpose entails group members' active participation in goal formulation and strategy development. This is supposed to enhance their understanding of the group's aims and offer direction on how to effectively achieve those objectives (Carson, et al., 2007; Luthans, et al., 2007a; Pearce, 2004; Wu & Chen, 2018).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

Shared objectives refers to group members who possess a common understanding of the group's objectives (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016). Group members who involved in the organisational transformation possess a common understanding of their objectives. Undoubtedly, the crisis of change had a beneficial impact on groups' perceptions of their company.

This finding corroborate with the thoughts of Carson et al. (2007) of group members sharing similar understandings of their objectives. Moreover, this extends our understanding of the

factors that influence the development shared leadership, and how these factors influence the accomplishment of organisational change process.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to consider the potential bias towards self-oriented goals rather than goals that are shared with their peers. Despite the view that shared objectives contribute to the development of shared leadership, which primarily emphasises the group as a whole rather than individual members (Pearce & Conger, 2003), our finding contradicts the thoughts of Carson et al. (2007) of group members sharing similar understandings of their objectives, as some members prioritised their own objectives over those of the groups.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Group refers to utilising the mutual influence between group members to lead one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). Furthermore, it is imperative for group members to possess effective communication skills and maintain a high level of coordination among themselves in order to exert an impact on the evolution of shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010; Liu & Werblow, 2019). Indeed, the reciprocal influence that members have on one another when it comes to leading is one approach to evaluating shared leadership practices (Gockel & Werth, 2010).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

Within the internal dynamics of a group, cooperation is considered a crucial element in influencing the development of shared leadership practices. The Eastern Region branch's findings demonstrated that group members possess divergent viewpoints towards cooperation. One perspective regards cooperation as an important aspect that impacts the group's results, while the opposing perspective believes that group members should not rely on their colleagues' assistance or support to fulfil their responsibilities.

This contradicts the ideas proposed by Carson et al. (2007) regarding the group's internal environment and Perry et al.'s (1999) belief that cooperation can predict shared leadership practices among group members. Furthermore, the findings also indicated that certain individuals in the auditing department are inclined to collaborate with colleagues, while others will only collaborate upon receiving a request.

During the process of organisational transformation, when the company was facing a number of challenges, it was critically important for group members to work together and cooperate. This corroborates the assertion made by Canterino et al. (2020) that the cooperation of group members has a significant impact on the process of organisational change. Thus, this extends the change literature body of knowledge that cooperation influence the accomplishment of successful organisational change. However, Perry et al. (1999), who asserted that cooperation may be used to anticipate shared leadership behaviours, the finding could be interpreted as a contradiction to their thought.

Group External Environment

Within Group External Environment three main areas of coding were identified— *'Sharing Authority'*, *'Empowerment'*, and *'Supportive Culture'*. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Sharing Authority— Delegation (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014); Empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Fausing, et al., 2015)— Autonomy (Carson, et al., 2007) and Self-leadership (Pearce & Manz, 2005); and Supportive Culture (Erkutlu, 2012)— Collective Decision-making, Participate in Decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and Leader's Support in Decision-making (Yukl, 2002).

Main Code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

Sharing authority is a factor that influences the development of shared leadership practices. Sharing authority refers to the group leader's willingness to distribute the necessary power to their followers in order to successfully complete their assigned responsibilities (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014).

The current investigation has revealed that managers of both departments distribute power to their group members, depending on their knowledge, skills, abilities, and expertise. An interesting finding is that sharing of authority is not influenced by socio-demographic characteristics. Instead, a group leader distribute power based on the skills, abilities, and qualifications of group members.

This approach also ensures that their manager recognise and value their efforts. This finding contradicts the findings of Muethel et al. (2012), who argued that the gender ratios (specifically, the ratio of females to males) within a group had an impact on the development of shared leadership within the group. Thus, a further investigation required to measure the effectiveness of female-to-male ratio on shared leadership practices, particularly on the authority distribution factor.

Similarly, within the auditing department, group members are authorised to progress in their job, but if they encounter a dispute, they are required to seek guidance from the group manager. Indeed, authority distribution fosters a culture where group members actively assume leadership responsibilities within their group and make valuable contributions to the organisation's success. These findings extends the understanding and provides more evidence for the argument put forth by Cox et al. (2003), Jain & Jeppesen (2014), and Seers et al. (2003)

that group leaders were encouraged to delegate power to their group, depending on their abilities, skills, and experience, to foster the development of shared leadership.

On the other hand, the leader's involvement in complex circumstances contradicts the findings of Jain and Jeppesen (2014), who argued that a leader's intervention in crucial circumstances could limit group members' self-initiative towards their responsibilities.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

Regarding delegation, another significant finding is that the leader's delegation was noticeable during the organisational transformation. This may be considered a crucial aspect of the effect of shared leadership on the process of organisational transformation. Under such circumstances, the leader's act of delegating responsibilities to others would have a substantial influence on the process of change, as it would enable group members to carry on their duties without obstructing the organisational transformation process.

This finding corroborates the claim put forth by Sweeney et al. (2019) and Jain & Jeppesen (2014) that delegation has an impact on shared leadership within groups as it promotes the adoption of a horizontal group structure. This finding also corroborates the view of Kempster et al. (2014), who asserted that shared leadership exerts a substantial influence on the process of organisational change. Thus, these findings extended the literature knowledge that delegation influences the development of shared leadership and the successful accomplishment of organisational change process.

Conversely, within the audit department, there appears to be a lack of trust between the manager and his group members over their skills and capabilities. This has the potential to result in conflict, which would have a detrimental effect on the progress of the organisational change.

This finding contradicts prior research that has advocated for group leaders to delegate power to their group members relying on their knowledge and specialisation (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014; Yukl, 2002). Therefore, we could argue that the lack of trust that the group leader had in his group members had a negative impact on the development of shared leadership in the auditing department.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Empowerment refers to the members' perception of their leader's ability to influence and motivate them to take on leadership roles within the group. This includes granting them the required autonomy to fulfil their responsibilities (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Fausing, et al., 2015).

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

The current investigation has determined that the degree of autonomy among members of the legal department group is contingent upon their level of experience and skill. The investigation found that the majority of group members were autonomous while progressing their work.

Previous studies has highlighted the significance of group autonomy, which influences the development of shared leadership practices (Carson, et al., 2007; Cheong, et al., 2019; Fausing, et al., 2013). Hence, the findings corroborate Carson, et al. (2007) proposition that the degree of autonomy influences the development of shared leadership within groups. Further, these findings align with the assertion made by Buchanan et al. (2007), who stated that distributed leadership has a positive impact on the process of organisational change. This is due to the fact that it enables employees to enjoy a high level of autonomy. Thus, these findings extended the knowledge to the body of literature that autonomy influences the development of shared leadership and enhances the accomplishment of organisational change process.

Conversely, the investigation revealed that group members in the auditing department have been given limited autonomy. This may be due to the group's limited experience and the leader's lack of trust in their abilities.

This finding contradicts prior research that has proposed that group leaders should actively promote autonomy among group members in order to enhance their self-initiative in handling complex tasks and necessary making-decisions related to that task (Fausing, et al., 2013; Jain & Jeppesen, 2014).

One notable finding is that the restriction on autonomy is not determined by the group leader; rather, it is influenced by market forces. It seems possible that these findings were due to conflict between the group leader and his group, leading to a restriction on the group's ability to express themselves and reducing their level of autonomy. Thus, this contradict with Carson et al., (2007) claim that autonomy level can predict shared leadership practices in the auditing department group.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

Self-leadership refers to the group members' capacity and ability to effectively manage and exert influence among themselves (Pearce & Manz, 2005). The findings of this study demonstrated that group members exhibit a noticeable sense of responsibility, and the pace of work remains unaffected regardless of the presence or absence of the group leader. One potential explanation for these findings might be that engaging in auditory tasks that demand self-management leads to the development of self-leadership skills. In addition, a leader's encouragement of self-management among group members as they carry out their given responsibilities.

The justification for this finding may be explained by Jain and Jeppesen's (2014) perspective on accountability, which emphasises the importance of group members taking responsibility for their work behaviour. In fact, this has an impact on the amount of autonomy among group members and motivates them to assume leadership roles within their group, while also enhancing their sense of accountability towards their company. Thus, this finding aligns with the conclusions of Pearce & Sims (2002) and Perry et al. (1999), who posited that when group leaders support their members to self-manage and demonstrate leadership qualities, it has an impact on the development of shared leadership; and consistent with the study conducted by Binci and Cerruti (2016), that self-leadership behaviour has a positive impact on the process of organisational change, particularly when it involves significant and radical changes. Hence, these findings extends the body of literature on shared leadership that self-leadership influences the development of shared leadership and enhances the accomplishment of organisational change process.

In a similar vein, the findings demonstrated that the legal department's operations would continue uninterrupted in the absence of their leader. These findings may be attributed to the phenomenon of power sharing between the leader and his group. The legal department necessitates the presence of proficient individuals to handle cases that involve the court of law. Thus, these findings support the notions put forth by Cox et al. (2003) and Seers et al. (2003), which propose that a group leader should delegate responsibility to their group and encourage them for self-leadership, as well as placing trust in their abilities, skills, and expertise. Thus, these findings extended the excising knowledge on the factors that influences the development of shared leadership. Moreover, it also extended the knowledge on that self-leadership enhances the successful accomplishment of organisational change process.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

Supportive culture refers to the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members including collective responsibilities, collective decision-making among group members (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002).

Sub-codes: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making

Group members engage in collective decision-making when confronted with a critical situation that necessitates the involvement of more than one group member, relying on their knowledge, skills, experience, and expertise (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Manz, 2005). Regarding the decision-making process, due to the fact that the sensibility of the legal department, most of the collective decisions are collected with the presence of the team leader.

Prior studies that have noted the importance of delegating decision-making authority to unit members impacts the development of shared leadership practices and has a positive effect on the leader-group relationship (Carson, et al., 2007; Cox, et al., 2003; Fausing, et al., 2013; Seers, et al., 2003; Volmer, et al., 2012; Wu & Chen, 2018; Yukl & Becker, 2006). However, the findings of this study do not support that view. On the other hand, when it comes to complex situation within the group and the organisation, the group would take further step and make necessary decisions relying on themselves and their peers knowledge and expertise to overcome the complex situation. This finding is consistent with that of Gockel & Werth (2010) and Pearce & Sims (2000) who argued that complex tasks influence the development of shared leadership practices. Thus, these findings extended the knowledge in the shared leadership literature that group decision-making influences the development of shared leadership. Moreover, it adds to the growing body of literature on organisational change that group

decision-making processes enhance the accomplishment of organisational transformation, which is considered a complex situation.

Sub-codes: Group External Environment—Participate in Decision-making

The expression of group members' opinions during the decision-making process is an indicator of shared leadership (Carson, et al., 2007). The study revealed that the leader of the legal department actively promotes his group members to express their opinions process throughout the decision-making process on matters that affect the whole organisations, such situation was during the organisational change process.

Undoubtedly, when a group leader actively engages their group members in the decision-making process, it has a significant impact on their self-efficacy and fosters the development of shared leadership. Thus this finding corroborates Carson et al.'s (2007) assertion that the participation of group members in the decision-making process has an impact on the development of shared leadership within groups. Furthermore, it aligns with the perspective of Buchanan et al. (2007), who argued that group leaders should grant their group members the authority to engage in the decision-making process during an organisational change process. Hence, these findings extended the body of knowledge in the literature of shared leadership that participating in the decision-making process influence the development of shared leadership. Moreover, it also extended the change literature that participating in the decision-making process enhances the successful accomplishment of organisational change.

In contrast to the legal department, personnel of the auditing department were not involved in any form of decision-making. Surprisingly, the reason for group members not being included in the decision-making process is not due to the group leader's exclusion of them but rather their belief that it is unsuitable for group members to be involved in this managerial role.

It could be argued that the absence of trust between the group leader and his group may have an impact on the group members' beliefs. Additionally, the group members' self-efficacy level is comparatively low; this could be due to the impact of the relationship dynamics between the group's leader and their followers, which negatively affects how they perceive themselves.

These findings contradict Carson et al.'s (2007) assertion that a group's participation in the decision-making process affects the growth of shared leadership. It also contradicts Jain & Jeppesen's (2014) belief that involving group members in decision-making increases their willingness to take on additional tasks, particularly during times of crisis similar to the transformative process that the organisation has gone through. Further, this contradicts the assertion made by Buchanan et al. (2007) that shared leadership fosters a positive relationship between members of a group and the leaders of that group, especially during an organisational change process. Thus, these findings adds to the growing body of literature of shared leadership and change that lack of trust between group members and their leader affect their participation in the decision-making process, which therefore, impacted the development of shared leadership practices as well as the accomplishment of organisational change process.

Sub-codes: Group External Environment— Leader's Support in Decision-making

Leader's support in the decision-making process refers to the level of support of the decisions implemented by group members, whether they were successful or not.

The development of shared leadership is influenced by the leader's support in the decision-making process, where unit members are encouraged to make decisions related to their filed of expertise (Cox, et al., 2003; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002). The findings of this study revealed that group units were supported by their leader in terms of their decision outcome, and their contribution was supported by their leader.

Thus, the degree of group members' involvement in the decision-making process has a positive impact on the development of shared leadership within the group. This is consistent with the perspectives of Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fausing et al. (2013), Seers et al. (2003), Volmer et al. (2012), Wu & Chen (2018), and Yukl & Becker (2006) that the distribution of decision-making power is a crucial element that influences the development of shared leadership practices and has a beneficial impact on the relationship between the leader and the group. Furthermore, this is consistent with the perspective presented by Erkutlu (2012), who contended that an organisational environment that promotes the positive behaviour of group members influences the development of shared leadership. Therefore, these findings extended the current understanding of leader's support in the decision-making process that influence the development of shared leadership. It also, adds on to the knowledge that the supportive culture enhances the successful accomplishment of organisational change process.

