Developing Network Leadership in Planned Organisational Change:
The Emergence of Transformation Network Leadership

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ABSTRACT

According to the literature, Network Leadership is defined as a leadership approach that influence the interaction mechanisms between actors and nodes connecting scattered organisational clusters to achieve the collective organisational goal. Network Leadership is based on network leaders' attributes and practices to connect scatter clusters across organisational boundaries. Literature suggests that Network Leadership is to be further explored and examined to capture its conceptual dimension. Taking Network Leadership as useful but underdeveloped concept, this study brought together existing knowledge from distributed leadership and organisational transformation and examined the intersection of these two domains through the theoretical lens of social network theory.

This research develops the Network Leadership literature by introducing the phenomenon of Transformation Network Leadership, which shifts leadership theory and practice away from reliance on single change agents towards the creation of a network of transformation leaders to implement planned organisational changes. This study details the conceptual characteristics of Transformation Network Leadership and demarcates it by specifying its essential features: Network Leaders Attributes and Network Leaders Practices. The theoretical contribution of this study is demonstrated by analysing critically Transformation Network Leadership, drawing upon Whetten (1989), to identify its components, to postulate relationships between the components and to suggest conditions under which Transformation Network Leadership is more or less likely to support the implementation of planned change initiatives.

This study's ontological and epistemological position is interpretivist / constructivist. The findings are based on an in-depth, qualitative study conducted within Bahrain's Oil and Gas sector. The unit of analysis is the companies operating in Bahrain Oil and Gas. Data was gathered using semi-structured interviews and data analysis conducted using thematic analysis technique. The limitations of the study are conducting the study in Bahrain Oil and Gas, qualitative methodological approach, and the limited sample size. Future research directions are examining the intersection between distributed leadership with organisational transformation, examining Transformation Network Leadership on a broader scale and expanding the research to regional and international context. Future research can be extended beyond the scope of this research to other sectors as well as carrying out quantitative research to examine Transformation Network Leadership.

DEDICATION

I proudly dedicate this thesis to:

His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa

It was him who sponsored me through my PhD journey and was my inspirer and motivator to serve my nation at my upmost level. His words and actions were a source of determination to achieve the unachievable.

May Allah rest his soul in heaven

To my Father and mentor **Hussain Sultan Sultan Al-Ghanem**

Who raised me to be the man I am today and was my primary motive in this journey. I am very sorry to have missed a lot of precious times with him through the past years.

May Allah bless you with continues health and prosperity

To my family and loved ones who gave me the best thing in life without their support and continuous encouragement I wouldn't be able to achieve this work.

Thank you all for everything

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I would like to thank all the faculty members and administrators at Brunel Business School and the administration office at Brunel University for their professional assistance during the period of my research.

I can hardly believe that I have reached the end of this journey, however I have developed a soft spot for academia and research. I am sure that my ties with research will just grow bigger as it became one of my sources of my pride to become a published researcher.

Thank you all from the deep of my heart.

Nawaf Husain Sultan Al-Ghanem

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is original authentic research conducted by the author himself for the prepose of the PhD without Residence at Brunel University London. This research has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification to any other academic institution. I further declare that all facts, figures, tables, and data has been extracted and introduced honouring academic regulations and ethical conduct.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In todays' vibrant fluctuating global economy where organisations' complexity is growing in context, structures and geographical spread over different time zones. Organisational transformation has become a vital element to organisational existence (Day *et al.,* 2014; Burns, Hughes and By, 2016; Buillington and Alford, 2019). The organisational transformation initiatives and change process have become essential to the survival, growth, prosperity, and continuity of those organisations. Organisations strongly compete by transforming the way they operate and perform their day-to-day business (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997; Burke, 2002; Walo and Ringen, 2018), not only that but they also compete by enhancing their business and management practice to keep up with the best business practice. Organisational transformation literature proposes shifting and adjusting organisational practice which could be incremental continuous transformational changes or large-scale transformation initiatives which turns around the way organisational performance is perceived (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997; Weick and Quinn 1999; Hughes, 2017). Scholars have argued that organisational transformation initiatives require organisational members to modify and upgrade not only their day-to-day work routines but also their social practices such as ties with their leaders and team members (Weick and Quinn 1999; Heyden *et al.,* 2017; Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018). Resistance to changes, human nature, and psychology of organisational members are obstacle increasing tension amongst organisational members in achieving their organisational goals (Burns, Hughes and By, 2016; MackKillop, 2018). Therefore, organisational leaders are expected to practise suitable leadership approaches to mitigate tensions emerging from the transformation decision. Leaders are expected to exhibit behaviours which motivate, inspire, and convince organisational members of the significance of the transformation initiative decision to the organisation (Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018; Bass and Riggio, 2006; Burke, 2002).

Transactional and transformational leadership were preferred approaches to organisational leadership amongst various leadership theories since the 80's to the early 21st century (Leithwood and Azah, 2016; Turner and Baker, 2018). Transactional leadership is based on understanding employee's needs, providing for those needs to reward employee's contribution

and hard work, and committing to reward them after they complete assigned work duties (Bass and Avolio, 1993; Chiang and Wang, 2012). Achua and Lussier (2004) state that "transactional leadership seeks to satisfy followers' individual needs as a reward for completing a given task" (p. 360). Transformational leadership was often linked with managerial effectiveness during organisational transformational initiatives (Pawar and Eastman, 1997; Bass and Riggio, 2006; Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018). Transformational leaders recognise the essentiality and need for transformational changes and inspire their followers to execute and implement planned organisational changes (Meuser *et al.,* 2016; Bass, 1999).

Team/collective approach to organisational leadership is growing in popularity due to increased organisational complexity in structure. The team/collective approach to leadership has many constructs such as shared, distributed, complexity, democratic, intergroup, collaborative, collective and participative leadership approaches (Gronn, 2002; Pearce and Munz, 2005; Spillane, 2005; Denis *et al.*, 2012 Floyd and Fung, 2017). However, distributed leadership is perceived as a more suitable approach to organisational management as it is concerned with achieving the collective organisational goal rather than individual or group of individuals goals (Badaracco, 2001; Gronn, 2002; Bennet *et al.*, 2003; Bush, 2018).

The growing organisational complexity has resulted in a desire to shift from complicated classical large scale hierarchal organisational structures towards more flexible network-based structures to attain and execute organisational goals (Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Antonakis, 2014; Wind, 2017). This has called for the quest of identifying newer leadership approaches that are suitable for leading organisations in a network-based structure (McGuire, 2003; Provan and Kenis, 2008; Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Popp *et al*, 2014). Network leadership was explored by scholars with the attempt to define its quantum and definition (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; McGuire, 2003; McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Wei-Skilern and Silver, 2013; Popp *et al.,* 2014; Striver, 2017). The network leadership research was not extended beyond the scope of conceptualising its definition and quantum.

1.2 Framing this Research

This research explores and conceptualises network leadership from three different domains of literature. Firstly, organisational transformation which is a process of transforming organisations to upgrade the way they do business and achieve organisational goals (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997; Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018). This process is challenged by

many obstacles such as human resistance to change, lack of knowledge and individual capacity to implement those transformation initiatives as expected (Burns, Hughes and By, 2016). Organisational transformation is a planned change process in organisation's culture, believes, values and the way the business is done (Bartunek and Louis, 1988). However, leadership is perceived as a main element of assuring the execution of planned transformational initiatives and implementing organisational goals without highlighting which type of leadership and in what phase of the transformation process (Denis *et al.,* 2012; White *et al,* 2016).

Secondly, distributed leadership which is a switch form traditional classical leadership to more collaborative, collective team-based leadership (Gronn, 2002; Lumby, 2019). This leadership approach is a preferred leadership approach in leading organisations towards achieving their collective transformational initiatives (Currie *et al.,* 2011; Feng *et al.,* 2017).

Finally, social network theory which assists in understanding the ties linking organisational actors, networks, and clusters (Carter *et al.,* 2015). This theory also assists in understanding the mechanisms of those ties linking different organisational actors together (Wassrman and Faust, 1994; Borgatti *et al.,* 2009). Therefore, social network theory was used in this research understand the strength and mechanisms of ties connecting organisational actors together.

This research examines the intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation literature through the theoretical lens of social network theory. This research explores the emergence of network leadership as an outcome of this intersection and expand the concept of network leadership to the organisational transformation domain. Social network theory is utilised as an underpinning theory to explore ties strength, mechanisms between organisational actors, networks, and clusters.

1.3 Research Background

Organisations have been going through changes which are incremental or large scaled to update the way they operate (Henderson and Clark, 1990; Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997; Heyden *et al.,* 2017). Those changes have been targeting the same objective which is reaching optimal and upmost performance levels of those organisations. This refers to transforming an organisation by applying up-to-date best operational functions, technologies, procedures, policies, and best business practices which help enhancing overall performance and profitability of those organisations (Bartunek and Louis, 1988; White *et al.,* 2016).

The process of organisational transformation continues to be challenged by traditional classical authoritarian organisational leadership models. Those leadership models which have become unsuitable in an information and technological era distinguished by hyper-competition (Marshak, 2004; Walo and Ringen, 2018). However, unsatisfactory implementation of organisational transformation initiatives is accompanied by an emerging view stating that those traditional classical leadership models of leadership models are no longer adequate for 21st century organisational management challenges (Marshak, 2004; Stebbings and Braganza, 2008).

Organisational transformation initiatives change leads to frequent purposeful adjustments which are essential to the organisational continuity, survival and prosperity (Badaracco, 2001; Denis *et al.,* 2012; Bush, 2018). Scholars have argued that the implementation of organisational transformational initiatives require organisational members to transform the way they operate and perform (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997; Weick and Quinn 1999; Shirado and Christakis, 2017). This is to keep up with the challenge of continuous environment evolvement attempting to convince and inspire organisational members to exercise leadership practices that facilitates the execution of transformational initiatives (Feldman and Pentland, 2003; Anderson *et al.,* 2017). Among various leadership approaches (Robbin and Judge, 2008; Xenikou, 2017) stated that transactional leadership is suitable to implement organisational transformation initiatives through motivating members to execute planned organisational goals which have been determined by means of confirming the assigned roles, responsibilities, and tasks.

1.4 Research Dilemma

Organisations are challenged by the evolvement of its operating environment, changing economics, and increasing complexity to go through transformation initiatives (Gronn, 2003; Wind, 2017; Turner and Baker, 2018). However, those transformational initiatives are challenged by many obstacles that effect the success of the organisations in achieving their organisational goals (Beckhard, 2006; Hayden *et al.,* 2017). Those organisational transformation obstacles are the cause of organisational transformation implementation failures (Bledow *et al.,* 2017; De Keyser *et al.,* 2021). Organisational change failure is defined as "an organisation's deviation from goals and outcomes that are expected and desired from organisational change" (Schwarz, Bouckenooghe and Vakola, 2021, p. 162). There are many obstacles which limits the success of implanting transformational initiatives such as human

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resistance, lack of knowledge, growing organisational complexity and social ties (Irani, Sharif and Love, 2001; French and Bell, 2006). As Schwarz, Bouckenooghe and Vakola (2021) stated "there is a long history of theorising specific perspectives on the ways that organisations seek to manage, frame and understand failure and its conditions" (p. 172). The implementation of transformation initiatives demands actors in different levels of the organisation to lead the organisational change. If they don't accept this leadership role, the organisational change will not achieve its goals and outcomes.