On the other hand, the auditing department findings revealed different view regarding the leader's support in terms of the decision-making process. This is a result of a conflicting relationship between the leader and the group members, when certain expectations have not been fulfilled after the organisational change, along with the decisions taken during and after the transformation process. This finding is contrary to that of Erkutlu (2012) who found that an organisational environment that promotes the positive behaviour of group members influences the development of shared leadership.

Central region- Riyadh

The central region branch of the case organisation is regarded as the smallest branch in terms of both staff numbers and the number of clients it supports. Three individuals, excluding the branch manager, were invited for an interview at a time that suited them best.

Group Internal Environment

Within Group Internal Environment three main areas of coding were identified— 'Social Support', 'Shared Purposes', and 'Group'. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Social Support— Knowledge, Skills, and Accomplishment Recognition (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016), and Trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010); Shared Purpose— Shared Objectives (Carson, et al., 2007); and Group (Gockel & Werth, 2010)— Cooperation (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999).

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Social Support

Social support refers to group members attempt to provide mutual emotional and psychological support to each other, including skills and knowledge, and accomplishment recognition of their peers (Carson, et al., 2007).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Knowledge, and Skills Recognition

The findings of this study is that there is a limited level of mutual support among group members, and they hold the belief that not all group members possess the necessary abilities and skills.

The occurrence of this conflict can be attributed to several factors, such as the gap in knowledge and expertise among group members or the consequences of the organisational transformation procedure. Regarding the process of organisational transformation, the organisation has undergone a significant restructure at the hierarchical level. Consequently, the restructure failed to meet the expectations of those aiming for elevation in the management hierarchy. Hence, the conflicting interpersonal dynamics among group members may have an adverse effect on the development of shared leadership within the group. Thus, these findings contradict prior research that has indicated that a group's social support is perceived as a relationship-oriented

approach, where group members establish a positive and supportive environment that impacts the development of shared leadership (Erkutlu, 2012; Han, et al., 2018).

Conversely, members of the same group viewed this issue from varying viewpoints. This point view, in fact, aligns with the findings of Han et al. (2018), who identified social support as a relationship-oriented strategy in which group members foster a supportive environment that impacts the development of shared leadership within a group. Thus, this extended the understanding that social support as relationship-oriented strategy influence the development of shared leadership practices. Moreover, these findings adds on to the growing body of change literature that social support as relationship-oriented strategy enhance the accomplishment of organisational change process.

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Accomplishment Recognition and Trust

Recognising peers' successes and fostering trust among group members are crucial components of effective collaborative work, as they reflect the level of confidence that exists within the group (Small & Rentsch, 2010). According to the findings, most of the group members recognise their peers' accomplishment and contribution as this is the branch environment prior and post organisational transformation process. This finding is in accord with recent studies by Han et al. (2018) indicating that social support is a relationship-oriented strategy that influences the development of shared leadership in groups by encouraging members to create a supportive environment.

Main code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Purpose

The concept of shared purpose pertains to the participation of individuals within a group in the formulation of strategies and goals. This engagement is anticipated to enhance their understanding of the group's overarching objectives and provide direction on how to effectively

achieve those objectives (Carson, et al., 2007; Luthans, et al., 2007a; Pearce, 2004; Wu & Chen, 2018).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Shared Objectives

The existence of shared objectives within the group has an influence on the development of shared leadership practices. Shared objectives refer to a common understanding of the primary aims and collective goals of the group (Carson, et al., 2007).

The study revealed that group members in the Riyadh branch possess a cohesive understanding of the group's goals, specifically focused on the company's success, particularly during the process of organisational change process. Shared objectives are essential for the sustainability of the organisation.

This finding broadly corroborates the findings of previous studies in this field that demonstrate a correlation between the shared objectives of group members and the effectiveness of shared leadership development within groups (Bligh, et al., 2006; Carson, et al., 2007; Daspit, et al., 2013; Serban & Roberts, 2016).

One notable finding is that group members had a similar understanding of the group objectives; however, as participants mentioned, they showed differences in how they carried out these objectives.

This implies that the achievement of shared goals was dependent on the group's conscientious execution of their responsibilities. Indeed, this also relied on the leader's support of his group, a fact that is evidently not perceptible.

This finding contradicts earlier research that has indicated that a group leader should foster a supportive environment for their group, which in turn affects the development of shared

leadership (Erkutlu, 2012; Pearce & Sims, 2000). Thus, this also contradicts Carson et al.'s (2007) thought that shared objectives were observed as a factor that influences the development of shared leadership practices. Furthermore, it has failed to exhibit task cohesiveness in relation to the group's objectives, contradicting the findings of Serban & Roberts (2016) that group cohesion predicts shared leadership practices within groups.

Main Code: Group Internal Environment—Group

Group refers to utilising the mutual influence between group members on leading one another (Gockel & Werth, 2010). The evaluation of the development of shared leadership practices may involve examining the reciprocal influence that members exert on one another in the context of leadership (Gockel & Werth, 2010).

Sub-code: Group Internal Environment—Cooperation

The data from the central region indicates that group members cooperate with one another; however, there are some constraints associated with this cooperation. One of the participants has observed a conflict arising between group members and their relationship with the group leader.

This type of conflict has a direct impact on the interpersonal dynamics among group members, thereby impacting the development of shared leadership. Furthermore, the disagreement emerged following the organisational change and escalated as a result of the unfulfilled expectations of an experienced group member. Thus, this finding contradicts the findings of D'Innocenzo et al. (2021) and Hannah et al. (2011), which exhibited that the group relationship had an impact on the development of shared leadership practices.

The conflict among group members was noticeable due to the lack of alignment between the views of one of the participants and the rest of the group. These findings contradict previous

studies, which have indicated that shared leadership promotes a strong level of cooperation and coordination among group members (Perry, et al., 1999) and that the group leader's supportive environment influences the development of shared leadership within the group (Erkutlu, 2012). The high level of misunderstanding among group members in the central region negatively impacted the development of shared leadership. It could be argued that interpersonal conflicts among group members have a negative impact on the development of shared leadership.

As a result, it is apparent that the central region branch did not generally support the thoughts put forth by Carson et al. (2007) about the group's internal environment and Perry et al. (1999) regarding cooperation. These findings do not provide evidence to support the implementation of shared leadership in the Riyadh branch. One potential reason for this might be an inconsistency in understanding the group's primary objective, the group's diverse range of skills and expertise, and the process of organisational transformation. Furthermore, the absence of the group leader's proactive efforts in establishing a supportive environment (Erkutlu, 2012) significantly impacts the group interpersonal relationship, which as result impacted the development of shared leadership.

Group External Environment

Within Group External Environment three main areas of coding were identified— *'Sharing Authority'*, *'Empowerment'*, and *'Supportive Culture'*. Within these main areas of coding, sub-codes were also derived. These were Sharing Authority— Delegation (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014); Empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Fausing, et al., 2015)— Autonomy (Carson, et al., 2007) and Self-leadership (Pearce & Manz, 2005); and Supportive Culture (Erkutlu, 2012)— Collective Decision-making, Participate in Decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and Leader's Support in Decision-making (Yukl, 2002).

Main Code: Group External Environment—Sharing Authority

Sharing authority refers to a group leader's ability to distribute responsibility and provide their followers with the tools they need to do their jobs (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014).

The central region branch's findings indicate that the branch manage distributed authority with his group and has assigned some powers to the group members. Sharing authority is a key factor that impacts the development of shared leadership within groups (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014). Bligh et al. (2006) suggest that the implementation of shared leadership methods in groups is heavily influenced by the knowledge, abilities, and backgrounds of group members. Consequently, it is advisable for a group leader to restrict their interference, delegate greater authority to group members, and serve as a coach to intervene when needed to improve any inadequate execution (Carson, et al., 2007; Perry, et al., 1999). The branch manager trust his group member knowledge and skills, thereby, placing confidence in them by distributing authority. For instance, the branch manager relied on participant 1R's expertise in human development and involving him to train and prepare newly recruited staff for their job responsibilities.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Delegation

Regarding delegation, the practice of power delegation empowers group members to take on leadership roles within their group, enabling them to make decisions when faced with conflict situations.

Actually, the practices of sharing authority and delegating power were established throughout the process of organisational transformation since they were predominantly centralised in the prior era. This finding provides general support for the findings of previous research in this

field, which have shown a connection between shared authority and delegation and the growth of shared leadership within groups (Cox, et al., 2003; Seers, et al., 2003; Bass & Bass, 2008).

Main Code: Group External Environment—Empowerment

Leaders' empowerment is a crucial element that has an influence on the development of shared leadership in groups. The findings of the study illustrated that group members observed their leader's empowerment while performing their duties. These empowerments were observed from the angle of autonomy and self-leadership practices.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Autonomy

Autonomy refers to the level of independence provided by the role in terms of allowing employees significant freedom in scheduling their work duties and determining the approach to completing tasks (Carson, et al., 2007; Hackman & Oldham, 1974). According to the current investigation, the level of autonomy that each member of the Central Region group had depended on their individual levels of experience and expertise. Indeed, the analysis uncovered that the majority of group members exhibited autonomy in carrying out their responsibilities.

The influence of autonomy on the development of shared leadership was significant due to its strong emphasis on the abilities and expertise of group members. While this phenomenon results in increased accountability and an understanding of leadership responsibilities, it also fosters the development of shared leadership within groups. Thereby, these findings corroborates the research conducted by Carson et al. (2007), which shown that a group's level of independence has an impact on the development of shared leadership within the group, thus leading to an elevation in group members' sense of responsibility towards their tasks.

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Self-leadership

The findings of the self-leadership demonstrated that group members exhibited a strong sense of accountability, and their progress of work was unaffected by the presence or absence of the group leader. The nature of the branch group's work necessitates a strong sense of job responsibility. Hence, the self-leadership behaviour of group members is consistently apparent.

The branch manager's established environment significantly determines the amount of responsibility that group members exhibit towards their job, particularly throughout the process of organisational transformation period.

This corroborates the perspective brought forward by Pearce & Sims (2002) and Perry et al. (1999) that self-leadership has an impact on the implementation of shared leadership practices within groups. Additionally, one of the participants noted that the branch manager coaches his group members to encourage them to handle their tasks on their own.

The group leader's behaviour may have fostered the development of shared leadership in his group, which this finding generally corroborates the work conducted by Cox et al. (2003), Pearce & Sims (2002), and Perry et al. (1999), which suggests that when a leader encourages their group members to self-manage and demonstrate leadership behaviours within the group, it has an impact on the development of shared leadership.

Main Code: Group External Environment—Supportive Culture

Supportive culture encompasses the organisational environment that encourages constructive behaviour among group members, including cooperative responsibilities, collective decision-making (Erkutlu, 2012), participation in the decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012), and leader's support in decision-making process (Yukl, 2002).

Sub-codes: Group External Environment—Collective Decision-Making

Group members engage in collective decision-making when confronted with a critical situation that necessitates the involvement of more than one group member, relying on their knowledge, skills, experience, and expertise (Pearce, 2004; Pearce & Manz, 2005).

Group autonomy levels are directly associated with the decision-making process. Previous studies have indicated that group members who have autonomy were given the opportunity to make decisions pertaining to their specialised profession (Carson, et al., 2007; Yukl & Becker, 2006). Therefore, the findings corroborate the previous thoughts of Carson et al. (2007) and Yukl & Becker (2006), indicating that group members in the central region were encouraged to make decisions pertaining to their area of expertise when they faced a complex situation that requires each group member to contribute to the decision-making process. These findings also corroborate the ideas of Pearce, (2004), and Pearce & Manz, (2005), who suggested that complex situations encourages collective decision-making, which in turn influences the development of shared leadership practices.

Group members' opinions should be valued by the group leader in order to foster their self-efficacy and promote their self-initiative, thereby motivating them to behave and act like leaders within their group (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014).

Sub-code: Group External Environment—Participate in Decision-Making

The active participation of group members in the decision-making process greatly influences the development of shared leadership practices (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012). Therefore, the findings corroborate the previous thoughts of Carson et al. (2007) and Yukl & Becker (2006), indicating that group members in the central region were encouraged to either make decisions pertaining to their area of expertise, or at the very least, be included in the decision-

making process as active participants. Group members' opinions should be valued by the group leader in order to foster their self-efficacy and promote their self-initiative, thereby motivating them to behave and act like leaders within their group (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014).

Sub-codes: Group External Environment— Leaders Support in Decision-making

Leader's support in the decision-making process refers to the level of support of the decisions implemented by group members, whether they were successful or not. The finding of this study revealed that the group leader support in the decision-making process is limited, as the group members should consult the unit leader before making any decisions.

This in fact, contradict with (Carson, et al., 2007; Yukl & Becker, 2006) in two aspects, first the limited autonomy level, and the opportunity to make decisions pertaining to their specialised profession. Moreover, this also contradict with Jain & Jeppesen (2014) who argued that leader's support would foster group members' self-efficacy and promote their self-initiative.

One interesting finding is that the leader's support is contingent to the outcome of that decision. This finding is contrary to previous studies which have suggested that who suggested that delegating decision-making authority to organisation unit members, might strengthen the group members' efficacy, alleviate pressure, and distribute power more equitably (Yukl, 2002). Moreover, based on the findings, the degree of group members' involvement in the decision-making process has a negative impact on the development of shared leadership within the group as the group leader support is limited to the decision outcome. Thus, this also contradict with the viewpoints of Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fausing et al. (2013), Seers et al. (2003), Volmer et al. (2012), Wu & Chen (2018), and Yukl & Becker (2006) that the delegation of decision-making authority is a critical factor that impacts the development of shared leadership practices and has a positive effect on the leader-group relationship. Additionally,

this also contradicts the viewpoint put forth by Erkutlu (2012), who suggested that the organisational environment that fosters the positive behaviour of group members affects the development of shared leadership.

Discussion Summary

The examination of the group internal environment revealed that group members socially support each other by recognising their peers' accomplishments and having trust in their skills, knowledge, and capabilities. Trust is an important factor in the social support element because it enhances their confidence in each other, particularly given the organisation's transformative crises after over thirty years of operation. Despite the ongoing crisis of change, group members perceived themselves as one cohesive unit, possessing a shared understanding of the group and the organisation's objectives, which facilitated the group members in effectively completing the process of change. Another component that facilitates the group members in the transformation process is their cooperation and willingness to embrace the impact of their peers in order to preserve the business and successfully accomplish the transformation process. Thus, the accomplishment of organisational transformation process was influenced by factors, including the establishment of individual mutual trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010), which fosters a positive environment that promotes cooperation, acknowledges each other's skills and expertise, and aligns with shared understanding of the group goals (Carson, et al., 2007). Moreover, this corroborates with Pearce's (2004) perspective that complex duties and circumstances enhance the utilisation of shared leadership within groups. Collectively, the study findings indicate that the group internal environment components encompassed in this context are: *a) social support, including knowledge, skills, and accomplishment recognition and trust; b) shared purposes, including shared objectives; and c) group, including cooperation*, were factors that influenced the development of shared leadership practices as

well as the accomplishment of the organisational transformation process in the context of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the study findings extended our knowledge of these factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices in terms of cross-functional groups (Bligh, et al., 2006); knowledge, skills, and achievement acknowledgment (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016); social support as a relationship-oriented strategy (Han, et al., 2018); and mutual trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010). Moreover, the findings of this study add to the growing body of change literature that these factors enhanced the effectiveness of the organisational change process. Additionally, the study findings extended the understanding of shared leadership literature in terms of cooperation, which empirically influences the development of shared leadership, especially in complex situations (Pearce & Sims, 2000). It also adds to the growing body of literature on change by providing practical evidence that group members' cooperation, coordination, and knowledge sharing have encouraged the effective accomplishment of the organisational transformation.

Within the group's analysis of the external environment, the study found that the group leader does not only possess power for themselves. Instead, the authority was distributed to the group members, relying on their abilities, skills, knowledge, and years of experience (Cox, et al., 2003; Yukl, 2002). The distribution of authority assisted the group members in the process of organisational transformation. Thus, the study findings extended the understanding by providing empirical evidence that a leader's power distribution to the group members' specific areas of expertise, experience, knowledge, and ability enhances the process of organisational transformation.

Moreover, the leaders' empowerment was notable as the group members' level of autonomy was notably high, relying on their skills, abilities, and specialisations. The study findings correspond with the studies conducted by Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fletcher &

Kaufer (2003), Jain & Jeppesen (2014), and Pearce & Sims (2002), who suggested that group members should have a high level of autonomy in order to progress their duties independently, and the view of Buchanan et al.'s (2007) who suggested that a group's autonomy level have a positive effect on the process of organisational change. Thus, the findings of this study extended the empirical understanding that autonomy positively influences the development of shared leadership practices. It also adds to the growing body of change literature that group autonomy enhanced the accomplishment of the organisational change process because group members were given the needed freedom to fulfil their duties. In terms of self-leadership, the study findings extend the knowledge of shared leadership literature by providing empirical evidence that group members' self-leadership serves as an indicator of shared leadership practices in the organisation, which relies on the abilities, skills, and expertise of group members. Moreover, it also extends knowledge of change literature that self-leadership enhances the accomplishment of organisational change processes.

In terms of the supportive culture, the group members reported that their contribution in the decision-making process was valued by their leader. While the organisation was experiencing a transformative process, group members were authorised to take initiatives in making decisions related to their filed of expertise. In addition, they perceived a significant amount of support from their leader in relation to both successful and unsuccessful decisions. These elements may have influenced the development of shared leadership practices among the group members in the case study organisation. Additionally, it is conceivable that the group members' proficiency, abilities, capabilities, and extensive experience helped to facilitate the successful execution of these aspects (Pearce & Sims, 2000; Seers, et al., 2003). Hence, these findings extended to the growing body of literature that the supportive culture empirically influenced the development of shared leadership practices. It also adds to the change literature that supportive culture as a theme includes collective decision-making, participation in decision-

making, and the leader's support in decisions, which enhances the accomplishment of the organisational change process.

Collectively, the study findings indicate that the group external environment components encompassed in this context are: *a) empowerment, including autonomy, and self-leadership; b) sharing authority, including delegation; and c) supportive culture including participate in the decision-making, collective decision-making, and leader's support in decision-making process* were factors that influenced the development of shared leadership practices as well as the accomplishment of the organisational transformation process in the context of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the study findings extended the understanding of shared leadership literature in terms of these factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices. Moreover, the study findings extended the understanding of shared leadership literature in terms of autonomy (Carson, et al., 2007), which empirically influence the development of shared leadership practices and enhanced the process of organisational change (Buchanan, et al., 2007). Thus, the study findings adds to the growing body of literature of shared leadership and change by providing practical evidence that autonomy, self-leadership, sharing authority, supportive culture have influenced the development of shared leadership practices and practically encouraged the effective accomplishment of the organisational transformation.

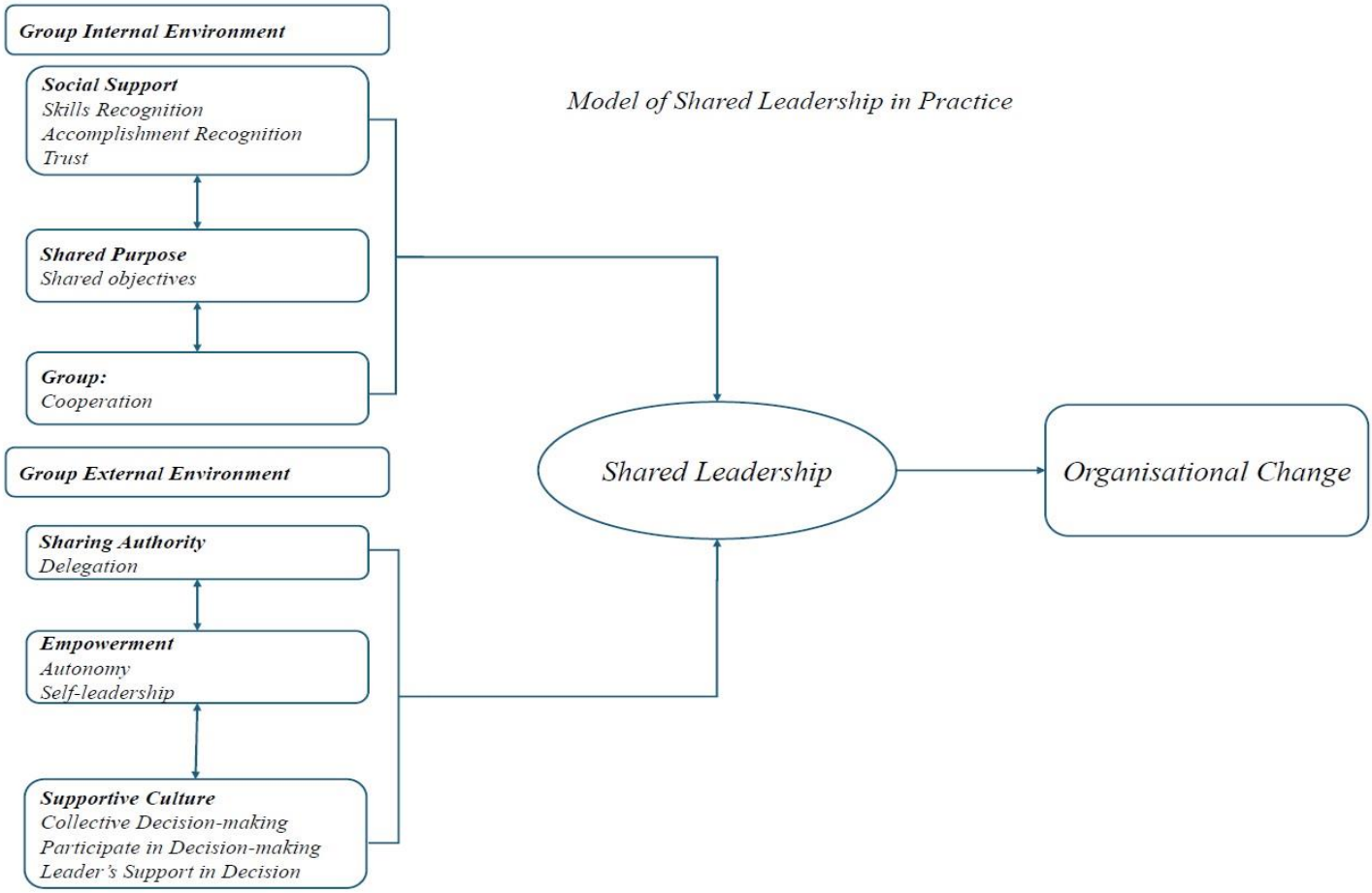
The Outworking of the Model

The conceptual model of shared leadership in practice provides an opportunity to empirically explore how key factors of shared leadership operate in a real-world environment. In doing so, it makes a useful contribution to the growing body of shared leadership literature. The conceptual model yielded useful insights for identifying shared leadership practices within the case study organisation. We were able to gain a comprehensive understanding of the empirical implementation of these factors and their impact on the practices of shared leadership,

particularly in the context of organisational change. The conceptual model effectively facilitated the identification of shared leadership practices within the case study organisation and explored the influence of these factors on the successful implementation of organisational change in Saudi commercial organisation (see Figure 2).

Since this research was conducted in a Saudi commercial organisation, a future research opportunity ought to focus on implementing the constructed conceptual model in different settings, for example non-commercial organisation for outcome generalisation. Moreover, investigating the socio-demographic effects in terms of female-to-male ratio groups on the development of shared leadership, taking into consideration the cultural norms and their effect on shaping the organisational culture and practices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Trust is a crucial factor that influences the development of shared leadership. Future research opportunities should focus on investigating the level of trust between group leaders and their followers, as well as understanding the nature of its influence on the development of shared leadership in groups within Saudi commercial organisations.

Figure 2: An Empirical Based Model for Identifying Shared Leadership in Practice.



Conclusion

The research findings and an analysis of the interviews conducted for the study have been addressed in this chapter. The consequences of these findings for organisations operating in this industry are substantial, since they can provide valuable insights. The findings of this study were based on face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with 26 participants. The findings of this investigation indicated that there was general recognition of shared leadership among the groups. The acquired and evaluated data has provided insight into the elements that impact shared leadership practices in groups, revealing significant trends and patterns, for example cooperation, which empirically influences the development of shared leadership, especially in complex situations. Also, a practical evidence that group members' cooperation, coordination,

and knowledge sharing have encouraged the effective accomplishment of the organisational transformation. Furthermore, the data has substantiated some assumptions while also unveiling certain unforeseen outcomes.

As the organisation was going through process of structural and cultural transition, the findings of the middle-line managers indicate that group members demonstrate their willingness to collaborate with their colleagues in order to accomplish the objectives of both the group and the organisation (Perry, et al., 1999). Their shared goals, mutual understanding, social support, and cohesive relationships all have an impact on the development of shared leadership in the middle-line managers' group (Carson, et al., 2007; Seers, et al., 2003). As a result, the group successfully completed the organisational transformation process. Furthermore, the analysis of the external environment indicated that the group leader does not solely hold power; instead, he distributes authority among group members, relying on their abilities, skills, knowledge, and years of experience (Cox, et al., 2003; Jain & Jeppesen, 2014; Yukl, 2002). In addition, the group members perceived a high level of empowerment from their leader in terms of autonomy, which grant them the ability to have independence and make decisions pertaining to their specialised job (Carson, et al., 2007; Cheong, et al., 2019; Cox, et al., 2003; Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002). In terms of decision-making, the amount of support the group members experienced from their leader about successful and unsuccessful choices was particularly high (Yukl & Becker, 2006).

In terms of the front-line group findings from the group internal environment indicate that group members generally demonstrated a noticeable level of cooperation with their peers in order to accomplish both group and organisational goals. However, there was a degree of uncertainty in terms of sharing and understanding similar objectives across certain branches. Additionally, the majority of groups provided social support to one another, resulting in a

cohesive relationship among group members. According to the findings of the external environment, groups' leaders in every region distribute authority to the members of their respective groups. The manager of the auditing department, on the other hand, does not have trust in the capability of his group members to share decision-making authority with them. In terms of autonomy, members of the group demonstrated that they had a high level of freedom when it came to progressing their duties. This was a requirement for work fluency, so it was important that they had adequate freedom. Because of this, members of the group were able to observe the support that their leaders provided in terms of decision-making; however, the support that is provided in the auditing department of the Eastern region was limited.

The negative impact of the implementation of shared leadership in Eastern Region auditing departments may be due to several variables. One such explanation is the presence of conflicting relationships between the group leader and their group members, which undermines the leader's trust in their skills and abilities. The Central Region branch concerns the level of trust that group members have in their group leader. Factors obtained from the Western Region and the legal department of the Eastern Region may affect the emergence of shared leadership in groups. Thus, these elements were a plausible explanation that affected the development of shared leadership among groups in the case organisation.

These findings were broadly supports the thoughts of Carson, et al., (2007) group internal environment, and Perry, et al., (1999) cooperation. It also, support the factors of the group external environment such as authority sharing and delegation (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014; Bass & Bass, 2008; Yukl, 2002), leader's empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014), group's autonomy level (Carson, et al., 2007; Cheong, et al., 2019), and self-leadership (Fausing, et al., 2015; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Perry, et al., 1999) as predictors of shared leadership practice.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter aims to summarise the key findings, discuss the implications of the findings of this study, discuss the study's contributions to the literature review, and offer recommendations for future research and practical applications. The aims and objectives of this study is to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. It identifies within the literature the factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors have impacted the accomplishment of organisational change within the Saudi Arabian context. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting.