Leadership style and leaders' traits are the means of implementing those transformational initiatives efficiently, continuously and consistently. The dilemma of which leaders and leadership approach to organisational management should be used as a mean of implementing those changes still exists. Scholars have created a connection between different schools of thoughts some of which still believe in traditional classic leadership methods, whereas others believe in contemporary leadership approaches such as transactional, transformational, and charismatic leadership (Hernandez *et al.,* 2011; Dai *et al.,* 2013; Turner and Baker, 2018). However, team-based leadership approaches are being more accepted these days amongst organisational leaders. As scholars has highlighted the significance of having distributed leadership as a leadership tool to mitigate tension and facilitate the efficient performance of employees (Gronn, 2002; Fitzgerald *et al.,* 2013). Unlike conventional and contemporary leadership approaches to organisational management, team-based leadership approach is collective, distributed, facilitative, collaborative, participative and emergent. Distributed leadership which is perceived as a suitable team-based leadership approach requires organisational leadership engagement, empowerment, and facilitation of potential leaders to connect and interconnect disparate organisational elements.

This research integrates social network theory principles with the fundamentals of distributed leadership. This research highlights organisations desire to change their structures, functions, working method and processes due to growing organisational complexity (Denis *et al.,* 2012; Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017). The organisational mindset shift towards more flexible network-based structures demands for a leadership approach suitable in managing networks (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Silvia, 2010; Stiver, 2017). As scholars studied network leadership to define its concept, this research expands the concept network leadership to the domain of organisational transformation.

1.5 Research Aim and Objective

The aim of this research is to develop the useful but underdeveloped concept of network leadership. This is through exploring the impact of distributed leadership in organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives. As well as a conceptualising network leadership in interconnecting different organisational scattered components from across organisational boundaries.

The objective of this research is to explore the theoretical concept of network leadership to identify this leadership approach effect on organisations going through planned transformational changes. This research expands network leadership research beyond the attempt of capturing its dimension to the organisational transformation domain. This research highlight importance of network leadership role in implementing planned large scale organisational transformational. This research will highlight the need for network leadership as an important and significant aspect of leading organisations through planned organisational changes. This is achieved through understanding the obstacles to the implementation of planned organisational changes.

1.6 Research Questions

This research is interested in exploring the emergence of network leadership during planned organisational transformation. The emergence of network leadership is facilitated by overlaying the principles of social network theory upon the characteristics of distributed leadership during planned organisational change to capture its conceptual dimension. The purpose of the research questions is to understand the conceptual dimension of network leadership and network leaders role in implementing planned organisational changes. Therefore, the research seeks to address the following questions to explore the notion of network leadership in organisations going through their planned transformational change:

Q1. A. What are the outcomes of the intersection of distributed leadership with organisational transformation and social network theory?
    B. Is network leadership a result of this intersection?

Q2. How does social network theory enhance distributed leadership practice?

Q3. What are the conceptual dimensions of network leadership?

1.7 Methodology

This research is adopting qualitative philosophical approach technique to extract data related to the research topic through semi-structured questionnaire data collection tool. A face-to-face interview is conducted to capture the participants' organisational reflections on the research topic. The qualitative approach was chosen due to the nature of the research topic, where it depends on discussions, arguments and believes of organisational participants to explore the emergence network leadership. Data is collected from different Divisions within Bahrain Oil and Gas which has been going through organisational changes. During the data collection process, companies will still be implementing initiatives towards enhancing their policies and procedures as needed to achieve high performance levels of operation efficiency and maximum extraction of revenues and profits of those operations. The collected data are categorised to relevant themes and sub-themes which will be analysed based on a thematic analysing approach which will be discussed in Chapter 3.

1.8 Bahraini Oil and Gas Selection

This research is conducted in Bahrain Oil and Gas which is the main pillar of the Kingdom of Bahrain national economy and a major contributor to its national GDP. Bahrain Oil and Gas is an integrated holding company, consisting of different business divisions. Those divisions are upstream, downstream, petrochemicals and services. The first oil discovery in the GCC region was announced in the Kingdom of Bahrain in 1932 and the first oil shipment which left the port of the Kingdom of Bahrain was in 1934. Therefore, this industry has gone through a lot of transformational plans throughout its 97 years life. Due to the nature of the business, this industry is continuously undergoing through transformational initiatives to cope with the changes in the market demands, product specifications requirement and international imposed environmental requirements for fossil emissions. The oil and gas industry is continuously challenged increasing environmental restrictions to fossil fuel emissions. This encourages organisations operating in this industry to implement cutting edge technologies that enhances production efficiency and product quality. This industry is still going through large scale transformational changes in its major companies. Selecting the oil and gas industry provides the researcher with extensive cumulated experience of organisational leaders and executives that reflect their views and believes on the research topics.

1.9 Thesis Structure

This thesis is organised into six chapters in the following sequence and design:

Chapter 1: introduces the reader to the thesis, presents the research background, problem and sets out the research questions. The chapter also discusses the aim and objectives of conducting the research along its methodological approach.

Chapter 2: explores existing literature, theories, concepts and empirical evidence in the literature discussing organisational transformation, distributed leadership, network leadership and social network theory. The various leadership styles and theories will be discussed and defined. At the end of this chapter, the conceptual model and the critique will be discussed as a closure to the literature review where the identified gap or contribution of this research will be revealed.

Chapter 3: is the research methodology, including the epistemological and ontological stance, the research framework, research design and data analysis aspects. in this chapter the research methodological and philosophical approach addressing research questions will be explained, discussed and justified . The process of sampling will be highlighted and discussed.

Chapter 4: is the data analysis chapter which will analyse the outcomes from the interviews and questioner to the targeted research sample. Participants' ideas, views, and perception in relation to the research questions.

Chapter 5: in this chapter a full discussion of the outcomes and findings from the data gathered will be discussed.

Chapter 6: is the conclusion and contribution chapter where the thesis findings will be concluded. The research contribution existing knowledge will be highlighted alongside the limitations and directions for future research. The thesis structure is illustrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Thesis Structure

Chapter 1 Introduction	• Introduction to the research area and highlights the research problem. • discuss research aim and objective.
Chapter 2 Literature Review	• Reviewing literature linked to research topic. • Identify the gap in the existing literature.
Chapter 3 Research Methedology	• Discuss the research methodolgy and philiosphical approach. • Discuss the data collecting process. • Discuss the coding process.
Chapter 4 Data Analysis	• Present gathered data. • Analysis of gathered data. • Provide findings.
Chapter 5 Discussion	• Full discussion of results and findings.
Chapter 6 Conclusion	• Present the research contribution, limitations, future direction and closing remarks

1.10 Summary

This chapter discussed the research background and dilemma that encouraged the researcher to conduct this research. The aim of this research was discussed highlighting the rationale for exploring the emergence of network leadership and conceptualising its dimensions in the domain of organisational transformation process in a qualitative methodological approach.

The next chapter is going to be a literature review, where research dilemma will be addressed and explored. Organisational transformation, leadership evolvement, distributed leadership, social network theory and network leadership are the main literature areas discussed. The synthesis of domains assembling network leadership conceptual model will developed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets the theoretical foundation for exploring the emergence of network leadership as well as its conceptual dimensions. This is done by examining the outcome of the implementation of distributed leadership during organisational transformation and utilising social network theory as an underpinning theory to understand the mechanisms of ties between actors. The chapter discusses organisational transformation, leadership theories evolvements, social network theory and network leadership.

This chapter explores the intersection between distributed leadership with organisational transformation through the lens of social network theory. This chapter is organised in the following sequence. Firstly, reviewing literature related to organisational transformation, leadership theory in a chronological sequence to understand how leadership theory literature developed over time. Secondly, discuss team-based leadership theories implementation during organisational transformation. Thirdly, discuss social network theory. Finally, the chapter will discuss network leadership as defined by scholars, explain the developed conceptual model, and concluded with comprehensive perception of network leadership.

2.2 Organisational Transformation

Organisational transformation refers to actions taken by organisational leaders to transform and includes terms such as re-engineering, redesigning and refining operational systems or a change in the manner the business is carried out in the event of the re-engineering or the restructuring activity (Weick and Quinn, 1999; Battilana *et al.,* 2010). Organisational transformation is an organisational change that goes beyond the concept of a mere change in systems to a process that penetrates different organisational layers to implement organisational changes (Beckhard, 2006; Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018). Furthermore, organisational transformation can take many forms from radical to incremental to continuous incremental (morphing). Each form of transformation might suggest different combination of leadership styles and different set of traits. The required set of leadership traits differs

according to stage and status of the transformation process. Morris and Brandon (1993) argued that organisations should position their re-engineering projects alongside other change initiatives taking place including total quality, redesign, and empowerment. Additionally, Hammer (1990) suggests that organisations that have made incremental changes, can usually improve what was done earlier by changing a single variable, within the functional structure. Organisational transformation depends on the success of such changes which depends on the way those changes are executed and introduced to organisations' members (French and Bell, 2006; Burns, Hughes and By, 2016). Organisational transformation execution is dependent on how good and effective leadership is (Bass, 1985; Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018). Leaders and followers are key elements to efficient implementation of change (Kempster *et al.*, 2014; White *et al.*, 2016).

However, transformational change is observed as an all-pervading, universal, and multifaceted process within a specific business frame and presents vast and immense challenges to any system (Beckhard, 2006; MackKillop, 2018). The challenge of organisational transformation in complicated business patterns would primarily require profound depth and insight of theoretical examination, such as exploring possible combinations of individual and plural outlooks of leadership at the pinnacle of the organisation (Denis et al, 2012; Alghanem *et al.,* 2019). For example, in the paper published by Binci, Cerruti and Braganza (2016) examining the link between shared and vertical leadership in organisational transformational change. They focused on the relationship between organisational leaders and the change management team in charge of implementing those planned transformational change in a large-scale Italian public utility. They highlighted that during radical big scale transformation the way of leading the organisation is not as same as going through an incremental continuous change (Binci, Cerruti and Braganza, 2016). On the other hand, Caterino, Shani and Cirella (2018) explored a medium-sized family business in the fashion industry, who has implemented radical changes to take the company back to profitability. As the company was on route to bankruptcy, they confirmed that the type of relations between the organisational leader and his team of managers is different in the case of urgent transformational shift from their incremental transformation initiatives. Yet literature continues to focus largely on the individual who leads the transformation, rather than on the plurality of individuals and their interactions (Kempster *et al.*, 2014; White *et al.*, 2016).