Overview of Research Questions and Objectives

As illustrated above, the aim of this study is to identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change. In doing so, it explores the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices and investigates how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. Accordingly, the research worked towards accomplishing the objectives below:

1. To identify shared leadership practices within the Saudi commercial organisation.
2. To assess the factors that have foremost influence on the development of shared leadership practices.
3. To assess the impact of shared leadership practices on the process of significant organisational change in the Saudi commercial case study.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding the study are:

- What factors identify the "shared leadership" practices in the case study organisation?
- What are the factors that influence the development of shared leadership practices?
- What is the impact of shared leadership practices on the process of significant organisational change within the case study organisation?

Accomplishing the Objectives

In order to accomplish the objectives, the researcher conducted a literature review that covered the topics of leadership, with a particular focus on shared leadership. They also explored the connection between leadership and ongoing processes of organisational change. The review looked at what is already known and understood in three important and related areas of research. For example, it considered the theoretical understanding of leadership with a focus on shared and distributed leadership, such as shared leadership during times of change, especially rapid, discontinuous change. It also looked at approaches and understandings of leadership in the region of the Middle East and, more particularly, the Gulf States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This led to the construction of a theoretical model from that literature review to test the assumptions and answer the research objectives of this study, which are to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a process of change and how these factors have impacted the accomplishment of organisational change within the Saudi Arabian context.

Summary of Key Findings

Middle-line Managers

The examination of the middle-line managers' group's internal environment revealed that group members socially support each other by recognizing their peers' accomplishments and having trust in their skills, knowledge, and capabilities. Trust is an important factor in the social support element because it enhances their confidence in each other, particularly given the organisation's transformative crises after over thirty years of operation. Despite the ongoing crisis of change, group members perceived themselves as one cohesive unit, possessing a shared understanding of the group and the organisation's objectives, which facilitated the group members in effectively completing the process of change. Another component that facilitates the group members in the transformation process is their cooperation and willingness to embrace the impact of their peers in order to preserve the business and successfully accomplish the transformation process. Various factors, including the establishment of individual mutual trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010), influenced the accomplishment of the organisational transformation process. This trust fosters a positive environment that promotes cooperation, acknowledges each other's skills and expertise, and aligns with a shared understanding of the group's goals (Carson, et al., 2007). Furthermore, this confirms Pearce's (2004) perspective that complex duties and circumstances enhance the use of shared leadership within groups. Overall, these results show that the following parts of the group internal environment—a) social support, which includes knowledge, skills, accomplishment recognition, and trust; b) shared purposes, which includes common goals; and c) group, which includes cooperation—had an impact on the growth of shared leadership in middle-level managers and the success of the organisational transformation process in this case. These results helped us learn more about the things that affect the growth of shared leadership practices in cross-functional groups (Bligh,

et al., 2006); knowledge, skills, and achievement recognition (Carson, et al., 2007; Serban & Roberts, 2016); social support as a relationship-based strategy (Han, et al., 2018); and trust between people (Small & Rentsch, 2010).

Within the group's analysis of the external environment, the study found that the group leader does not only possess power for themselves. Instead, the group leader distributed authority to the group members based on their abilities, skills, knowledge, and years of experience (Cox, et al., 2003; Yukl, 2002). The distribution of authority assisted the group members in the process of organisational transformation. Moreover, the leaders' empowerment was notable among middle-line managers. The leader granted a notably high level of autonomy to the group members, based on their skills, abilities, and specialisations. Our findings correspond with the studies conducted by Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fletcher & Kaufer (2003), Jain & Jeppesen (2014), and Pearce & Sims (2002), who suggested that group members should have a high level of autonomy in order to progress their duties independently, and the view of Buchanan et al.'s (2007), who suggested that a group's autonomy level has a positive effect on the process of organisational change. In terms of self-leadership, the findings extend the knowledge of shared leadership literature by providing empirical evidence that group members' self-leadership serves as an indicator of shared leadership practices in the organisation, which relies on the abilities, skills, and expertise of group members.

The group members reported that their leader valued their contribution to the decision-making process, indicating a supportive culture. The organisation, undergoing a transformative process, empowered group members to take the lead in making decisions that aligned with their areas of expertise. In addition, they perceived a significant amount of support from their leader in relation to both successful and unsuccessful decisions. These elements may have influenced the development of shared leadership among the middle-line management group in the case

study organisation. Additionally, it is conceivable that the group members' proficiency, abilities, capabilities, and extensive experience helped to facilitate the successful execution of these aspects (Pearce & Sims, 2000; Seers, et al., 2003).

Non-managerial Employees

The non-managerial employees' findings indicated that the internal environment of the group demonstrates the level of social support. Group members in the majority of branches provided social support to each other by acknowledging the development of their colleagues' knowledge and skills. The study's findings align with the ideas put forth by Carson et al. (2007) on social support, Bligh et al. (2006) on cross-functional groups, Small & Rentsch (2010) on trust as antecedents that shape the growth of shared leadership practices, and the perspective of Binci & Cerruti (2016), who posit that the sharing of expertise and experience among group members significantly influences organisational change. However, there were trust concerns between group members in both branches: Riyadh, the Central region, and the auditing department of the Eastern region.

The organisation has undergone a crisis of change, resulting in the rearrangement of its hierarchical structure. Due to unmet expectations, the implementation of these adjustments resulted in conflicts among group members in the Central region, for example, due to unmet expectations, which in turn generated these conflicts. The study also demonstrated that there was a lack of common understanding among group members with regards to the group's purpose, and they did not have common objectives in the same region. Moreover, these issues arose as a result of the internal conflict among the group members and their leadership within the case study organisation. As a result, it was not obvious that groups have a similar understanding of group objectives, which contradicts the findings of Carson et al. (2007) and

Serban & Roberts (2016), who found that a common objective has an impact on the development of shared leadership practices within groups.

Each location influences group member cooperation in a different way. The Western region and the Eastern region's legal department viewed themselves as a cohesive and integrated group. The degree of cooperation among group members was remarkable. Thus, these findings support the belief of Fausing et al. (2015) and Perry et al.'s (1999) that cooperation influences the development of shared leadership practices. Thus, cooperation enables group members to share knowledge, experience, and expertise that contributed to the effective completion of the transformation process (Buchanan, et al., 2007). Nevertheless, it appeared that the other locations had misinterpretations among group members, resulting in a noticeable internal conflict. These conflicts were due to several aspects, such as level of experience and a lack of mutual trust in one another's skills, knowledge, and expertise. Taken together, these data indicate that group members exhibit a significant degree of cooperation with their peers in order to accomplish both group and organisational goals. Nonetheless, we might presume that the degree to which group members reciprocally understand the group's goals, provide social support to one another, and maintain a strong relationship might have varying effects on the development of shared leadership across different branches.

Regarding autonomy, group members demonstrated a strong preference for having a significant degree of flexibility in carrying out their tasks, as it was essential for maintaining an efficient workflow. Therefore, this finding supports Carson et al. (2007)'s argument that autonomy influences the development of shared leadership. Furthermore, Buchanan et al. (2007) assert that the implementation of shared leadership during the organisational change process fosters the level of autonomy among group members and positively influences the relationship between the group leader and their followers.

Perhaps the most disturbing finding in terms of self-leadership is that in the western region branch, the manager would intervene to guide his unit on the execution of specific cases. This finding contradicts the definitions of shared leadership provided by Fitzsimons et al. (2011) and Fausing et al. (2013), who described it as a self-leading behavior at the group level. The Eastern region branch, on the other hand, found that the unit manager encouraged his group to practice self-management as they carried out their given responsibilities. The results of this study agree with those of Pearce & Sims (2002) and Perry et al. (1999), who said that when group leaders help their members to self-manage and show leadership traits, it has an effect on the growth of shared leadership. They also agree with Binci and Cerruti (2016), who found that self-leadership behaviour helps the process of organisational change.

Group members noted that the managers provided support in making decisions. However, in the Eastern Region branch, specifically within the auditing departments, there were conflicting relationships between the group leader and group members. These conflicts negatively impacted the leader's trust in the skills and abilities of the group members. Regarding the Central Region branch, the issue concerns the level of confidence that group members have in their manager. Factors from the western region and the eastern region's legal department may have influenced the development of shared leadership within groups. Additionally, it is plausible to assume that the group members' proficiency, qualifications, capabilities, and extensive experience facilitated the successful application of these aspects (Pearce & Sims, 2000; Seers, et al., 2003). So, the findings from the Western region and the Eastern region's Legal Department agree with Carson et al. (2007), Cox et al. (2003), Fausing et al. (2013), Seers et al. (2003), Volmer et al. (2012), Wu & Chen (2018), and Yukl & Becker (2006) that giving others the power to make decisions is a key factor that affects the development of shared leadership practices and create a positive relationship between the leader and the group. Erkutlu

(2012), who argued that the organisational environment that fosters positive behaviour of group members affects the development of shared leadership, also aligns with this viewpoint.

Key Findings Implication

This study's primary aims and objectives are to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a change process. It identifies within the literature factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. The conceptual model suggests that there are internal and external environments that help to effectively utilise shared leadership practices within a group. Based on the constructed conceptual model, the internal environment includes factors used as influencers in the development of shared leadership in practice. Social support, such as group members who acknowledge and trust their peers' skills, knowledge, and accomplishments, significantly influences the development of shared leadership in practice. Sharing a common objective between group members by having a common understanding of the group's purpose and accepting one another's influence as one coherent group influences the development of shared leadership practices.

Internal environmental factors influence the group's shared leadership. However, the external environment contains the factors that surround the group members. For example, group leaders ought to promote more autonomy among group members. Autonomy, in turn, would have various implications for the other factors that impact the development of shared leadership, such as assuming a leadership role and authority distribution among group members. In addition, the group leader ought to create a supportive environment for their group members, influence their contribution in the decision-making process, make essential decisions related to

their assigned tasks, and support their decision outcomes. The second aim was to investigate the impact of shared leadership in a changing context. The findings suggest that, in the context of change, it is advisable for organisational leadership to embrace the shared leadership approach. The suggestion is based on several significant reasons: 1) To foster a collaborative environment among group members; 2) encourage a decentralised framework and delegate tasks to lower-level managers and non-managerial employees whenever possible; 3) engage group members in the decision-making process as it positively influences their perception of their leaders and organisation. Because of this, it is clear that it is essential to properly execute shared leadership within a group, particularly during periods of organisational change.

Study Contribution to the Literature

This thesis has provided a deeper understanding of the empirical implementation of shared leadership, specifically within the context of organisational change. Leadership study is critical for both commercial and non-commercial organisations, particularly in the context of shared leadership. By emphasizing a horizontal leadership style (Sweeney, et al., 2019), a shared leadership approach adds a new dimension to leadership research, distributing leadership responsibilities among group members instead of concentrating them on a single appointed leader (Carson, et al., 2007; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Perry, et al., 1999). The empirical investigation's findings provide many contributions to the existing literature.

First, a conceptual model of shared leadership in practice provides an important contribution to the growing body of shared leadership literature and change. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on shared leadership by providing an accepted understanding of the shared leadership definition. For instance, most studies focused on the antecedents of shared leadership practices and their effect on the development of shared leadership (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012; Fausing, et al., 2015; Gockel & Werth,

2010; Pearce & Manz, 2005; Perry, et al., 1999; Serban & Roberts, 2016; Small & Rentsch, 2010; Yukl, 2002). Our study adds to the literature on shared leadership by putting together these factors as a conceptual model and empirically investigating their effect on the development of shared leadership.

The second contribution is to use these factors empirically in the context of organisational change. Previous studies (Buchanan, et al., 2007) explored the use of distributed leadership in non-commercial organisations during organisational transformation in the healthcare sector, distributing change among group members to achieve the desired transformation outcome. Our study contributes to the growing body of literature on shared leadership and change by providing practical evidence that group members' cooperation, coordination, and knowledge sharing have encouraged the effective completion of the organisational transformation.

The third contribution is the supportive culture that the leader provides to their followers, which influences the development of shared leadership (Erkutlu, 2012). Previous studies focused on each factor of the supportive as an antecedent of shared leadership. For example, Carson et al. (2007) referred to voice, which is the group members' participation in the decision-making process; Erkutlu (2012) referred to collective decision-making as an influence on shared leadership practices. Our study contributes to the growing body of literature on shared leadership and change by combining these elements into one theme, "supportive culture," and examining their effect on the development of shared leadership in practice in the context of organisational change.

The fourth contribution, Döös & Wilhelmson (2021) defined shared leadership in their third contribution as managerial shared leadership, where a group of individuals occupying managerial positions share the leadership. In their review, Döös & Wilhelmson most of the empirical work reviewed focused on first-line managers, while paying less attention to middle-

line managers. The significance of middle-line managers lies in their structural placement between top and first-line managers. Therefore, our study adds to the growing body of literature on managerial shared leadership and change and shows that middle-line managers played a significant role in the accomplishment of organisational change. Various factors, such as the establishment of individual mutual trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010), group autonomy (Carson, et al., 2007), and the implementation of authority distribution, have influenced the efficacy of the organisational change process.

The fifth contribution pertains to the limited number of studies carried out in the Arab context, particularly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The studies conducted in the Saudi context primarily focused on non-commercial organisations, specifically educational institutions within Saudi Arabia, including schools and educational districts (Alarifi, 2020; Alradi, 2017; Alyami & Floyd, 2019). By considering the various leadership styles of different countries, including those in the Middle East like Saudi Arabia, this study not only contributes to the existing knowledge in the field but also employs shared leadership in the context of organisational change within a commercial organisation.

Study Implications

The findings of this study highlighted the importance of leadership roles in the organisation, and shared leadership practices in particular. We separated the implications of these findings into two separate sets: group leaders and group members.

Implications for Managerial Level

The utilisation of shared leadership practices among group members is considered a crucial step, particularly in the context of organisational change. The conceptual model represents the factors that influence the effective implementation of shared leadership practices and how these

factors enhance the accomplishment of organisational change. Leaders must prioritise the impact that shared leadership practices have on the progress of organisational transformation process. The study highlighted the importance of shared authority, autonomy, and participation in the decision-making process as key factors that influence the development of shared leadership in groups. Regarding the concept of shared authority, group leaders are advised to distribute power to group members in order to enable them to accomplish their assigned duties autonomously. Indeed, this fosters their sense of accountability among group members and motivates them to assume leadership roles. Furthermore, the findings of this study emphasised that the degree of group autonomy played a crucial role in the implementation of shared leadership within groups. Group members were granted the freedom to carry out their tasks according to their own specialisation and had the authority to make important decisions related to their responsibilities. Moreover, the supportive environment that the leader provided to their group members enhanced their willingness to take further initiatives and be actively involved in the decision-making process. In fact, the group leaders' consideration of their perspectives during the decision-making process significantly influences the development of shared leadership practices. Hence, it is important for group leaders to take into account the perspective and appraisal of their followers on their role in the decision-making process.

As a result, group leaders can create an environment that fosters empowerment, encouraging group members to take responsibility for their work, boosting their self-assurance, and cultivating a sense of value from the organisation's leadership.

Implications for Non-managerial Employees

The study's findings specifically illustrated that group members' levels of cooperation and respect for one another's knowledge, skills, and abilities were key factors in the successful adoption of shared leadership. This was particularly important in the context of organisational

change. Without a doubt, cooperation among members of a group contributes to creating an environment that is constructive and more salubrious. This environment allows members of the group to work and conduct themselves as a cohesive and integrated unit. In addition, it is essential to recognise and value the unique skills and knowledge that fellow colleagues possess, while simultaneously highlighting the efforts that they have put forth in order to make the most of their contributions to the group because of their dedication. Several participants in the study acknowledged that the cooperation of group members was crucial for the successful completion of the organisational change process. They emphasised that the support and cooperation of their peers played a significant role in accomplishing the complex task of organisational transformation.

A number of people who took part in the study have emphasised the significance of recognising the skills, knowledge, and experience of group members. This acknowledgement makes it attainable for members of the group to have a better knowledge of the unique abilities that their colleagues possess when it comes to dealing with a challenging task, such as an organisational transformation crisis.

Challenges and Limitation

Throughout the study's execution, several challenges and limitations were encountered. The primary obstacle the researcher faced was the inability to initiate data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the closure of most relevant organisations. Furthermore, due to the ongoing pandemic circumstances, the researcher had difficulties identifying a suitable case for the data collection procedure. As previously discussed in Chapter 3, 'Methodology Chapter', the researcher was unable to access four potential cases for various reasons. Despite the difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic, an additional limitation arose during the data collection phase when the researcher arranged three interview sessions with participants. The

occurrence of COVID-19 cases within the targeted department forced the cancellation of these sessions.

Furthermore, the researcher faced challenges in acquiring historical data about the case study organisation, as the confidential nature of these materials restricted access to any materials from the prior era. However, the organisation underwent a transition process, granting the researcher access to both current and future company materials.

Another limitation was the capacity to address the socio-demographic influence on the development of shared leadership practices. Saudi Arabia's cultural and societal norms led some female participants to decline participation in the one-on-one, man-led interview procedure. Therefore, assessing the female-to-male ratio as a factor that influences the development of shared leadership practices was not possible. Additionally, trust is considered an important aspect in influencing the development of shared leadership practices; however, the data collection timeframe did not support the researcher in conducting a deeper understanding of the nature of trust between group members and their peers, as well as between group members and their leader. Therefore, this is considered a limitation in understanding the nature of trust between the organisational members.

Future Research

This study's primary aims and objectives are to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a change process. It identifies within the literature factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. The research yielded noteworthy findings and identified prospective directions for future investigation.

This research data was conducted from Saudi commercial organisation, future research could focus on implementing the constructed conceptual model in different settings, for example non-commercial organisation for outcome generalisation. Since the research on shared leadership practices is limited in the Middle Eastern context, particularly in the Gulf Council Countries, a future research implement the our conceptual model to validate its outcome in several context.

The limitations of this investigation have obscured the plan for future research. The study was limited in its ability to examine the socio-demographic influence on shared leadership practices due to the cultural and social norms of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A future study should focus on investigating the socio-demographic effects in terms of female-to -male ratio on the development of shared leadership practices in commercial organisations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Trust is a crucial factor that influences the development of shared leadership. Future research ought to focus on evaluating the level of trust between group leaders and their followers, as well as understanding the nature of its influence on the development of shared leadership in groups within Saudi commercial organisations.

Moreover, this study empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergone a change process in Saudi Arabia. Future research ought to focus on examining the influence of shared leadership in practice model on organisational innovation in Saudi Arabia, particularly in light of the Kingdom's ongoing efforts to achieve its ambitious Vision 2030.

Conclusion

To summarise, the primary aims and objectives of this study are to empirically identify and investigate shared leadership practices within a case study organisation undergoing a change process in Saudi Arabia. It identifies within the literature factors that affect the development of shared leadership practices and how these factors impact the accomplishment of organisational

change. In doing so, it constructs a model of shared leadership in practice and dimensionlises how that model operates in an empirical setting. The chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research questions, aims, and objectives. Additionally, it presents the study's key findings and examines their implications. Further, it examines the significance of the study and discusses its contributions to the existing body of knowledge. It also explored the implications for managerial-level and non-managerial employees. Ultimately, the chapter outlined the challenges encountered during the study, acknowledged its limitations, and offered future research opportunities.

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Appendices

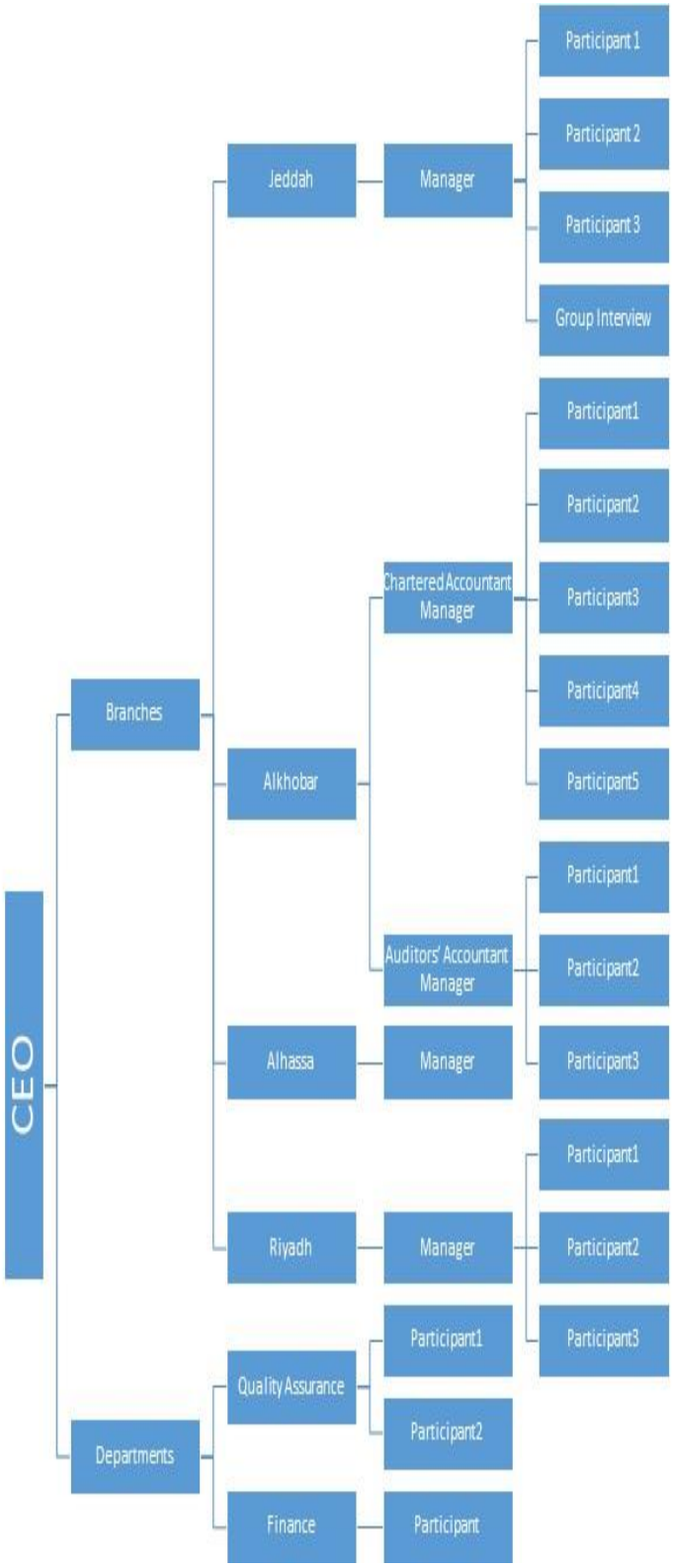
Appendix A: Table summarises the participants of the study.

Total	Region	City	Participants	Gender	Department	Role
1			PCEO	Male	General Manager	Chief Executive Officer
2	***Eastern***	***Al-Khobar***	P1L	Male	Legal	Branch Group
3			P2L	Male	Legal	Branch Group
4			P3L	Male	Legal	Branch Group
5			P4L	Female	Legal	Branch Group
6			P5L	Female	Legal	Branch Group
7			P6L	Male	Legal	Branch Manager
8			P1A	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
9			P2A	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
10			P3A	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
11			P4A	Male	Auditing	Branch Manager
12			P1Q	Male	Quality Assurance	Head of department
13			P2Q	Male	Quality Assurance	Head of Department Assistant
14		***Alahsa***	P1H	Male	Auditing	Branch Manager
15			P2H	Male	Finance	Head of Department
16	***Western***	***Jeddah***	P1J	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
17			P2J	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
18			P3J	Female	Legal	Branch Group
19			P4J-A	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
20			P4J-B	Female	Auditing	Branch Group
21			P4J-C	Female	Auditing	Branch Group
22			P5J	Male	Auditing/ Legal	Branch Manager
23	***Central***	***Riyadh***	P1R	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
24			P2R	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
25			P3R	Male	Auditing	Branch Group
26			P4R	Male	Auditing	Branch Manager

Appendix B: Table contain the list of Themes, codes, and sub-codes of the study

Theme	Main Codes	Sub-codes	Description
Group Internal Environment	***Social Support*** (Carson, et al., 2007; Small & Rentsch, 2010)	*Knowledge and skills recognition* (Carson, et al., 2007)	Group members recognise their peer's knowledge and skills
		Accomplishment Recognition (Carson, et al., 2007)	Group members recognising peers' accomplishment
		Trust (Small & Rentsch, 2010)	The level of trust between group members
	Shared Purpose (Carson, et al., 2007)	*Shared objectives* (Carson, et al., 2007)	Do group members share the same objectives and goals?
	Group (Gockel & Werth, 2010)	*Cooperation* (Fausing, et al., 2015; Perry, et al., 1999)	The level of cooperation between group members while processing their duties
Group External Environment	***Sharing Authority*** (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014)	*Delegation* (Jain & Jeppesen, 2014)	Level of responsibility assigned to group members while performing their duties
	Empowerment (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Fausing, et al., 2015)	*Autonomy* (Carson, et al., 2007)	Group members level of freedom to act on their or her own values and interests
		Self-Leadership (Pearce & Manz, 2005)	Group members' capabilities, and abilities to manage and influence themselves
	Supportive Culture (Erkutlu, 2012)	*Collective Decision-Making* (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012)	Decisions that made by the whole group members related to a shared task
		Participating in Decision-making (Carson, et al., 2007; Erkutlu, 2012)	Group members participating in decision making with their manager
		Support in Decision-making (Yukl, 2002)	Group leader's support to the followers successful and unsuccessful decisions

Appendix C: Participant's structure



Appendix D: Translator 1 Confidentiality Agreement

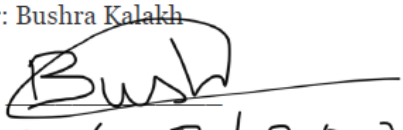
Confidentiality Agreement

Mrs. Bushra Kalakh, You have been hired to *Translate* for *Mr. Faisal Saleh Alsabaan*, the data collected in his research project on 26/06/2022. The ethical guidelines of this study require that you read and sign this form, signifying that you are willing to enter into a confidentiality agreement with respect to the data collected in this study.

The transcribed interviews you will receive will likely contain identifying markers of the participants as well as names of third parties (for instance colleagues, family members and/or acquaintances of participants). In order to protect confidentiality, you are to not to use or ay the names or the information of the transcribed data. You will ensure that all transcripts are kept confidential (i.e., materials are never left unattended and are secured when not being used). By signing below, you agree not to reveal any information about what is contained in the written transcripts. Furthermore, you agree not to discuss anything regarding the participants or the data collected in this study with anyone other than the principal investigators.

By signing below you are indicating that you have read and understand the above agreement and that you will follow all of the specified conditions.

Translator: Bushra Kalakh

Signature: 

Date: 30/08/2022

Appendix E: Translator 2 Confidentiality Agreement

Confidentiality Agreement

Mr. Tarek Shaaban, you have been hired to *translate* for *Mr. Faisal Saleh Alsabaan* the data collected in his research project on **November 10, 2022**. The ethical guidelines of this study require that you read and sign this form, signifying that you are willing to enter into a confidentiality agreement with respect to the data collected in this study.

The transcribed interviews you will receive will likely contain identifying markers of the participants as well as names of third parties (for instance colleagues, family members and/or acquaintances of participants). In order to protect confidentiality, you are to not to use or ay the names or the information of the transcribed data. You will ensure that all transcripts are kept confidential (i.e., materials are never left unattended and are secured when not being used). By signing below, you agree not to reveal any information about what is contained in the written transcripts. Furthermore, you agree not to discuss anything regarding the participants, or the data collected in this study with anyone other than the principal investigators.