2.3 Leadership Definitions

There are various perspectives of leadership and numerous scholars who have endeavoured to outline the leadership concept (Stogdill and Bass, 1981) which is summarised in Table 1 below. The meaning of leadership is not simply about an individual or a group of individuals at the peak of the hierarchy and chain of command in an organisation (Denis *et al.,* 2012; Weschler and Massarik, 2013; Turner and Baker, 2018). Leadership is a process, act, or endeavour to exert influence on organisational members (Bass, 1999; Kotter, 2008; Dai *et al.,* 2013). Leadership is principally an interpersonal influence, performed in a certain situation, and directed through the communication process toward the achievement of a certain goal or goals (Weschler and Massarik, 2013). It is a social process in which one individual exercise influence on the behaviour of others and the process of the activities of an organised group in its efforts toward achieving a certain goal (Stogdill, 1950; Buchanan and Huczynski, 2019; Turner and Baker, 2018). Generally speaking, leadership is the influencing process of leaders over followers to achieve organisational objectives through certain changes (Lussier and Achua, 2004). It is the incremental influence that a person has beyond his or her formal authority (Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Wu *et al.,* 2020).

Leadership is a process where one individual sets a purpose or a direction for one or a group of individuals and gets them to move alongside each other in that direction with competence and commitment (Jaques and Clement, 1994; Anderson *et al.,* 2017). An influential and visionary leader convinces his team members that the planned transformational initiatives are vital in a challenging, highly competitive, and volatile environments. Since 1980s, the literature on organisational change leadership has been largely influenced by performance models advising on where leadership can be found and how it can lead to change (Bass, 1985; Kotter, 1988; Kotter, 2008; Kuipers *et al.*, 2014). Leadership is a challenge in global economy where business environment is dynamic and competitive. Coping with such competitive economic environment requires organisations to transform and go through organisational changes to be able to keep up with business trends. Global markets and geopolitics environment frequently evoke organisations, whether large or small to apply changes and modify the way they do businesses, or even change their organisational cultures and beliefs. One of the challenges for leaders is carrying out planned organisational changes which broadly correspond to premeditated interventions intended to modify organisational functioning towards more favourable results (Lipps, Watson and Westly, 1958). Many leadership studies which tackle the relationship between leadership and change do not however account for the complexity of intra-organisational processes including the complexity of the organisational change

implementation process, which involves a wide spectrum of activities and people (Yukl, 1999). Planned organisational change implementation requires leadership competencies that might play different roles and is neglected by leadership literature (Higgs and Rowland, 2005; Alghanem *et al.,* 2019). The complexity of leadership requires competent visionary leaders with knowledge and diversified set of social and personal skills to lead the organisation towards the efficient implementation of those planned changes (Lipps, Watson and Westly, 1958; Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Walo and Ringen, 2018).

Leadership has gone through several phases of development: traditional, contemporary, team/collective, and global leadership theories. Leadership theories traced back from the early twentieth century to the late 70's are referred to as traditional leadership theories. These emerged and developed from the 80's to early twenty first century were identified as newer leadership theories (Turner and Baker, 2018; Avolio *et at.,* 2009). At the beginning of this century, more collective and team focused leadership started evolving and developing alongside the new evolutionary global leadership theory which emerged recently. The "notion of individualistic leaders have been replaced by labels such as collective, distributed and shared leadership" (Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020: p. 4). In the sections below leadership theories development are discussed in a chronological development with more focus on transactional, transformational, and team-based leadership theories. Figure 2 below exhibits leadership theory evolution.

Figure 2 Chronological Evolution of Leadership Theory.

Traditional Leadership	**Newer Leadership**	**Team/Collective Leadership**	**Global Leadership**
•from early 20th century to late 70's	•from the 80's to early 21st	•beginning of the 21st century	•beginning of the 21st century
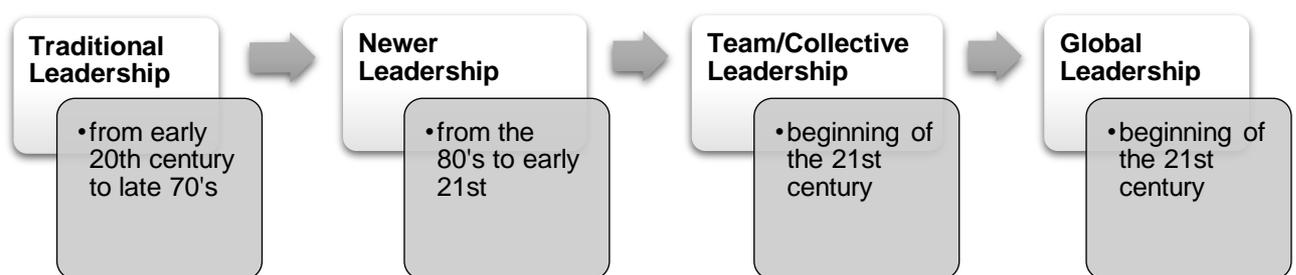
Leadership as defined by different scholars are listed in table 1 below.

Table 1 Leadership definitions

Reference	Leadership definition
Stoghill (1950)	"Leadership may be considered as the process(act) of influencing the activities of an organised group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement" (P. 3)
Stogdill and Coons (1957)	"Leadership is the behaviour of an individual when he is directing the activities of a group toward a shared goal" (P. 7)
Prentice (1961)	"Leadership is the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistant. A leader is one who successfully marshals his human collaborators to achieve particular ends" (P. 143)
Hollander (1978)	"Leadership is a process of influence between a leader and those who are followers" (P. 1)
Rauch and Behling (1984)	"Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organised group toward goal achievement" (P. 46)
Bass (1990)	"Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perception and expectations of members" (P.19)
Cohen (1990)	"Leadership is the art of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objective or project" (P. 9)
Conger (1992)	"Leaders are individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals who gain commitment from this group of members to this direction and who then motivate these members to achieve the direction's outcomes" (P. 18)
Jaques and Clement (1994)	"Leadership is that process in which one person sets the purpose or direction for one or more other persons and gets them to move along together with him or her and with each other in that direction with competence and full commitment" (P. 4)
Hogg (2001)	"Leaders may emerge, maintain their position, be effective, and so forth, as a result of basic cognitive processes" (P. 186)
Howell and Shamir (2005)	"Followers' self-concepts play a crucial role in determining the type of relationship they develop with the leader" (P. 97)
Balkundi and Kilduff (2006)	"Our network approach locates leadership not in attributes of individuals but in the relationships connecting individuals" (P. 420)
DeRue (2011)	"Leadership is a social interaction process where individuals engage in repeated leading-following interactions, and through these interactions, co-construct identities and relationships as leaders and followers" (P. 126)
Yammarino (2013)	"Leadership is a multi-level. leader-follower interaction process that occurs in a particular situation(context)where leader and followers share a purpose and jointly accomplish things willingly" (P. 2)
Lord and Dinh (2014)	"Leadership is a social process that involves iterative exchange processes among two or more individuals" (P. 161)
(Cullen-Lester and Yammarino (2016)	"Leadership as collective behaviour resulting from a number of interdependent entities interacting with one another, typically in a non-linear way, and have the characteristics of emergence and self-organisation over time" (P. 173)
Turner and Baker (2018)	"Leadership is a multilevel construct, and current leadership theories should be presented as multilevel theories rather than individual theories" (P. 487)

2.3.1 Traditional Leadership Theory

Traditional leadership theories include trait-based theories, behaviour theories, situational/contingency leadership theory and leader follower model theory. The development in traditional leadership theories is exhibited in figure 3 below.

Figure 3 Traditional Leadership Development.
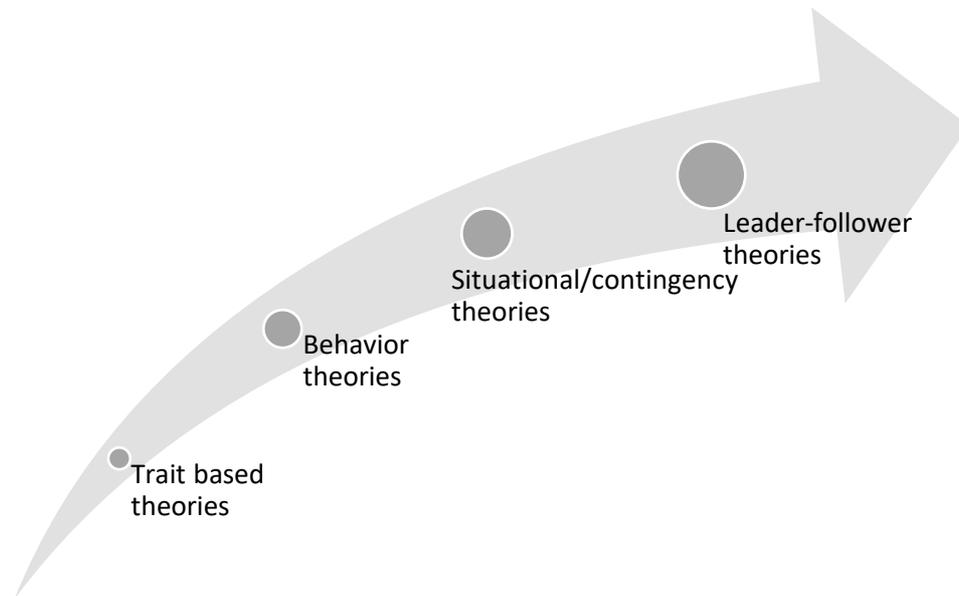
1) Trait based theories

Great man leadership theory was the first leadership model to evolve in the beginning of the nineteenth century stating that "leadership qualities were inherited" (Hernandez *et al.,* 2011, p. 1169). Great-man leadership soon transformed to what was known later as trait leadership theory or a heroic leadership theory that is based on the characteristics of the leader and his ability to motivate the patterns of follower's behaviours by positive influence. Trait-based theories is based on the belief that "certain personality characteristics distinguish leaders from non-leaders" (Hernandez *et al.,* 2011, p.1169). Trait-based leadership has been extended to include neo-trait approach emphasizing "the need to understand the psychological mechanisms through which traits translate into leadership effectiveness" (Hernandez *et al*., 2011, p. 1169). In this approach raises the argument that "trait alone is not sufficient for business leadership they are only a precondition" (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991, p.49). Trait-based theories became famous in the 19th century, some of the earliest leadership literature and research studied people who were successful leaders already (Turner and Baker, 2018). Many scholars have argued that leaders were a result of societies they lived in. As trait-based

leadership theories are considered by some scholars and researchers as an obsolete leadership style and theory.

2) Behaviour Based Theories

Behaviour leadership theory focuses on the leader's behaviour and actions rather than traits (Hernandez *et al.,* 2011). Behaviour leadership theory believes that "great leaders are made not born" (Turner and Baker, 2018, p. 475). These theories propose that leaders are an outcome of leaders learning capacity and ability to acquire those successful leaders' behaviours. Behaviour leadership theories was an evolvement of the great man theory as it identifies certain behaviours that determines and identifies leaders (Hernandez et al., 2011).

3) Situational/Contingency Leadership Theories

Researchers progressed from trait and behaviour-based leadership theories to situational leadership that relates leadership to the leader's environment (Fiedler, 1976). Scholars identified a new theory at that time which matches leaders' behaviours with their follower's capacity of handling different roles and achieving designated goals set by the leader in different situations (Hernandez et al., 2011). Fiedler (1976) said "we have to match the leader's motivational structure (that is, the goals to which he gives the highest priority) with the degree to which the situation gives the leader control and influence over the outcomes of his decisions" (p. 9). The main driver of this theory was the motivation of employees and followers by looking at the leader's management style and the environment he/she is operating in. This approach to leadership contradicts trait and behaviour theories in its attention and reflection on leaderships' situational environment exposure (House, 1996).

4) Leader-Follower Models

This leadership model focuses on the response of leaders to followers' capabilities and abilities to adapt to changes and perform efficiently (Fiedler, 1976). The attention to the level of interaction between leaders and followers and the level of follower's maturity in term of the understanding challenges facing the organisation and the need for change (Lord, 1977) are important factors of such leadership style. In leader-follower models of leadership, followers are influenced by their leaders to execute their duties at their upmost performance levels and motivated by their leader's commitment towards achieving their organisational goals (Turner and Baker, 2018). These leadership models are the philosophical analysis approach from

single leader behaviour towards dyadic ties analysis to understand and evaluate the actor's competencies (Hernandez *et al.,* 2011).

2.3.2 Contemporary Leadership Theories

Contemporary leadership theories are someway charismatic, inspiring in the relationship between leaders/followers and transactional. Avolio (2009) outlined new approaches to leadership which "emphasised symbolic leader behaviour, visionary, inspirational messages, emotional feelings, ideological and moral values, individualised attention, and intellectual stimulation" (p. 766). These approaches to leadership resulted in novel ways of looking at and understanding the concept of leading and being led. Charismatic and transformational leadership became of interest in the past two decades (Avalio, 2009). Contemporary leadership models are believed to bring followers to "higher levels of inspiration, aptitude, and performance" (Avolio *et al.,* 2009, p. 766).

Contemporary leadership theories have mainly focused in the past three decades on transformational and transactional leadership as the most effective and efficient leadership styles. Transactional and transformational were the most popular leadership approaches amongst scholars in the during the 80's till beginning of this millennium (Turner and Baker, 2018). This research reviewed this transactional and transformational leadership (Appendix 1). Those studies outlined many gaps in leadership which are related to the relationship between followers and leaders', while other studies have highlighted the need of newer leadership style (Turner and Baker, 2018). The need for a leadership approach which interconnects various change agents that are accountable for the proper implementation of those required changes is essential called for exploring more team/based leadership approaches.

2.3.3 Team/Collective Leadership Theory

Team-based leadership theories focus on individuals encouraging their positive participation in decision-making processes (Arredondo, Trapero and De Lozada, 2010). Collective approaches to leadership are built around the concept of moving from a single leader's approach to a leadership model where "followers and groups exercise shared leadership to initiate transformative change" (Eberly *et at.,* 2013, p. 427). Collective/team leadership

theories are decentralised where leadership can be rotated based on the situation and current challenge facing the organisation, operating at multilevel, formal/informal, and dynamic in its approach to leadership as leaders are encouraged to be proactive (Friedrich *et al.*, 2014). In their work, Arredondo, Trapero and De Lozada (2010) stated that team-based forms of leadership are needed as this is "a new type of leadership which is centred in the human aspect" (p. 62). This refers to assembling the process of decision making around the engagement of followers and understanding their stance. This leadership theory is going to be discussed more thoroughly in this chapter.

2.3.4 Global Leadership Theories

Global leadership theories are those theories which recognise the complexity of leadership such as instrumental, process and global leadership theories. Global leadership theory is a new approach based on the idea that leadership can take place globally and across different geographic locations (Steers *et al.*, 2012). Few studies and scholars have looked into this leadership approach as it remains an area which is under researched and investigated (Mendenhall and Bird, 2013). Many scholars have tried to bridge the gap in global leadership literature by identifying the main theory constructs by approaching leadership as a culture and the expected role of global leader (Steers *et al.*, 2012). Global leadership theories approach leadership from two different prospective local or domestic and global or international (Bird and Mendenhall, 2016). Global leadership theory is defined as "the process of influencing others to adopt a shared vision through structures and methods which facilitate positive change while fostering individual and collective growth characterised by significant levels complexity, flow and presence" (Mendenhall *et al.*, 2012, p. 500). These researchers look at global leadership as influencing and leading individuals or groups of individuals in multiple regions towards achieving the collective organisational goals. Global leadership is about leading through dissimilar cultures and can be looked at as either cultural or universal (Antonakis and House, 2014).

2.4 Team/Collective Leadership

Team/collective leadership can be defined as a process of emergent relationship between individuals, team members (actors) and networks that interacts with each other and share leadership roles between team members to achieve the overall collective organisational goal

in a systematic way (Carter *et al.*, 2015; Small and Rentsch, 2011). Many researchers have linked leadership theory with results, organisational satisfaction, effectiveness, and organisational behaviour (Bass and Avolio, 1994: Detert and Burris, 2007: Braun *et al.*, 2013). Those studies stressed that the concept of leadership is only executed by a single leader in a traditional approach to leadership (Pearce and Munz, 2005). As a natural evolvement of post-heroic leadership theory interest started emerging during the mid-eighties in to more shared, distributed, collaborative and collective leadership approach where leadership is shared between a group of potential qualified leaders (Badarcco, 2001; Bolden, 2011; Fitzsimons *et al.,* 2011). There is "a significant departure from leading large, centralised, hierarchically arranged institutions in which the leader guides followers who are employees of their organisation" (Slyke and Alexander, 2006, p. 364). This evolvement in leadership theory focused on the relationship between different components and elements of the organisation from individuals to organisational bodies ensuring the achievement of the collective organisational goals smoothly in coordination and harmony (Kickert *et al.*, 1997; Friedrich, Griffith and Mumford, 2016). Teams engaged in complex decision making or knowledge-based works highly benefits from collective leadership approach (Fausing *et al.,* 2015). The sharing of leadership roles results in performance efficiency during organisational transformation in networks with formal or informal leadership (Wang, Waldman and Zhang, 2014; Waldman, Wang and Zhang, 2016; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino, 2016).

Team/collective approach to leadership was first recognised and acknowledged as a political approach to leadership in organisational networks (Bryson and Kelley, 1978; Leithwood, 2019). First, leadership is argued to be relational. The relational view and approach to leadership was adopted by (Hollander and Julian, 1969). Progression towards relational approach to leadership has exhibited increasing importance of team-based leadership. Second, leadership and how its perceived is largely inseparable from the situation in which it occurs (Avolio *et al.,* 2009; Anggraini and Lo, 2020). Therefore, leadership is situated in its context (Carter *et al.*, 2015: Wind, 2017) Third, leadership is patterned and uniquely developed between different dyads due to experiences, processes (Carter *et al.*, 2015; DeRue, 2011; Lord *et al.*, 2001). Forth, leadership can be both formal and informal (Follet, 1925; Friedrich *et al.,* 2014).

As stated above and agreed by modern scholars, the need of collective approach to leadership is by multiple or group of individuals a necessity to face increasing challenges and problems through formal or informal engagement. Shared, distributed, complex, democratic, intergroup, collaborative, participative, and collective leadership are all team/collective leadership

elements that forms and structures the team/collective leadership that highlights and defines the spectrum of this leadership theory (Wind, 2017; Turner and Baker, 2018; Li *et al.,* 2020). Research conducted on leadership as networks have highlighted that network approach to leadership strengthen information sharing, team effectiveness, and as a result led to better performance (Hoch, 2014; Nicolaides *et al.,* 2014; Wind, 2017).

This approach to leadership is very instrumental to teams engaged in sophisticated complex and knowledge-based environments which require high levels of interaction, innovation, and performance (Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2019; Wang *et al.,* 2014; Fausing *et al.,* 2013). Previous studies showed teams that operated in those environments which have positive strong relations between team members and teams, empowerment of members participating in leadership activities develop complex team/collective leadership structures (Fausing *et al.,* 2014; Leithwood and Azah, 2016).

Team/collective leadership is dynamic in interactions between leaders and followers exchanging knowledge, experience, information within a wider organisational network, and multilevel in its structure of networks (actors) (Stricker *et al.,* 2018; Carter et al., 2015). Researchers have used different terms describing the emerging non-hierarchical views of leadership in terms such as shared leadership (Nicolaides *et al.,* 2014; Wang *et al.,* 2014; Zhu *et al.,* 2018; Kukenberger and D'Innocenzo, 2020), distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2012), collective leadership …etc. Table 2 shows a brief comparison between traditional leadership and team/collective leadership.

Table 2 Traditional vs Team/Collective leadership

Attributes	Traditional leadership	Team/Collective leadership
Organisational view	Looked at as machines.	Looked at as a systematic process.
Structure	Vertical hierarchal	Network of individuals or teams
Decision	Vertical top-down	Shared, distributed, and rotated
Individuals' capacity assumption	Individuals are ordered	Individuals are capable and trusted to perform.
Success creation	Only one individual has the trait and skill to be successful	From the collective and cumulative skills and characteristics of team members

2.5 Collective/Team Leadership Dimension Constructs

There are different constructs and elements of collective/team leadership from shared leadership to all different identified team/collective leadership which assembles the wide

spectrum of team/collective approach to leadership. This research explored distributed leadership which is one of the constructs of collective/team leadership. However, all different constructs of collective/team leadership approach were reviewed and examined in (Appendix 2). Figure 4 below illustrates the collective/team leadership constructs.

Figure 4 Collective/Team Leadership Dimension Constructs.
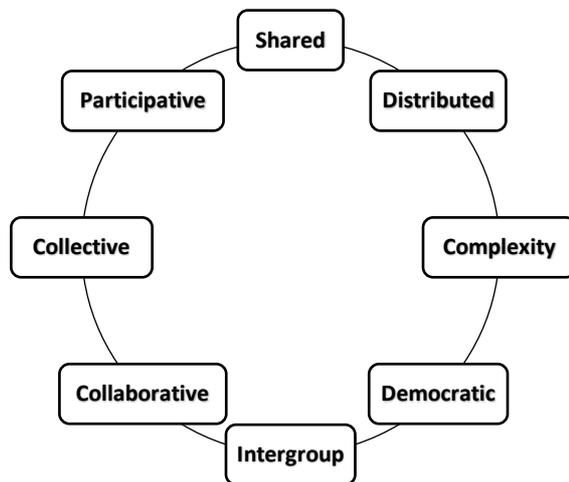
2.5.1 Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership is a construct/element of team/collective approach to leadership and is usually discussed with shared leadership (Turner and Baker, 2018; Gronn, 2008; Mehra *et al.,* 2006). Distributed leadership is conceptualised as a concretive and conjoint effort of a group or network of individuals (Gronn, 2002; Bennet *et al.*, 2003; Cirrie *et al.*, 2009; Bush, 2018). Distributed leadership identifies a focal designated leader and focuses on the organisation as a whole rather than teams' level (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2013; Currie *et al.*, 2011; Bolden, 2007). Distributed leadership has become a preferred 'post-heroic' leadership style (Wind, 2017). Distributed leadership is a unit of analysis in which leadership could be understood in a holistic view rather than the form of individual contribution (Gronn, 2002). At organisational level, senior leadership or the person on top of the organisational hierarchical structure simply can no longer deal solely with the continuously evolving economic environment and the growing organisational complexity (Feng *et al.,* 2017; Lumby, 2019). The implementation and contribution of distributed leadership was mainly in the education sector and health sector (Bolden, 2011; Currie *et al.*, 2011; Floyd and Fung, 2017). It was not until the paper of Gronn

(2002) when the concept of distributed leadership was linked to management organisational studies investigating the impact of distributed leadership on organisations.