By signing below, you are indicating that you have read and understand the above agreement and that you will follow all the specified conditions.

Translator: Tarek Shaaban

Signature: Tarek Shaaban

Date: December 4th, 2022

Appendix F: Ethical Approval

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST | MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

30 March 2021

Dear

Faisal Alsabaab is a PhD student with Queen's Management School under the supervision of Dr Joanne Murphy. We can confirm that Faisal's research has received ethical clearance and that he is able to commence his fieldwork. We would be grateful for any help and assistance you were able to provide. Please contact Dr Murphy on joanne.murphy@qub.ac.uk if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Julian Warner

Dr Julian Warner
Chair, Research Ethics Committee
Queen's University Management School
Email: j.warner@qub.ac.uk

The Queen's Anniversary Prizes 2015

Athena SWAN Bronze Award GENDER CHARTER

Queen's Management School Queen's University Belfast, Riddel Hall, 185 Stranmillis Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK, BT9 5EE
T +44 (0) 28 9097 4200; E qms@qub.ac.uk; qub.ac.uk/schools/QueensManagementSchool

Appendix G: Case Study Data Collection Confirmation

Chartered Accountants And Auditing

محاسبون و مراجعون قانونيون

To whom it may concern,

This is to confirm that Faisal Alsabaan, PhD Candidate at Queen's Management School, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, Northern Ireland, successfully completed his case study at our firm, Chartered Accountants & Auditors from the period of October 26, 2021 to February 9, 2022 with all our branches located Al Hassa, Al Khobar, Jeddah and Riyadh.

Having performed and conducted series of interviews to our employees and distributed questionnaires as part of his fieldwork training.

Given this 14th day of February, 2022.

To verify any information, feel free to contact us.

CEO

Appendix H: Interview Protocol and Questions English Version

Interview Protocol for the research project "Shared Leadership in the Context of Change"

Thank you for meeting with me today!

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that influence the development of Shared Leadership practices. Shared Leadership is defined as a team process where team members are practicing leadership as whole rather than one appointed person. I am interested on how shared leadership have impacted the accomplishment of organisational change.

As participant in this study, I would like to speak to you because I understand that you are a team member who participated as a leader in the team. I want to know about your experience and thoughts regarding the questions I'm going to ask.

I will be recording this interview with this device. After our interview is over, I will make a transcript of what you said, but will replace your name, as well as those anyone you mentioned, so that nothing you said will traced back to you. I will be the only one that has access to this data and will keep it locked away and safe until it is time to erase the data entirely.

If you want to stop the participating in this interview or not respond to any specific question for any reason, you may do so without fearing my judgment, or disappointment. Before we begin, do you have any question?

This interview is expected to take 45-60 minutes. Are you willing to start the interview and be recorded right now? Okay I have started the recording. Can you affirm, for the recording that you understand and assent to having your words recorded in this interview?

The following questions are designed to assess the Shared Leadership in your team taking into consideration two elements: External environment (empowerment, sharing authority, and

supportive culture) is related to the leader's support, reward, and cultural systems provided to the team, which refers to how can you view your leader's abilities to influence you on accomplishing a task, making-decisions, and encourage you to take leading roles, the level of authorities that your line manger gives you to deal with problems related to your expertise. Internal environment (shared purpose, social support, and group). Shared purpose which refers to the team members' share similar understanding of the team's goals and objectives, where team members motivated and empower each other to accomplish these common goals. Social support where team members emotionally support their peers and recognise their accomplishments. Group is the mutual influence between group members to lead one another. If you would like me to repeat these definitions at any point in the interview, please let me know.

Thank you! Let's begin with the first question.

1. Describe to me how autonomous your team are?
2. Describe your freedom level on your assigned tasks and how to do them? Do you have sense of control of the work you do?
3. Describe to me how your leader gives you the authority to deal with issues related to your specialities?
4. Describe to me how empowering your appointed leader (direct-line manager) is?
5. In terms of support, tell me how many times you felt that you were supported by your direct-line manager regarding successful and unsuccessful decisions? Please describe to me your answer.
6. Tell me about your formal leader (direct-line manager) and his/her willingness to delegate some control to team members (informal leaders)?
7. Do you feel that you and your peers share and understand the same purpose and goals?

8. Do you believe you and your peers share the same values, beliefs, and goals when all of you act as leaders?
9. From your personal experience, how would you describe the team leadership style?
10. Describe how you and your team members are getting involved in a major decisions-making process? Culture/ delegation
11. How often your appointed leader involved you and your team members in a decision-making process?
12. Describe to me how do you trust your team members to effectively getting the job done?
13. How collaborative are your team are in getting any task done?
14. How your team progress their work when your appointed leader is absent?
15. How do you feel of collective decision-making process? Do you trust your peers in making collective decision-making?
16. How regularly you collaborate with your team members to achieve goals?
17. Describe how unique is your team members knowledge and skills? Culture
18. How do you think about leadership in your team? Culture
19. When facing a complex task how do you and your team members react to it? Collaboration.
20. Describe your feeling when you have to act as an informal leader in your team? Who do you know from your peers have the same abilities to take leadership responsibilities? Culture.

Appendix I: Interview Protocol and Questions Arabic Version

بروتوكول المقابلة لمشروع البحث "القيادة المشتركة في سياق التغيير "

شكرا على مقابلتك لي اليوم!

الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو التحقيق والبحث في العوامل المؤثره على ممارسات القيادة المشتركة. عرفت القيادة المشتركة بأنها عمل فريق يمارس أعضائه القيادة ككل بدلا من فرد معين واحد. وانصب اهتمامي على كيفية عمل وأداء القيادة المشتركة وتأثيرها على التغيير.

بصفتك مشاركًا في هذه الدراسة، أود التحدث إليك لأنك أحد أعضاء الفريق الذي شارك كقائد للفريق. لذلك أريد أن أعرف منك عن تجربتك وأفكارك فيما يتعلق بالأسئلة التي سأطرحها.

سأقوم بتسجيل هذه المقابلة من خلال هذا الجهاز وبعد انتهاء مقابلتنا، سأقوم بنسخ ما قلته، لكنني سأحل محل اسمك برمز، وكذلك أي شخص تذكره، حتى لا يعود إليك أي شيء قلته. سأكون الوحيد الذي لديه حق الوصول إلى هذه البيانات وسأبقيها مغلقة وآمنة حتى يحين وقت محو البيانات بالكامل.

إذا كنت ترغب في التوقف عن المشاركة في هذه المقابلة أو عدم الرد على أي سؤال محدد لأي سبب من الأسباب، يمكنك القيام بذلك دون خوف من رأي الشخصي أو خيبة الأمل. قبل أن نبدأ، هل لديك أي سؤال؟

من المتوقع أن تستغرق هذه المقابلة من 45 إلى 60 دقيقة. هل أنت مستعد لبدء المقابلة والتسجيل الآن؟ حسنا لقد بدأت التسجيل. هل يمكنك التأكيد على فهمك للتسجيل وموافقتك على تسجيل كلماتك في هذه المقابلة؟

صممت الأسئلة التالية لقياس مستوى ممارسات القيادة المشتركة في فريقك مع الأخذ في الاعتبارعنصرين: البيئة الخارجية وتتكون من (التمكين، مشاركة السلطة، والثقافة الداعمة) وهي ترتبط بدعم القائد، تحفيزه والنظم الثقافية المقدمة للفريق والتي تشير إلى الطريقة التي تمكنك من عرض قدرات قائدك للتأثير عليك في إنجاز مهمة ما واتخاذ القرارات، ومدى شجاعتك للقيام بأدوار قيادية ومستوى السلطة التي يمنحك إياها مديرك للتعامل مع المشاكل المتعلقة بخبراتك في مجال معين.

أما البيئة الداخلية فتتكون من (الهدف المشترك والدعم الاجتماعي والفريق). أما الهدف المشترك فهو يشير إلى أعضاء الفريق الذين يتشاركون في فهم مماثل لأداء الفريق وأهدافه، حيث يعمل أعضاء الفريق على تحفيز وتمكين بعضهم البعض. بينما الدعم الاجتماعي هو أن يدعم أعضاء الفريق بعضهم عاطفيا ويعترفون بإنجازات بعضهم البعض.

أما الفريق هو مستوى التأثير المشترك بين أعضاء الفريق في عمليات القيادة.

إذا كنت ترغب في أن أكرر هذه التعريفات في أي وقت من المقابلة، اسمح لي بمعرفة ذلك.

شكرًا لك!

لنبدأ بالسؤال الأول.

1 .صف لي مدى استقلالية فريقك؟

2 .صف لي مستوى الحرية الخاص بك في مهامك المخصصة وكيفية القيام بها؟ هل لديك شعور بالسيطرة على العمل الذي تقوم به؟

3 .صف لي كيف يمنحك قائدك السلطة للتعامل مع القضايا المتعلقة بتخصصاتك؟

4. صف لي مدى تمكن القائد المعين (المدير المباشر)؟

5 .من حيث الدعم، قل لي كم مرة شعرت أنك كنت مدعوما من قبل مديرك المباشر فيما يتعلق بالقرارات الناجحة وغير الناجحة؟ رجاء صف إجابتك لي.

6 .أخبرني عن قائدك الرسمي (مديرك المباشر) واستعداده لتفويض بعض السلطة لأعضاء الفريق (القادة غير الرسميين)؟

7. هل تشعر أنك وزملائك تتشاركون نفس الأهداف؟

8 .هل تعتقد أنك وزملائك تتشاركون نفس القيم والمعتقدات والأهداف عندما تتصرفون جميعا كقادة؟

9 .من خلال تجربتك الشخصية، كيف تصف أسلوب قيادة الفريق؟

10 .صف كيفية مشاركتك أنت وأعضاء فريقك في عملية صنع قرارات كبرى؟

11. كم مرة قام قائدك المعين بإشراكك أنت وأعضاء فريقك في عملية صنع القرار؟

12 .صف لي كيف تثق بأعضاء فريقك لإنجاز المهام بشكل فعال؟

13 .ما مدى تعاون فريقك في إنجاز أي مهمة؟

14 .كيف يتقدم فريقك في عمله عندما يكون قائدك المعين غائبا؟

15 .ما هو شعورك تجاه عملية اتخاذ القرار الجماعية؟ هل تثق بزملائك في اتخاذ القرارات الجماعية؟

16. ما مدى تعاونك المنتظم مع أعضاء فريقك لتحقيق الأهداف؟

17 .صف مدى تميز المستوى المعرفي لأعضاء فريقك ومهاراتهم؟

18 .كيف ترى القيادة في فريقك؟

19 .عندما تواجه مهمة معقدة كيف تتفاعل أنت وأعضاء فريقك معها؟

20.صف شعورك عندما يتوجب عليك العمل كقائد غير رسمي في فريقك؟ من تعرف من زملائك لديهم نفس القدرات لتحمل مسؤوليات القيادة؟

Appendix J: Participant Interview Sample English Version

Mr. C Interview

Researcher: Mr. C, can you confirm that you understand the recording and agree to have your answers recorded in this interview?

Mr. C: Yes, I agree.

Researcher: Describe to me how independent your team is?

Mr. C: Regarding the team's independence, of course the general manager has given us total independence to make the decisions of the branch. From my side, I convey this independence to the employees to take decisions after consulting with me, which means that when I make an offer in any case or in auditing, there is surely a limit set to us by the higher management, so there is a bare minimum for auditing for instance, thus we have the freedom to set the price that we think is suitable according to the value of the case and the balance sheets to be reviewed to the clients. In the meantime, the general manager granted us our own space to give a proper discount within the limits of giving the service for a price lower than the required, while trying as best as we can to keep the client amid the competition between auditing companies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Researcher: Does this mean that the general manager granted the team independence in decision-making, and you have your own space to make your own decisions without the interference of the higher management.

Mr. C: True.

Researcher: Describe to me your freedom to do your assigned tasks and how you perform them?

Mr. C: I have full freedom to take decisions as I mentioned in the first question, by which I contact the higher management if I want to reward an employee or in case an employee is late or does not want to come to work. I have the chance to approve or disapprove. The higher management should also be contacted for routine measures, but it all goes back to me to approve first as a direct manager to the employee. In case I did not approve, the whole process will come to a standstill. Regarding a bonus for an employee, I contact the higher management about it, to give a financial incentive, salary increments or award a specific privilege, these are all liberties that I am granted as a branch manager.

Researcher: You incentivize your employees for performing their duties and this is a side that you talked about, the incentives could be financial, substantial, or moral, powers granted to you for moral incentives are more than the financial ones, do you submit proposals of the financial ones to the higher management?

Mr. C: Yes, the financial ones are presented as proposals from the branch manager to the higher management and go per what is possible and per the set plans by the higher management to increase salaries. Of course, I cannot increase the salary of one employee, but I can incentivize him for performance, but in case there is a desire to increase salaries, it must be studied, and a plan is set by the higher management and the branch management on how to increase and a percentage that aligns with the companies income.

Researcher: Do you feel in control of the work you do?

Mr. C: Sure.

Researcher: Can you describe to me how you feel in control?

Mr. C: In terms of controlling my branch, no employee can take a decision except after consulting with me as a branch manager because the branch manager is the first person to take responsibility before the higher management. He is responsible for all the decisions that

all his employees take, so I grant all the employees the space to take decisions, but they refer to me in this regard to make sure that the decision does not impact the flow of work. This is due to our decisions being very sensitive because they are related to dealing with courts and cases, hence one wrong decision could have a negative impact on the outcome of work.

Researcher: This means you grant your employees the chance to make decisions and supervise their decisions.

Mr. C: Yes.

Researcher: Does this mean that your direct manager deals with you and your team members in the same way, he grants you and your colleagues in the team the chance to take your decisions regarding your branches while supervising them sometimes and taking them some other times?

Mr. C: Yes, I present a proposal to the general manager regarding a decision that I want to make and ask him about his opinion? The answer is either in support of the decision and approving it or denying it for reasons that he sees, and I was not aware of.