Distributed leadership emphasises how human cognition is held between individuals and aspects of the situation and thus cognitive activity is stretched over both human actors and the context they are in (Fitzsimons, James and Denyer, 2011; Hristov, Scott and Minocha, 2018). Distributed leadership calls for people who are suitable to lead at relevant times and situations (Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017; Bush, 2018). Distributed Leadership "is an idea that can be traced back as far as the mid 20s earlier" (Harris, 2009, p.3). The concept of distributed leadership is not about an individual rather than the group whom this individual is collectively working and interacting with (Day *et al.,* 2004). Distributed Leadership is conceptualized by assembling a complete systematic process that collectively encourages the creation of innovative leaders that can lead transformation and other organisational initiatives within the organisational boundaries (Bennet *et al.,* 2003; Spillane, 2005; Lumby, 2019; Patterson *et al.,* 2020). Distributed leadership is a representation of an approach to leadership which shifts from command, control, and authoritarian leadership to more collective, coordinated, and collaborative leadership (Holloway, 2021). Table 3 below discusses the advantages and disadvantages of distributed leadership.

Table 3 Distributed leadership advantage and disadvantages

	Advantage	Disadvantage
1	More people are engaged in decision making	Accountability issues due to distribution of responsibility
2	Maintaining the chain of command by defining roles and responsibility	Could make decision making slow especially during crisis
3	Vision and mission shared and distributed through all organisation layers	Could create uncertainty and lack of confidence
4	Encourages productivity, loyalty, and commitment	Decision making is subjective to arguments due to the number of voices
5	Means of individuals advancement in the organisation hierarchy	
6	Mutual and upward learning curve	
7	Equal opportunity to contribute	

2.6 Social Network Theory

Social structures and ties through which units within those structures interact and connect to each other is termed as social network theory (Wasserman and Faust, 1994; Benton, 2015). Social network theory is a socially assembled structure created by a number of actors such as social dyadic. Social network theory is a way to study the relationship between different components and elements of societies, individuals, organisations, and groups (Liu *et al.,* 2017; de Nooy, 2009).The principals of social network theory are better understood by examining ties between social units and internal relations within those units and their interaction mechanisms rather than only examining the social units' characteristics (Borgatti *et al.*, 2009; Carter *et al.,* 2015).

This theory has been criticised by some scholars as being more oriented towards groups rather than individual's agency which is claimed to be ignored (Carrington, Scott and Wasserman, 2005). This claim does not have solid basis as social network theory explores different types of relationships between social units from individuals, group, organisations to societies (Sih, Hansel and McHugh, 2009; Kadushin, 2012; Horak *et al.,* 2019). Social networks are self-organised, emergent, and complex which makes coherent pattern emerge from the local interaction of actors that creates the social network structure (Newman, Barabási and Watts, 2006; Scott and Carrington, 2011; Cullen-Lester, Muapin and Carter, 2017). Those patterns become more visible as networks expands (Benton, 2015).

Social networks are analysed on three levels in which those network falls (micro, meso and macro). At micro level (dyadic, triadic, actor, subset) is the unit analysis the social network study starts from an individual or small group of individuals escalating as relationship evolutions are traced in a certain social context. First, dyadic level which is a social relation between couple of individuals. Second, triadic level which is simply a dyadic plus one more individual. At triadic level researchers are more concerned with elements such as transitivity and balance as well as social equality and tendencies towards reciprocity and mutuality (Kadushin, 2012). Third, actor level which is the smallest analysis unit in a social network focusing network characteristics such as size, relationship strength, density, centrality, prestige, and roles such as isolates, liaisons, and bridges (Jones and Volpe, 2011). Finally, subset level where social network problems begin at the micro-level, but may focus on distance and reachability, cliques, cohesive subgroups, or other group actions or behaviour (de Nooy, 2012). At meso-level analysis the size of population falls in the range from micro level to macro level size (Freeman, 2004; Newman, Barabasi and Watts, 2006). This level of

social network analysis refers to analysis mainly designed to investigate, examine, explore, and disclose the connecting ties between micro and macro levels networks (Kudushin, 2012; Knoke and Yang, 2019). Due to the nature of meso-level network, population size is a low in density and demonstrates informal activities which are different from the social relational micro-level networks ties (Hedstrom, Sandell and Stern, 2000). The meso-level network is also referred to as the middle level within the organisational level where it is constructed and structured from different groups within the organisation (Hedström, Sandell and Stern, 2000). At macro-level, networks analysis looks at the collective overall organisational structure of networks. This analytical level is formed of large-scale networks. Large-scale networks are complex in their nature as they exhibit patterns of complex ties and connections between networks actors (Kadushin, 2012). Those connections are not entirely consistent or random in their context (de Nooy, 2012).

It is important to note organisational structure loopholes which are detected by organisational network leaders who bridge those gaps and loopholes have the opportunity of identifying developing opportunities (Burt, 2004). Those network leaders are able to utilise and capitalise on their social abilities acting as informational brokers between different groups that aren't in contact providing exposure to ideas, opportunities and opinions (Shirado and Christakis, 2017). Organisations are focusing on building social capital and enhancing overall capacity of its employees by expanding beyond single limited influence leaders towards collective and shared leadership between network members for better exposure and influence through social context (Day *et al.,* 2014). Looking at leadership from a social network theory approach allows for reciprocal influence examination patterns of ties through networks or group members (D'Innocenzo *et al.*, 2014), and analysing those relationships in terms of nodes and ties. Whereas the pattern of leadership is described by density and centrality which explains how leadership is centralised around a specific focal point and is a helpful tool in understating the role of leaders within the network as well as the entire network.

2.7 Network Leadership

Many scholars defined network leadership as leaders' capacity of interaction, connection and linking of various scattered organisational elements that is essential in exchanging knowledge and communicating organisational messages across organisational boundaries (Garson, 2003; McGuire, 2003; Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Lithwood, 2019). Network leadership approach to organisational leadership is a leadership concept which has been also known at

its beginnings by the network management (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; McGuire and Bevir, 2011). It was also identified by scholars as leadership in networks and network-based leadership (McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013). Scholars started exploring this emerging leadership approach since the last twenty years (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Stiver, 2017). Network leadership concept evolves as a response to growing organisational complexity, and organisational mindset shift towards more flexible network based organisational structures (Silvia, 2010; Denis *et al.,* 2012; Turner and Baker, 2018). The traditional approach to organisational management techniques become inconvenient in network based organisational structures (Silvia, 2010). Network leadership is unorthodox in its approach to leadership as it is collective, distributed, facilitative, emergent, innovative, collaborative, and flexible (McGuire, 2003; Provan and Kenis, 2008; Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Popp *et al.,* 2014; Wind, 2017). Therefore "network management is thus in need of knowledge base equivalent to the hierarchical organisational authority paradigm of bureaucratic management" (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001, p.297). Unlike distributed leadership which is identified as a suitable leadership approach to organisational management, network leadership intellectual philosophy is relational and connectivity-oriented leadership approach focusing on social skills alongside communication abilities to connect different organisational clusters (Silvia, 2010; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020).

As network leadership is described by scholars as collective, collaborative, cooperative, coordinative and distributed in its nature of assuming their leadership roles to achieve the organisational collective goal (McGuire and Bevir, 2011; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020). These descriptions of network leadership are very similar to distributed leadership despite the fact that network leadership is based on leaders assuming their roles rather than being assigned to those roles (Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Popp *et al.,* 2014). Therefore, many scholars have perceived network leadership as an extension to the practice of distributed leadership that leverages on the capacity and functionality of leaders rather than their organisational structural status (Lithwood, 2019; Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020). In his work Dhanaraj and Parkhe (2006) identified network leadership by ensuring knowledge mobility, managing innovation, and encouraging network stability. Dhanaraj and Parkhe (2006) highlighted the essentiality of having leaders with suitable skills and characters to lead in network-based organisational structures.

According to McGuire and Bevir (2011) network leadership is connectivity, relational and knowledge-based oriented leadership approach that requires managers to be more effective and functional to achieve organisational goals in a timely manner. Network leadership is

governed by set of rules managing organisational networks such as coordination, collaboration, structure governance, network interaction and facilitation (McGuire and Bevir, 2011). Network leadership is described as a leadership tool that influence the interaction mechanisms between actors and nodes to achieve organisational goals based on trust, power, knowledge, decision making capacity, motivations, and the ability to mobilise people with the right set required traits to a certain leadership role (McGuire, 2002; Rodriguez *et al.,* 2007; McGuire and Bevir, 2011). "Network leadership refers to the behaviour of public managers that facilitate productive interaction and move participants in the network towards effective resolution of a problem" (McGuire and Silvia, 2009, p.35). In their paper Wei-Skillern and Silver (2013) defined network leadership as being based on four principles "focus on mission before organisational growth, manage through trust not control, promote others not yourself and build constellations not stars" (p. 121). "Facilitation, Convening and building trust are the heartbeat of network leadership" (Stiver, 2017, p. 149). Network leadership concept is defined by scholars as the behaviour of network leaders that are segmented to activation, framing, mobilising, and synthesising (Kickert *et al.,* 1997; Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; McGuire, 2002). Network leadership includes "introducing new ideas, bargaining, and inducing reflection within the network, whereas the later involve arranging, structuring, and mediating interaction among network participants" (McGuire, 2002, p. 602). Network leadership is assembled in scholars' views by behaviours and practice of network leadership (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Silvia and McGuire, 2008; McGuire and Silvia, 2009).

Network leadership is an emerging leadership approach which is "very different from traditional top-down leadership and involves a more distributed, emergent, collective leadership among various actors at different levels of the network. Network leadership may thus be seen as a distributed practice of actors" (Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2019, p. 12). There is limited research conducted and published exploring network leadership (Popp *et al.,* 2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino, 2016). Furthermore "the notion of collective and network leadership is taking hold in both academia and practice…advancements are being made in both theory and practice, but empirical research needs to be emphasised and enhanced" (Cullen-Lester and Yammarino, 2016, p. 174). Silvia (2010) said "while the network level approach to the study of networks is important, the issues of leadership and management within these collaborative ventures has largely been overlooked" (p. 67). Therefore, network leadership is an area to be further explored and examined. Network leadership as defined by scholars is illustrated in table 4 below.

Table 4 Network Leadership definition

Reference	Definition
Kickert *et al.*, (1997)	"Network management is aimed at stimulating this last category of coordination. As mentioned earlier, it should be distinguished from forms of central coordination which are associated with polyarchy and hierarchy" (P. 8)
McGuire and Silvia (2009)	"Network leadership refers to the behaviour of public managers that facilitate productive interaction and move participants in the network towards effective resolution of a problem…The assumption that networks exist in collaborative structure, but seldom do researchers documents the actual competencies, tasks and behaviours that constitute such leadership" (P. 35)
McGuire and Bevir (2011)	"Network management is the strategic activity meant to influence the interaction of the nodes (actors). The purposes of the interactions may include achieving the goals of the individual actors (and their 'home' organizations) while simultaneously achieving network- level results" (P. 441)
Wei-Skillern and Silver (2013)	The four network leadership principles are mission impact before organisational growth, trust rather than control, other rather than own and constellation rather than stress" (P. 121)
Popp *et al.*, (2014)	"Leadership in networks is not viewed as the purview of a single leader in a formal leadership position but is seen as something more organic in nature that is supported and grown across the network. This way of conceptualising leadership aligns with both a relational view of leadership that focuses on process, context and relational building; and with literature on complexity leadership" (P. 94)
Stiver (2017)	"Network leadership is more about influence than control; it is also a more indirect than direct form of leadership, requiring leaders to create a work environment based on autonomy, empowerment, trust, sharing, and collaboration….. Network leadership is about figuring out "how to mobilize and support the work of groups of people to get towards common outcomes." (P. 149)
Leithood and Azah (2016)	"Network leadership is often assumed to be different from leadership of agencies or organisations" (P. 411)
Peckham and Whitehead (2019)	"Leadership in a networked world is more about enabling than directing, more about influence than control and more indirect than direct. It is leadership understood first and foremost as a social process that creates direction, alignment and commitment." (P. 48)
Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp (2019)	"Network leadership is usually very different from traditional top-down leadership and involves a more distributed, emergent, collective leadership among various actors at different levels of the network. Network leadership may thus be seen as a distributed practice of actors." (P. 12)

Network leadership emerges as response to the demand for a leadership approach in a network-based structure organisations. Tables 5,6,7 below segments scholars' definition and description of network leadership to network leadership concept, network leaders' attributes and practices. As summarised in the tables below literature continues to focus largely on practices and attributes of network leaders as the conceptual basis of defining network leadership.

Table 5 Network Leadership Concept

Author	Coordination	Collaboration	Facilitative/ Collective	Power/ Influence	Connectivity	Relational/ Trust	Structure	Knowledge
(McGuire and Bevir, 2011)	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
(Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013)			X	X	X	X	X	
(Stiver, 2017)		X	X	X	X	X		X
(Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020)	X	X					X	
(Cristofoli et al., 2020)			X	X	X		X	

Table 6 Network Leader attributes

Author	Power/ Influence	Trust	Personal Skills	Social Skills	Collaborative
(McGuire and Bevir, 2011)	X	X			X
(Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013)		X			X
(Stiver, 2017)			X	X	X
(Peckham and Whitehead, 2019)	X		X	X	
(Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020)	X	X	X	X	X

Table 7 Network Leader Practices

Author	Sharing	Improve Performance	Assembling Networks	Leadership Activities	Connectivity
(McGuire and Bevir, 2011)			X	X	X
(Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013)	X	X			
(Stiver, 2017)	X	X	X	X	
(Peckham and Whitehead, 2019)		X		X	X
(Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020)	X	X	X	X	
(Cristofoli et al., 2020)	X	X		X	

2.8 Synthesis: Towards a conceptual model of Network Leadership

In this chapter, the conceptual model was developed after reviewing the existing organisational transformation, leadership, and social network theory literature. As discussed in this chapter, distributed leadership was utilised through the theoretical lens of social network theory to explore the emergence of network leadership. Network leadership is assumed to be a specific instance of distributed leadership during planned organisational change.

There was limited research and literature exploring organisational transformation and team/collective leadership theory together. Literature stated that leadership is considered an important factor in the successful implementation of transformation initiatives. However, it does not specify which type of leaders, leadership style, the stage and time of the transformation process. Leadership literature reviewed stated that distributed leadership is perceived by scholars and practitioners as an initiator and facilitator of change by assembling groups (networks) of individuals who share and distribute leadership roles during different times and circumstances. As this research focused on exploring network leadership, it is worth mentioning that network leadership was reviewed by scholars with the aim of conceptualising its dimensions and defining its quantum. Network leadership was confirmed as a preferred leadership practice, however limited empirical studies of practices and behaviours governing this leadership was conducted (Silvia and McGuire, 2008). Network leadership was not comprehensively explored beyond the attempts of capturing its definition. Network leadership literature does not extend the notion of network leadership to other literature domains. Therefore, this research expands the captured notion of network leadership to the organisational transformation domain. Expanding the network leadership to the organisational transformation domain led to the identification of Transformation Network Leadership. The conceptual model is explained in figure 5 highlining the emergence of network leadership.

Figure 5 Proposed Conceptual Model for the emergence of Network Leadership
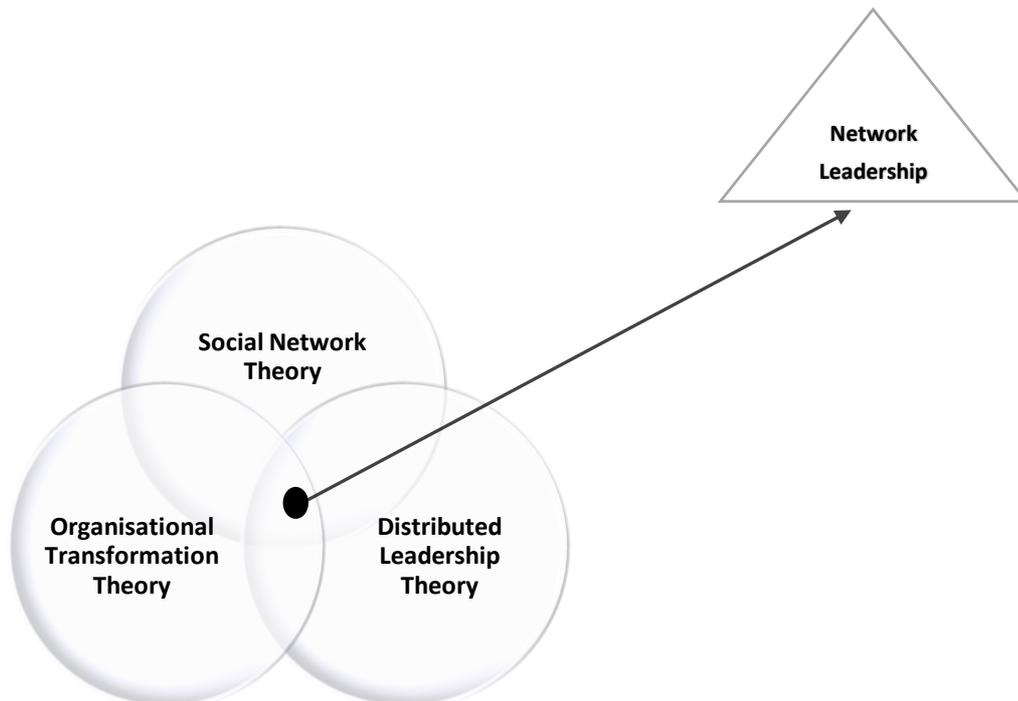
2.9   Critique

The literature reviewed and discussed in this chapter provided a clear understanding of the intersection of organisational transformation theory and distributed leadership theory through the theoretical lens of social network theory. Leadership theory was discussed in a chronological sequence to understand the evolvement of different leadership theories and approaches to organisational management. Leadership theory and practice has developed significantly over the past century. Traditional leadership theories were traced back to the turn of the 20th century and continued to dominate for decades. During that period, scholars developed trait-based theories, behavioural theories, situational/contingency theories, and leader-follower model theories. The earliest theories were based upon great man theory who built up and maintained successful organisations based on his traits in what is also known as a heroic leadership (Hernandez *et al.,* 2011; Turner and Baker, 2018). The assumption that prevailed was that there was some special traits and characteristics which was inherited enabling those leaders to achieve significant success most often measured in financial terms.

This assumption has been challenged as leaders have been deemed to be the outcome of the societies, in which they worked, lived and were part of its society (Turner and Baker, 2018; Alghanem *et al.,* 2019). Then behavioural theory was developed where scholars were interested in the way leaders behaved which led to comprehensive studies on leaders' habits and practices which influenced followers to perform at their upmost level. The underpinning assumption was that leaders are made not born. These assumptions encouraged researchers to develop the notion of situational/contingency leadership theory (Fielder, 1976). Factors such as leadership style, environment, and followers' capacity to achieve organisational goals as imposed by the leader does affect the ability and success of the leader as followers were the contingency factor which was of interest to researchers.

The relationship between leaders and followers was captured in the notion of transactional leadership and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership was characterised by the relationship between leaders and followers that are at distance, objective, impersonal and structured reward/punishment based (House and Shamir, 1993). Where relationships between followers and leaders in transformational leadership is closer and leaders understand their followers needs, personal interest, builds trust and allow followers participation in decision making (Bass *et al.*, 2003). Team/collective leadership theory which is based on shared leadership approach was a natural extension of transformational leadership. Shared leadership approach suggested that there are official and unofficial leaders that emerges at different times based on the need of such leaders during those times (Pearce and Conger, 2003). This research recognises the importance of different leadership approaches in running businesses and organisations during organisational transformation initiatives. The discussion of leadership evolvement in chronological sequence provided the researcher with a clear view of how and why those leadership theories evolved through different times.

Organisational transformation literature through all its forms from radical to incremental to morphing highlighted the importance of leadership in the process of implementing organisational transformation and change management initiatives (Denis *et al.*, 2012; White *et al.*, 2016). This research explores the research problem in Bahrain Oil and Gas. The Kingdom of Bahrain Oil and Gas industry is one of the oldest in the Middle East and has been going through many transformation initiatives some of which have been executed and others still in the pipeline. This chapter has discussed in more details distributed leadership and network leadership. This research argues that leadership competency is essential and vital in achieving the planned organisational changes which have been planned by stakeholders or the Board of Directors.

As discussed in this chapter, team/collective leadership has many dimensions or constructs as many like to call. Those dimensions share one common characteristic which is the concept of sharing and distributing leadership (Gronn, 2002; Fityzgerald *et al.*, 2003). Some of those constructs are mentioned with each other such as shared leadership and distributed leadership which as much as they seem similar, they are pretty much different. Shared leadership focuses on sharing leadership within the team or network which they are operating in unlike distributed leadership where it focuses on the achievement of the overall collective organisational goals through aligning the individual and organisational goals (Gronn, 2002; Fitzsimons, James and Denyer, 2011). This research assumes that distributed leadership is the comprehensive team/collective leadership approach. Distributed leadership is all about assembling a complete systematic process that collectively encourages the creation of innovative leaders that are able to lead different transformation initiatives within the organisational boundaries (Currie *et al.*, 2009; Bolden, 2011). At organisational level a single leader is challenged to deal solely with all situations during the transformation initiatives due to the complexity of organisations (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Wilkinson and Young, 2005; Antonakis and House, 2014; Turner and Baker, 2018). Distributed leadership doesn't mean that organisations have no top leader to the contradictory it identifies different leaders from different organisational layers with different skills and expertise carrying out formal and informal leadership roles which are needed in different stages of the planned organisational transformation initiatives. There is enough available evidence that proves distributed leadership to be an interdependent element and contributor to improve performance (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2003; Bolden, 2007; Currie *et al.*, 2011; Bush, 2018).