Researcher: Describe to me how your leader grants you power to handle the cases related to your field?

Mr. C: He grants me absolute power to take decisions as I mentioned earlier, I am the one who takes decisions as I deem suitable in the cases we work on. In my branch surely, it is a matter of mutual consultation, which means that when we have a task or a certain case, I do not prefer making decisions alone without consulting my employees. Nevertheless, I make decisions individually if I find that a problem is about to occur, so I just do it. But when we receive a new case in the first place, I look at it then assign one of the employees who has worked on a similar case previously and I assign two other members to assist him in finishing the task.

Researcher: For members of your team (branch managers), has anyone of them ever needed your input with a certain job or faced a complicated task?

Mr. C: For us, each branch is independent, with financial and administrative departments and has its own budget, which all go to the head department, but it is possible that one of the other branches has work in Jeddah so contact happens between branch managers (team members) to cooperate at accomplishing tasks in the southern area, and also some tasks require me to visit one administration in Riyadh because most head departments are in Riyadh. So, communication takes place with the Riyadh's branch manager to follow matters in the middle area. Also, in the eastern area there are Al-Khobar and Al-Ihsaa branches. Then, all branch administrations are connected in the administrative aspects that we cooperate for as team members without interfering in the specific works of each branch.

Researcher: Does this mean you cooperate among yourselves?

Mr. C: Yes, we are one working team, and we cooperate among ourselves without interfering in the business of the other branch.

Researcher: Describe to me how enabling is the appointed leader or the direct manager?

Mr. C: Yes, he is enabling and always encourages the team, the general manager also meets each employee individually and goes through the issues that are faced and tries to offer the solution. Sometimes, the employees need moral support from the manager, and some others need financial increment, so he would listen to most employees in the company, but with the pressure of work on the general manager, the branch manager became responsible for this.

Researcher: In terms of support, tell me how many times have you felt supported by your direct manager regarding the successful and unsuccessful decisions? Describe this to me.

Mr. C: Since my start of work at this company, I do not think anyone ever disagreed with any decision I made, I was contrarily supported in all the decisions that I made. Yes, I would face some arguments and discussions, but the decision would be taken. I might take a decision that I think is correct but is not from the manager's point of view, we discuss it and clarify our views and take the decision accordingly.

Researcher: Tell me more about your official leader or direct manager and his inclination to empower the team members, the unofficial leaders?

Mr. C: Our direct leader is the general manager. The power of branch managers follows him directly. When it comes to empowerment, he grants us all the moral, technical, and administrative powers, not the financial, no collective decision can be made about it except after the higher management considers it.

Researcher: Do you and your colleagues feel that you share the same goals?

Mr. C: Yes.

Researcher: Can you elaborate?

Mr. C: We have one goal, which is to grow the company and make it one of the biggest four companies in the KSA, so each member of the team tries hard to make the company's name one of the best working companies in KSA, we therefore do not accept any case that does not fit the name and weight of the company.

Researcher: Do you think that you and your colleagues share the same values, beliefs, and goals when you act as leaders?

Mr. C: As leaders, we all behave the same, but our experiences differ.

Researcher: What about values and beliefs?

Mr. C: We share the same values amongst team members but there are differences in execution like experiences and skills.

Researcher: From your personal experience, how do you describe the approach to team leadership?

Mr. C: Each branch manager is the master of his decision, which means that I am the decision-maker of technical and administrative decisions, and the higher management does not interfere in the issues of the branch. When I see that a person is not effective at performing a certain task, I withdraw the case from him and hand it to another colleague. Also, if I find that a person is not functional in this branch, I can decide to move him to another branch that suits his abilities. If I notice poor performance by an employee, I try to find why and solve it. For instance, one employee performs poorly and wants to take a leave, but due to the work pressure he cannot make the decision to take it, so I told him to apply, and I will complete his tasks.

Researcher: Describe to me how you and your team members participate in a major decision-making process?

Mr. C: Since I became a branch manager, all decisions are collective, even in the way reports are prepared, then they are revised by reviewers until we meet as team members and present the whole work about the case on the big screen and the decision is made because responsibility is held by all team members.

Researcher: Okay, how many times has your appointed leader included you and your team members in the decision-making process?

Mr. C: As I told you in the previous question, we meet via Zoom and decide collectively which allows us to see some issues and what should be done because for some previous decisions taken relating to appointments at certain posts in some branches, I saw that adding

these posts was not as needed as now due to the limited numbers of employees now, so the general manager gave me the liberty to structure the branch that I manage, unlike other branches.

Researcher: Describe to me how you trust the members of your team to accomplish tasks effectively?

Mr. C: How can I not trust a branch manager trusted and appointed by the general manager? He did not reach this post except after passing many tests and managed to lead his team, then he is a leader who can head any one of the branches. A leader leads the place, therefore, in case team members are rotated to lead any branch, he will handle it very well.

Researcher: Does this mean that you trust them, their skills and efficiency deeply?

Mr. C: If he is not efficient, he would not be in this post.

Researcher: To what extent does your team cooperate to accomplish any task?

Mr. C: They are very cooperative. If the problem is simple, they can solve it without having me physically with them, but if it is a big problem, I must second them with one employee for about a week or ten days. For example, we had a case that is related with Jeddah's branch and requires attending sessions and completing documents in Riyadh, Riyadh's branch manager cooperated with me and lent me two of his employees to work under my management to accomplish the task. This took a whole week to finish, meaning that team members are truly cooperative.

Researcher: How does your team progress when you appointed leader is absent?

Mr. C: As I said in the beginning of the interview, the general manager grants full power to all branch managers. Hence, evaluation comes at the end of the year, which shows the achievement of the branch through the revenue and other matters. In addition to this, with

modern technology we can get access to the general manager at any time, the COVID pandemic had disadvantages, but it also had advantages. Transactions in courts have become digital rather than on paper, and when needed, signature and its documentation are sent to the general manager to sign, seal, and resend to be sent to the legal authority.

Researcher: This means that your team carries on when the manager is away?

Mr. C: Your do not feel he is absent because we instantly find him when we need.

Researcher: How do you feel about collective decision making? Do you trust your colleagues to take decisions collectively?

Mr. C: You cannot always trust the individual. As I mentioned earlier, I might take an unintentional decision that turns out to be incorrect. Hence, the decisions we take are collective. The experience factor makes a difference with some issues. I could be the expert in a certain area, and another manager could be the expert in another one but not in my area. Therefore, the purpose of holding meetings with managers is to fulfill the areas that each member specializes in.

Researcher: Does this mean you trust their decisions?

Mr. C: Yes, I do.

Researcher: To what extent are you cooperative with your team members to achieve goals?

Mr. C: We cooperate in any matter that relates to any of the branches as I mentioned to you earlier.

Researcher: Describe to me how distinguished are your team members in terms of knowledge and skills.

Mr. C: I already told you that they are appointed in their positions since they have the experience, the knowledge, their high efficiency, and their skills.

Researcher: How do you see leadership in your team?

Mr. C: I cannot judge it now because until now I compare it with the previous leadership of his father -may Allah rest his soul- and Dr. R's leadership currently. The job market in Saudi Arabia differs from it in any other country, but the current leader has a highly advanced mentality and hopes to reach the highest level of organisation at work in terms of dealing with colleagues and among branches, and dealing organisationally with other parties, also with employees' outside appearance and employing technology in the organisation officially. So, I can say that he is the leader of change.

Researcher: When facing a complicated task, how do you and your team members handle it?

Mr. C: We faced a problem in the previous era relating to the General Council of Accountants, and we all had a say in this problem as members of a team. Each one capable of giving help did because the problem was related to the entire organisation rather than a specific branch. We first ask for a meeting with the higher management via Zoom, we study the points of complication, propose a working schedule and what will be discussed. If a team member has a query about any issue, it gets posed in the beginning of the meeting and each member studies it and offers suggestions in the next meeting until we reach a solution to this problem, and it gets transferred to the higher management. In case we could not reach a solution, we seek help from the general manager.

Researcher: Describe to me how you feel when you must act as an unofficial leader in your team?

Mr. C: As I mentioned to you earlier, this does not mean anything to me, and I do not think that it means anything to any member in the team as long as we complement each other.

Researcher: Who among your colleagues you know that he has the same abilities to take the responsibility of leadership?

Mr. C: All team members.

Researcher: Thank you, Mr. C.

Appendix K: Participant Interview Sample Arabic Version

استاذ. س

الباحث: استاذ س هل يمكنك التأكيد على فهمك للتسجيل وموافقتك على تسجيل كلماتك في هذه المقابلة؟

استاذ س: نعم موافق

الباحث: صف لي مدى استقلالية فريقك؟

استاذ س: بالنسبة لاستقلالية الفريق ,طبعا المدير العام مانحنا الاستقلالية كامله في اتخاذ القرار الخاص بالفرع ,وانا بدوري انقل هذه الحرية الى المرؤوسين في اتخاذ القرارات بعد التشاور معي ,بمعنى انني عندما اقوم بعمل عرض سعر في اي قضيه او في تدقيق حسابات, طبعا في حد موضوع لنا من قبل الإدارة العليا, مثلاً في عمل تدقيق الحسابات ان لا يقل عن قيمه معينه, فبذلك يصبح لنا الحرية بوضع السعر الذي نراه مناسب بحسب حجم القضية والميزانيات التي سيتم مراجعتها للعملاء, في الوقت الحالي منحنا المدير العام المساحة الخاصة بنا لتقدم الخصم المناسب في حدود ان نقدم الخدمة بسعر اقل من المستحق. وبذات الوقت نحاول بقدر المستطاع ان نكسب العميل في ظل التنافس بين شركات المراجعة المحاسبية في المملكة العربية السعودية.

الباحث: هل هذا يعني ان المدير المباشر مانح الفريق استقلاليه في اتخاذ القرارات، ولديكم المساحة الخاصة بكم لاتخاذ قراراتكم دون تدخل الإدارة العليا فيها.

استاذ س: صحيح

الباحث: صف لي مستوى الحرية الخاص بك في مهامك المخصصة وكيفية القيام بها؟

استاذ س: انا ممنوح حريه كامله في اتخاذ القرارات كما ذكرت في السؤال الاول، من حيث انني انا ارفع للإدارة العليا في حال رغبت ان اكافئ موظف، او في حال تأخر موظف او كان لا يرغب في الحضور الى العمل، انا لدي المساحة اما بالموافقة او الرفض، ولابد ايضاً ان يتم الرفع للإدارة العليا من اجل الاجراءات الروتينية، ولكن في نهاية الامر القرار يتوقف على موافقتي اولاً كمدير مباشر للمرؤوس، وفي حال لم اوافق، يتوقف الاجراء بالكامل. وبالنسبة لمكافأة موظف، ارفع للإدارة العليا بأنني ارغب في مكافأة موظف، تقديم حافز مادي، زيادة في الراتب او منحنه ميزه معينه، فهذه كلها حريه ممنوحه لي كمدير فرع.

الباحث: انت تقدم عائد لمرؤوسيك مقابل ادائهم لمهامهم وهذا جانب انت تكلمت عنه، والحوافز ممكن تكون مالية او عينيه او معنويه الصلاحيات الممنوحة لك في الحوافز المعنوية أكثر من المالية، والمالية بتقدمها كمقترح للإدارة العليا؟

استاذ س: نعم المالية بتقدم كمقترح من مدير الفرع للإدارة العليا بحسب الامكانيات وبحسب الخطط الموضوعة من الإدارة العليا لزيادة الرواتب، طبعاً انا لا يمكنني زيادة راتب فرد واحد من المرؤوسين ولكن بإمكاني منحه مكافئه على اداءه، ولكن في حال الرغبة في زيادة الرواتب لابد وان تدرس وتوضع فيها خطه من قبل الإدارة العليا وادارة الفرع عن كيفية الزيادة والنسبة بما يتناسب مع دخل الشركة.

الباحث: هل لديك شعور بالسيطرة على العمل الذي تقوم به؟

استاذ س: طبعا.

الباحث: ممكن توصف لي كيف تشعر بالسيطرة؟

استاذ س: بالنسبة للسيطرة في فرعي، لا يمكن لاي فرد من المرؤوسين ان يتخذ قرار الا بعد التشاور معي كمدير للفرع، لان مدير الفرع هو المسؤول الأول امام الإدارة العليا، وهو ايضاً المسؤول عن كافة القرارات التي يتخذها جميع مرؤوسيه، فبذلك امنح جميع المرؤوسين المساحة في اتحاذ القرار ولكن يعود الي في القرار الذي سيتخذه والتأكد ان قراره لن يؤثر على اداء العمل .وذلك لان القرارات لدينا تكون حساسة جداً لان مرتبطة بالتعامل مع المحاكم والقضايا وبالتالي قرار واحد خاطئ ينعكس سلباً على مخرجات العمل.

الباحث: هذا يعني أنك تمنح مرؤوسيك الفرصة لاتخاذ القرار وتكون مشرف على قراراتهم،

استاذ س: نعم.

الباحث: هل هذا يعني ان مديرك المباشر يتعامل معك انت واعضاء فريقك بذات الطريقة، يمنحك انت وزملائك في الفريق المساحة لاتخاذ قرارتكم فيما يتعلق بفروعكم، ويكون احياناً مشرفاً عليها وأحيان اخرى هو من يتخذها بالنيابة؟

استاذ س: نعم، أقدم مقترح للمدير العام بقرار ارغب في اتخاذه، واسأله عن رأيه؟ والرد يكون اما بتأييد القرار والموافقة عليه او الرفض لأسباب هو يراها وانا لم أكن منتبه لها.