As discussed organisational transformation literature states and highlights the importance of leadership in the process of implementing organisational transformation initiatives, but it does not specify which type of leadership and in what stage of the transformation process. Leadership literature states that distributed leadership is the suitable leadership approach in achieving collective organisational goals. This research identified an intersection and overlapping between distributed leadership literature and organisational transformation literature. It's clear from the leadership literature reviewed that distributed leadership is looked at as an initiator of change implementation by creating a network of different leaders with different set of skills and characteristics that assume leadership during different times depending on the situation and status of the transformation process. One dimension of this intersection between organisational transformation literature and leadership literature is what this research refers to as network leadership.

This research explored distributed leadership when organisations plan to implement large scale transformational initiatives. Planned organisational transformational changes require change agents to work together to implement those transformation initiatives. Those agents often come together to for a project team (network). This network consists of agents from different hierarchical levels within the organisational structure and from different organisational functions. The organisational transformational literature proposes the concept that individuals on a change project teams should be identified and assigned to their roles based on their commitment and motivation to execute the planned transformation initiative. Yet, in practice change management project teams are created on pragmatic grounds such as availability, skills they bring and their organisational knowledge. As project teams are assembled from different organisational structural levels and different organisational divisions, the quality alongside the strength of the interconnection ties between those actors are weak (Alghanem *et al.,* 2020).

This research will use the findings to explore the notion of network leadership by overlaying social network theory upon the principles of distributed leadership. We argue that change agents are distributed leaders in as much as they are brought together due to organisational needs, they need to work closely together and collaborate. Social network theory frames the relationships between the change leaders, the composition and configuration of their social relationships, the interdependencies and information exchanges and their interests. Thus, network leadership is the practice of distributed leadership when organisations are undergoing planned large scale transformational changes. Network leadership is, for the purposes of our discussion is a specific instance of distributed leadership.

2.10   Synthesis

This chapter critically reviewed literature related to organisational transformation through all its forms. Organisational transformation as discussed in this chapter stated the importance of leadership as a main pillar in the achievement of organisational goals and proper implementation of transformational initiatives (Kempster *et al.*, 2014; White *et al.*, 2016). Leadership theory was critically reviewed in a chronological sequence to understand the evolvement of leadership theory from the era of traditional leadership to todays' team/collective leadership theory.

This research is in the area of change management/transformation and leadership. Distributed leadership states that different leaders assume leadership of teams or networks of leaders in different situations and circumstances depending on the status of the transformation initiative taken by the organisation. In other words, distributed leadership highlights the importance of having the suitable leader in situation that could be fulfilled by that leader regardless of his sequence and position on the organisational chain of command. Where organisational transformation highlights the importance of leadership in general but does not specifically state which leader and in what situation. Social network theory is used in this research as underpinning theory to understand how this network of leaders operates and evolves with time. The ability of an organisation to identify leaders and creates networks from those leaders to allow those networks to evolve overtime that's what's successful transformation initiative is.

This research reviewed literature related to network leadership concept and network-based leadership approached that has been published in the last thirty years. Although network leadership was recognised by scholars as a leadership approach that emerged as a response to increasing organisational complexity in context, structures, growth, and natural mindset shift of disassembling classic organisational structures towards network-based structures limited number of studies has been published. Those published studies attempted to define and conceptualise network leadership theory. However, no clear or comprehensive perception of the network leadership concept has been developed in a manner that captures and conceptualise this leadership approach. Scholars were conceptualising this leadership concept by the practices and attributes of network leaders (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003; Silvia and McGuire, 2008; McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Popp *et al.,* 2014). In other words when network leadership concept was discussed it was the network leader practices and attributes that was being defined not network leadership concept. Silvia and McGuire (2010) described network leadership as "the 800 lb gorilla in the room" (p. 264) that needs to be further researched. Network leadership is yet to be further investigated and its dimensions to be explored to be able to capture this emergent network-based leadership approach (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003; Silvia and McGuire, 2008; McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Popp *et al.,* 2014). As the network leadership research was not expanded to other literature domains. This research explored network leadership in the organisational transformational domain. Figure 6 below illustrates network leadership constructs.

Figure 6 Network Leadership Constructs
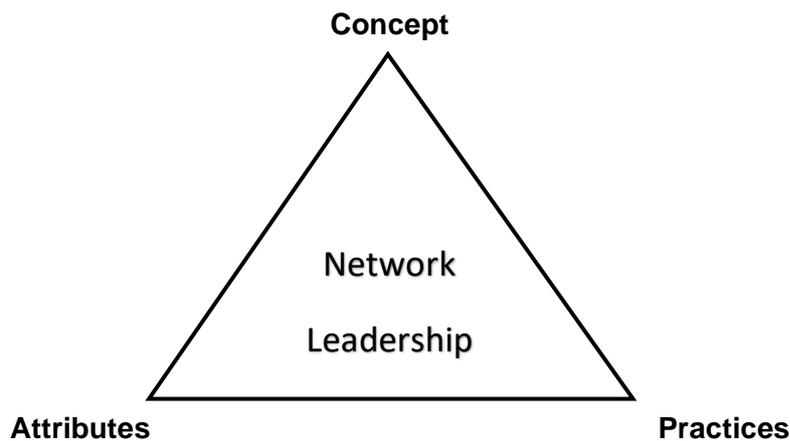
This research identified the lack of a conceptualised theoretical perception of network leadership concept as a gap in literature and is addressing this through developing a conceptualised understanding of network leadership. Network leadership is based on the conceptual understanding and differentiating between leaders' practices, attributes, and network leadership concept elements. This research combines those elements together to assemble the network leadership concept. Therefore, network leadership will be defined by a set of attributes, practices and concepts that forms this leadership approach capturing its fundamentals and principles.

2.11 Research Questions

The research questions are pillars in the development of the problem argument which becomes the focus of further examination. The research questions were extracted from the identified gap in the literature and prior research. The research questions evolved from the interest in the emergence of network leadership. The developed research questions are designed in a way to proceed in a theory building approach of network leadership. These developed questions are crucial as they address and captures an under researched network leadership concept and expands it to the organisational transformation domain. The design of these questions also includes the examination of the effect of social network theory on distributed leadership during organisational transformation. It is essential to study the identified intersection between distributed leadership literature and organisational transformation literature by laying social network leadership as an underpinning theory to explore network leadership as an element of this intersection dimension. The following research questions are the tools of examining the emergence of network leadership:

Q1. A. What are the outcomes of the intersection of distributed leadership with organisational transformation and social network theory?

B. Is network leadership a result of this intersection?

Q2. How does social network theory enhance distributed leadership practice?

Q3. What are the conceptual dimensions of network leadership?

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was a literature review in the domains of organisational transformation and leadership using social network theory as an underpinning theory. This chapter reviews the research strategy, data gathering and data analysis method. There are various methodological research fundamentals which are acknowledged by literature such as quantitative, qualitative, descriptive, inductive, deductive, abductive and predictive upon which researchers can choose to be embedded in their research (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). Pursuing with a certain methodological philosophical approach will depend on the assumptions made by researchers and their perspective of the research problem as part of a holistic view (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Network leadership for the purpose of this research is a specific instance of distributed leadership. Due to limited research on network leadership and for the purpose of exploring network leadership in the domain of organisational transformation, this research utilised interpretative strategy (Burrell and Morgan, 1985). This approach involves carrying out semi-structured interviews and following the onion approach proposed by Saunders *et al.* (2011).

3.2 Research Philosophy (Ontology and Epistemology)

Research philosophy is best described as each researcher's "set of beliefs stemming from the study of fundamental nature of knowledge, reality and existence" (Waite and Hawker, 2009, p. 685). The philosophical approach refers to the research technique adopted by the researcher to solve a problem and add to existing knowledge or knowledge development (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In other words, research philosophy is influenced by the researcher's way of perceiving a reality or a phenomenon (Morse *et al.,* 2002). The researcher's overview and understanding of reality will influence his or her research philosophical stance (Burrell and Morgan, 2017). Research is conducted to fill a gap in existing knowledge all the way to problem solving purposes (Yin, 2015).

Research philosophy requires researchers to understand and select a suitable research perspective for their research. The range of research perspectives fall under two main philosophical notions: ontology and epistemology (Galliers, 1991; Hultin, 2019). Ontology refers to how researchers might grasp an understanding of reality (truth) of things and the nature of its existence (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Allison and Pomeroy, 2000). Ontology reflects the researcher's perception of reality through understanding the reality of nature existence of things and examining social reality beliefs. Ontology is concerned with "whether or not there is a social reality that exists independently from human conceptions and interpretations and closely related to this, whether there is a shared reality or only multiple, context-specific ones" (Ormston *et al.,* 2014; p.4). Research ontology is a continuum ranging, at the extremes from a purely objective to a purely subjective ontology. Ontology is the researcher's belief about the existence of a single reality (realism) to multiple realities (relativism), where truth is constructed from the meanings and experiences of participants (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Ormston *et al.,* 2014).

Epistemology refers to "the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline" (Bryman, 2008; p.13). It is the set of assumptions researchers construct about the nature and type of knowledge that assists in understanding "the very bases of knowledge - its nature and form, how it can be acquired and how communicated to other human beings" (Cohen *et al,* 2007; p.7). Epistemology is linked with the understanding of the essence and character of reality and is concerned with examining the nature of reality (Saunders *et al.,* 2009; Allison and Pomeroy, 2000). Epistemological stance is mainly concerned with investigating knowledge source and examining the fundamentals upon which knowledge is constructed and what is considered as acceptable knowledge (Allison and Pomeroy, 2000; Morse *et al.,* 2002). Epistemology is also a continuum ranging from pure positivism to pure interpretivism (Saunders *et al.,* 2009). Ontology influences epistemology as what a researcher believes about the nature of reality that determines the means of understanding and the social reality (Crotty; 1998; Evely *et al.,* 2008; Moon and Blackman, 2014). Table 8 below summarises ontological and epistemological research assumptions.