الباحث: صف لي كيف يمنحك قائدك السلطة للتعامل مع القضايا المتعلقة بتخصصاتك؟

استاذ س: مانحني السلطة الكاملة في اتخاذ القرارات كما ذكرت سلفاً، انا من يتخذ القرار بما اراه مناسب في القضايا التي نعمل عليها، طبعا في فرعي الامر شورى بيننا، بمعنى عندما تكون لدينا مهمة او قضية معينه انا لا احبذ ان اتخذ القرار منفرداً دون استشارة مرؤوسي، ولكن اتخذ القرار منفرداً في حال رأيت ان مشكلةً ما تكاد ان تحدث فبالتالي اقوم باتخاذ القرار منفرداً. ولكن في الاساس عندما نستلم قضية جديده أقوم بالاطلاع على القضية ثم بعد ذلك أكلف أحد المرؤوسين والذي سبق وان عمل على قضية مشابهه لهذه القضية وأكلف عضويين اخرين لمساعدته في انجاز المهمة.

الباحث: بالنسبة لأعضاء فريقك (مدراء الفروع) هل في مره احتاج أحد منهم تدخلك في عمل معين او واجه مهمه معقده؟

استاذ س: بالنسبة لنا كل فرع مستقل بذاته, وبإدارته المالية والإدارية, ولديه ميزانيته الخاصة, وكلها في النهاية تنصب في الفرع الرئيسي, ولكن من الممكن ان فرع من فروع الاخرى يكون لديها عمل في مدينة جده, فيتم التواصل بين مدراء الفروع (اعضاء الفريق) للتعاون في انجاز المهام في المنطقة الغربية, وأيضاً بعض المهام تتطلب مني زيارة أحد الادارات في الرياض, وذلك لأن معظم الادارات الرئيسية مقرها الرياض, فبذلك يتم التواصل مع مدير فرع الرياض لمتابعة الامر في المنطقة الوسطى, وكذلك في المنطقة الشرقية فرعي الخبر والاحساء, فجميع ادارات الفروع مرتبطة في الجوانب الإدارية التي نتعاون فيها كأعضاء فريق دون التدخل في الاعمال الخاصة بكل فرع .

الباحث: هل هذا يعني انكم تتعاونون فيما بينكم؟

استاذ س: نعم نحن فريق عمل واحد ونتعاون فيما بيننا دون التدخل في شؤون الفرع الآخر.

الباحث: صف لي مدى تمكين القائد المعين او المدير المباشر؟

استاذ س: نعم هو ممكن ويشجع الفريق دائماً، ايضاً المدير العام يجتمع مع كل موظف على حده، ويبحث عن المشاكل التي يواجها الموظف ويحاول ان يقدم له الحل، وفي بعض الأحيان الموظفين يكونوا بحاجه الى دعم نفسي من المدير، والبعض الآخر يكون في حاجه الى زيادة ماديه، فكان يستمع الى معظم موظفين الشركة، ولكن مع ضغوط العمل على المدير العام أصبح مدير الفرع هو المكلف في هذا الامر.

الباحث: من حيث الدعم قل لي كم مره شعرت أنك كنت مدعوماً من قبل مديرك المباشر فيما يتعلق بالقرارات الناجحة والغير ناجحة؟ صف لي اجابتك؟

استاذ س: انا منذ انا بدأت العمل في هذه الشركة لا اعتقد انه يوجد أحد اعترضني في اتخاذ اي قرار، على العكس كنت مدعوم في كل القرارات التي اتخذتها، نعم كنت اواجه بعض الجدال والنقاش، ولكن في نهاية المطاف ينفذ القرار، قد اتخذ

قرار انا ارى انه صحيح، ولكن من وجهة نظر المدير غير صحيح، نتناقش في الامر ويتم ايضاح وجهات النظر وبناءاً اليه يتم اتخاذ القرار.

الباحث: حدثني أكثر عن قائدك الرسمي او مديرك المباشر واستعداده لتفويض بعض السلطة لأعضاء الفريق القادة غير الرسميين؟

استاذ س: قائدنا المباشر هو المدير العام، سلطة مدراء الفروع تتبع للمدير العام مباشرةً، من ناحية التفويض يمنحنا كافة الصلاحيات المعنوية والفنية، والإدارية، اما المالية فلا، يتم اتخاذ قرار جماعي فيها بعد ان تدرس من قبل الإدارة العليا.

الباحث: هل تشعر أنك وزملائك تتشاركون نفس الاهداف؟

استاذ س: نعم.

الباحث: ممكن تصف لي اجابتك.

استاذ س: هدفنا واحد هو تنمية الشركة ووصولها لواحده من الشركات الأربعة الكبرى في المملكة العربية السعودية، فكل عضو من اعضاء الفريق يحاول جاهدا ان يجعل اسم الشركة واحداً من أفضل الشركات العاملة في المملكة العربية السعودية ولذلك نحن لا نقبل اي قضية لا تليق باسم وحجم الشركة.

الباحث: هل تعتقد أنك زملائك تتشاركون نفس القيم والمعتقدات والاهداف عندما تتصرفون جميع كقادة؟

استاذ س: كقادة كلنا نمارس ذات الطباع، ولكن تختلف الخبرات.

الباحث: ماذا عن القيم والمعتقدات؟

استاذ س: نتشارك ذات القيم بين اعضاء الفريق، ولكن تختلف من الجانب التنفيذي كالخبرات والمهارات.

الباحث: من خلال تجربتك الشخصية كيف تصف اسلوب قيادة الفريق؟

استاذ س: مدير كل فرع هو سيد قراره، بمعني انني المتخذ للقرارات الفنية والإدارية، ولا تتدخل الإدارة العليا في القرارات المتعلقة بالفرع، وعندما ارى ان الشخص غير متمكن من اداء مهمه معينه يتم سحب القضية منه وتقديمها لزميل له, ايضاَ اذا كنت ارى ان الشخص غير مناسب في هذا الفرع بإمكاني اتخاذ القرار لنقله الى فرع اخر بما يتناسب مع قدراته. وإذا رأيت تدني مستوى اداء أحد المرؤوسين احاول ان ابحث عن سبب ضعف اداءه والوصول الى حل. على سبيل المثال أحد

المرؤوسين تدنى مستوى الاداء لديه، وكان يرغب في الحصول على اجازه ولكن بسبب ضغط العمل لم يتمكن من اتخاذ قرار الإجازة، فأخبرته ان يتقدم بطلب الإجازة وانني سأقوم باستكمال مهامه.

الباحث: صف لي كيفية مشاركتك انت واعضاء فريقك في عملية صنع قرارات كبرى؟

استاذ س: منذ وان اصبحت مدير فرع وجميع القرارات جماعيه، حتى في طريقة اعداد التقارير، ثم يتم مراجعتها من قبل المراجعين الى ان نجتمع كأعضاء فريق ونعرض العمل كامل فيما يخص القضية على الشاشة الكبرى ويتم اتخاذ القرار، ولذلك لان المسؤولية تنطبق على جميع اعضاء الفريق.

الباحث: طيب كم مره قام قائدك المعين بأشراكك انت واعضاء فريقك في عمليه صنع القرار؟

استاذ س: كما اخبرتك في السؤال السابق انا نجتمع عن طريق برنامج الزوم ونتخذ القرار بشكل جماعي يعرض علينا بعض الامور وما يتوجب على عمله لان في بعض القرارات التي سبق وان تم اتخاذها والمتعلقة بتنصيب بعض الناصب في الفروع، وكنت ارى ان استحداث هذه المناصب لم تكن بقدر الاحتياج في الوقت الحالي، لمحدودية عدد الموظفين في هذا الوقت، وبالتالي منحني المدير العام الحرية في هيكلة الفرع الذي اديره، على خلاف الفروع الاخرى.

الباحث: صف لي كيف تثق بأعضاء فريقك لإنجاز المهام بشكل فعال؟

استاذ س: كيف لا اثق في مدير فرع وقد وثق فيه المدير العام وعينه في هذا المنصب؟ هو لم يصل للمنصب هذا الا بعد ان تجاوز اختبارات عده واستطاع ان يقود فريقه وبالتالي هو قائد بإمكانه قيادة اي فرع من الفروع، فالقائد قائد مكان، فبذلك في حال تم تدوير اعضاء الفريق لقيادة اي فرع من الفروع سيتمكن من قيادة الفرع بكل جداره.

الباحث: هل هذا يعني ان ثقتك عالية فيهم وفي مهاراتهم وكفاءاتهم في العمل؟

استاذ س: لو كان لا يملك الكفاءة فلن يشغر هذا المنصب.

الباحث: ما مدى تعاون فريقك في انجاز اي مهمه؟

استاذ س: متعاونين جداً ,في حال كانت المشكلة بسيطة يمكنهم انجازها دون ان اكون متواجد معهم جسدياً ,اما اذا كانت المشكلة كبيره ,فلابد ان اعيرهم احد المرؤوسين لمده تتراوح من اسبوع الى عشره ايام, على سبيل المثال, كانت لدينا قضيه مرتبطة بفرع جده وتتطلب حضور الجلسات واستكمال المستندات في الرياض, تعاون معي مدير فرع الرياض واعارني 2

من مرؤوسيه للعمل تحت ادارتي لإنجاز المهمة, وقد استغرق الامر اسبوع كامل حتى تم انجاز المهمة. فبذلك اعضاء الفريق متعاونين جداً.

الباحث: كيف يتقدم فريقك في عمله عندما يكون قائدك المعين غائباً؟

استاذ س: كما ذكرت لك في بداية اللقاء ان المدير العام مانح الصلاحيات المطلقة لكافة مدراء الفروع، بالتالي تتم المحاسبة في نهاية السنه، يضح فيها انجازات الفرع، قيمة الايرادات المحصلة ,وغيرها ,اضافة الى ذلك ,مع التقنية الحديثة نستطيع الوصول للمدير العام في اي لحظه ,فجائحة كورونا كما ان لها مساوئ فهنالك محاسن ايضاً ,اصبحت تعاملاتنا مع المحاكم ليست ورقيه بل الكترونيه ,وفي حال لزم الامر التوقيع واعتماد التقارير يتم ارسالها للمدير العام ليوقعها ويختمها ويعيد ارسالها ,ومن ثم ترفع للجهة القضائية.

الباحث: يعني فريقك يتقدم في عمله في حال كان المدير غائباً؟

استاذ س: لا نشعر بعدم وجوده لأننا في وقت احتياجنا له نجده مباشرةً.

الباحث: ما هو شعورك تجاه عمليه اتخاذ القرارات الجماعية؟ هل تثق بزملائك في اتخاذ القرارات الجماعية؟

استاذ س: ليس في كل امر تثق في الفرد الذي امامك، كما ذكرت سابقاً انا ممكن اتخذ قرار غير متعمد وقد يكون غير صائب! وبالتالي القرارات التي نتخذها تكون جماعيه، عامل الخبرة يحدث فارق في بعض الامور، قد اكون انا متخصص في جزئيه معينه وقد يكون مدير آخر متخصص في جزئيه أخرى، ولكن غير ملم في جزئيتي، لذلك الهدف من عمل اجتماع بين المديرين هو لاستكمال الجوانب التي يتميز بها كل عضو،

الباحث: هل هذا يعني أنك تثق في قراراتهم؟

استاذ س: نعم اثق

الباحث: ما مدى تعاونك المنتظم مع اعضاء فريقك لتحقيق الاهداف؟

استاذ س: نحن نتعاون في اي امر يخص اي فرع من الفروع كما ذكرت لك سابقاً.

الباحث: صف لي مدى تميز المستوى المعرفي لأعضاء فريقك ومهاراتهم؟

استاذ س: سبق وان اخبرتك بما انهم كلفوا بهذا المنصب فهو بسبب خبرتهم، وعلمهم، وكفاءتهم العالية ومهاراتهم.

الباحث: كيف ترى القيادة في فريقك؟

استاذ س: لا استطيع الحكم عليها في الوقت الحالي، لأنني حتى الان لدي وجه مقارنه بين القيادة السابقة متمثلة في والده - رحمه الله- وقيادة R في فترته الحالية، سوق العمل في السعودية يختلف عن سوق العمل في اي دوله أخرى، لكن القائد الحالي يمتلك فكر راقي ومتقدم ويتمنى ان يصل الى اعلى درجه من التنظيم في العمل من جانب التعامل بين الزملاء والتعامل بين الفروع، والتعامل مع الجهات الاخرى تنظيمياً، ومن جوانب المظهر الخارجي للموظفين، توظيف التقنية في المنظمة بشكل رسمي, فيمكنني القول بانه قائد التغير.

الباحث: عندما تواجه مهمه معقده كيف تتعامل انت واعضاء فريقك معها؟

استاذ س: حصلت عندنا مشكله في العهد السابق متعلقة بالهيئة العامة للمحاسبيين وهذه المشكلة تدخلنا فهيا جميعاً كأعضاء فريق ,كل فرد كان باستطاعته تقديم مساعده كان يقدمها, لان المشكلة كانت متعلقة بالمنظمة ككل وليست مرتبطة في فرع محدد ,في البداية نطلب عقد اجتماع مع الإدارة العليا عن طريق برنامج الزوم ,ندرس النقاط التي واجهنا فيها تعقيد نطرح جدول الاعمال وما سيتم مناقشته واذا كان احد اعضاء الفريق لديه استفسار عن اي مشكلة يتم طرحها في بداية الاجتماع وكل عضو من الفريق يدرس المشكلة ويقدم مقترحات في الاجتماع القادم ,الى ان نصل لحل لهذه المشكلة ويتم رفعها للإدارة العليا ,وفي حال لم نستطع الوصول لحل ,نستعين بالمدير العام في هذه اللحظة.

الباحث: صف شعورك عندما يتوجب عليك العمل كقائد غير رسمي فريقك؟

استاذ س: كما ذكرت لك سابقاً هذا الامر لا يعني شيئاً لي ولا اعتقد ان اي عضو من اعضاء الفريق يعني له شيئاً بما أننا مكملين لبعضنا.

الباحث: من تعرف من زملائك لديه نفس القدرات لتحمل مسؤوليات القيادة؟

استاذ س: جميع اعضاء الفريق.

الباحث: شكرا لك استاذ س.