Table 8 Philosophical research positions and their assumptions

Ontological Positions (nature of the world of existence)	
Position	Assumptions
Objectivism	- Reality exists independently of our beliefs or understanding - Reality can be observed directly and accurately - A clear distinction exists between our beliefs about the world and the way the world is - Only material or physical world is considered 'real' - Social phenomena and their meanings cannot change - Events have causes and determined by their circumstances - The casual links between events and their causes can eventually be uncovered by science - Life is defined in 'measurable' terms rather than inner experiences - Notions of choice, freedom, individuality, and moral responsibility are excluded.
Subjectivism	- External reality exists but is only known through human mind and socially constructed meanings - There is shared social reality and series of different individual constructions of it - Reality is subjective - There exist only estimate or approximate observations or views of reality - Social phenomena and their meanings are produced through social interaction and are in a constant state of revision - Life is defined in 'estimate' terms based on inner experiences of humans where choice, freedom and individual responsibility are appreciated
Epistemological Positions (nature of knowledge)	
Position	Assumptions
Positivism	- The world is independent of and unaffected by the researcher - Facts and values are distinct - Objective and value-free inquiry is possible - Disputes are resolved through observations - Methods of natural science are appropriate for the study of social phenomena - Knowledge is produced through the senses based on careful observation - Only phenomena (and hence knowledge) confirmed by senses can be genuinely regarded as knowledge - Knowledge is seen as hard, tangible and objective - Knowledge is arrived at through gathering of facts - Social world is approached through the explanation of human behaviour
Interpretivism	- The researcher and the social world impact on each other - Facts and values are not distinct - Methods of natural science are not appropriate for the study of social phenomena for the social world is not governed by law-like regularities but mediated through meaning and human agency - Knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding the social world of the people being studied - Knowledge is seen as personal, subjective, and unique - The researcher understands the social world using both his/her as well as the participants' understanding - Social world is approached through the understanding of human behaviour

Source: Al-Saadi (2014)

The researcher ontological and epistemological stance influences the data gathering methods to understand the researchers believe of the nature of social reality (Crotty, 1998). Research paradigm is constructed by three main philosophical research components which are ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Table 9 below highlights the ontological, epistemological, and methodological stance in different research paradigms.

Table 9 Ontology, epistemology, and methodology in research paradigms

Items	Positivism	Postpositivist	Critical Theory	Constructivism
Ontology	Naive realism-"real" reality but apprehendable	Critical realism-"real" reality but only imperfectly apprehendable	Historical realism-virtual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethic, and gender values; crystallised over time	Relativism-local and specific constructed realities
Epistemology	Dualist/objectivist; findings true	Modified dualist/ objectivist; critical tradition/community; findings probably true	Transactional/ subjectivist; value-mediated findings	Transactional/ subjectivist; created findings
Methodology	Experimental/ manipulative; verification of hypotheses; chiefly quantitative methods	Modified expert-mental/manipulative; critical multiplism; falsification of hypotheses; may include qualitative methods	Dialogic/dialectical	Hermeneutical/ dialectical

Source: Guba and Lincoln (1994)

Management based research and studies are mostly examined, explored, and analysed based on two philosophical approaches being positivism and interpretivism (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Collis and Hussey, 2014). Positivism approach has a historical trace and is a commonly known approach to be used in quantitative based research (Saunders *et al.,* 2009). Interpretivism on the other hand, is known as a phenomenological approach which is interested in investigating and understanding human behaviour and reactions to a certain notion or problem (Collis and Hussey, 2014). These philosophical approaches have their own shortfalls and advantages which influences the research methodology of gathering data in relation to the research topic.

3.2.1 Positivism and Objectivism Paradigm

Positivism is an epistemological stance which expresses positivism as a natural knowledge-based paradigm derived from natural sciences (Schadewitz and Jachna, 2007). Moon and Blackman (2014) said "Positivism is objectivist, it is based on a conviction that only knowledge

gained through the scientific method through unprejudiced use of the senses is accurate and true" (P. 1173). The positivism concept is built around the presumption that society operates according to general laws or the laws of cause which evolve around social reality useful in developing hypothesis and examining their validity (Freimuth, 2009). Positivism reinforces the notion of segregation between researcher and reality based on the assumption that reality is unique and objective exceeding human cognitive ability and mind boundaries (Lin, 1998; Weber, 2004). Positivists assumes that reality is examined as solid evidence and the ties between those evidence are identified through the law of science (Rolfe, 2006; Yin, 2011). Positivist advocates treat laws of science as a reality where any social event or occurrence is examined as a natural object and knowledge is generated through testing of different hypothesis (Crotty 1998; Patton, 1999).

Positivists researchers utilises research data gathering methods such as surveys and experiments (McIntosh and Morse, 2015). Positivists researcher applies techniques to discover and measure facts about a single reality which exists, and governed by natural laws (Lin, 1998; Carson *et al,* 2001). Positivists believes that every reality can be investigated, tested, and proved (Morse *et al.,* 2002; Fisher, 2007). Positivist researcher is an objective rather than a subjective interpreter of the reality and its existence.

3.2.2 Interpretivism and Subjectivism Paradigm

Interpretivism is an epistemological stance which evolved as a reply to positivism critical analysis. This theory's main assumption is the concept that social reality is perceived in a single mind and unlike positivism it is subjective not objective (Lin 1998; Collis and Hussey 2014). Interpretivism researchers realises the world's complexity and the need of rationalising those complexities to help expanding knowledge alongside the challenge to understand the whole world surrounding us (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). In interpretivism, reality is assembled and constructed based on social understanding of ties and the way they interact with each other (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). Interpretivism philosophical approach gives the opportunity for researchers to explore the individual experience and understanding through putting them in their right social context (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Due to their perspective of understanding reality, interpretivist researchers are advocates of qualitative research methodology to expand and contribute to knowledge (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Interpretivists views a social reality or even the whole world through research participants' perception of the reality with regards to the research (Carson *et al.*, 2001; Greener, 2008).

The interpretive researcher believes that there are multiple realities where the researcher is involved in the context of the research (Carson *et al.,* 2001; Maxwell, 2020). Interpretive philosophy is based on arguments, discussion in building a theoretical understanding of the interpretation of multiple realities to a specific event (Saunders *et al.,* 2012). In this form of research using inductive process in combination with a view providing an interpretative approach of a social event in a specific context explains the social realities (Lin 1998; Collis and Hussy 2014).

Interpretivism is looked at as a more suitable philosophical approach for this research due to the nature of the research and the approach to the problem. Interpretivism is getting more popular amongst researchers in the field of leadership literature due to its philosophical nature of accepting an individual ties and behaviours as elements to be explored which makes it a useful epistemological approach (Alvesson, 1996; Yilmaz, 2013; Dana and Dumez, 2015). Therefore, this research adopts qualitative approach based on a theory building concept (Collis and Hussey, 2009). interpretivism is a desirable philosophical analytical approach in leadership studies, particularly where the researchers' aim is to understand ties between change agents and their behaviour. Interpretivism researchers "attempt to understand the way others construe, conceptualise, and understand events, concepts, and categories, in part because these are assumed to influence individuals' behaviour" (Kaplan and Duchon, 1988, p.571). The interpretivism and positivism research philosophical approach is shown in table 10 below.

Table 10 Principal characteristics of interpretivism and positivism approach

	Positivism	Interpretivism
1	Use large samples	Use small samples
2	Have an artificial location	Have a natural location
3	Concerned with hypothesis testing	Concerned with generating theories
4	Produce precise, objective, quantitative data	Produce 'rich', subjective, qualitative data
5	Produce results with high reliability but low validity	Produce findings with low reliability but high validity
6	Allow results to be generalised from the sample to the population	Allow findings to be generalised from one setting to another similar setting

Source: Collis and Hussey (2014)

3.2.3 Deductive and Inductive Research methods

Deductive and inductive research approaches are established and used in different research philosophies providing both empirical and theoretical parameters. The research philosophical

approach is decided based on the main research question and the complexity of ties between the research and literature (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Researchers follow deductive, inductive or abductive reasoning approach to examine, investigate and explore the research problem and theory building. Figure 7 below illustrates the distinctions between deductive and inductive approach.

Figure 7 Deductive vs Inducive approach
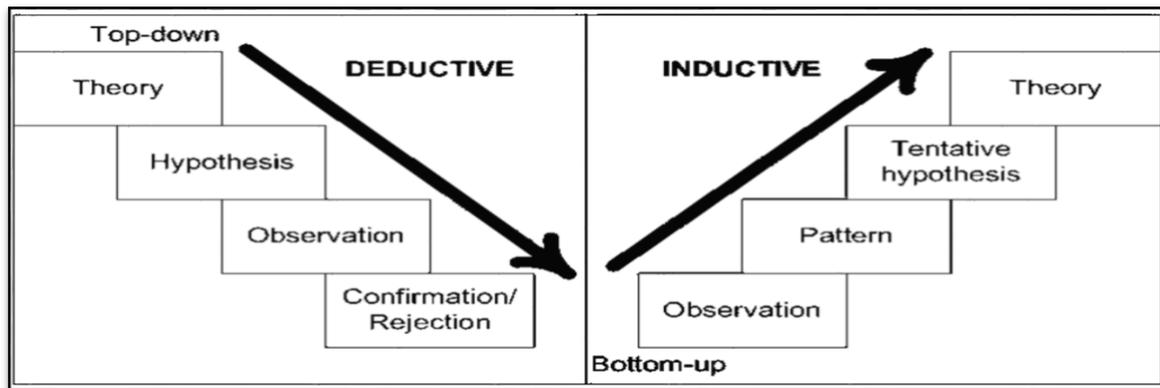
Source Burney (2008, p.6)

The deductive research approach is best explained as a method which is based on "developing a hypothesis (or hypotheses) based on existing theory, and then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis" (Wilson, 2010, p.7). This approach is described by hypothesis which are extracted from theory propositions and statements. The deductive approach is concerned with constructing the theoretical framework, developing research hypothesis, and deducing conclusions from the research findings (Baker and Foy, 2008).

Inductive research approach, or what is known as inductive reasoning is a common-sense way of sighting of observations, examining theories and concluding the research findings all the way to building a theory based on those findings (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Baker and Foy, 2008). This approach is mainly understood as involving "the search for patterns from observation and development of explanations-theories for those patterns through series of hypotheses" (Bernard, 2011, p.7). Inductive approach is linked to interpretivism philosophical research foundation in a qualitative methodological approach which explores the research problem subjectively. Whereas deductive approach is linked to positivism philosophical foundation in a quantitative methodological approach which examines the research subject objectively (Wood and Welch, 2010). Table 11 shows the differences between deductive and inductive approaches.

Table 11 Differences between Deductive and Inductive approaches

	Deductive approach	Inductive approach
1.	Scientific principles	A close understanding of the research context
2.	Moving from theory to data	Moving from data to theory
3.	The need to explain casual ties between variables	Gaining an understanding of the meaning's humans attach to events
4.	The collection of quantitative data	The collection of qualitative data
5.	A highly structured approach in a clearly predefined manner	A more flexible structure which permits changes in research emphasis as the research progresses
6.	Operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition	Theoretical concepts emerge from studying a phenomenon
7.	The application of controls to ensure valid data	Less concern with the need to generalise
9.	Researcher independence in respect of what is being investigated	A realisation that the researcher is part of the research process
10.	The need to select samples of sufficient size in order to reach generalisable conclusions	Sampling methods are restrained by time and budget resources

Source: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012)

3.3 Methodology

Methodology is defined as "a contextual framework for research, a coherent and logical scheme based on views, beliefs and values that guides the choices researchers or other users make" (Kara, 2015, p.4). Methodology is the theoretical approach constructed of strategies, techniques, and methods of understanding reality in different disciplines of knowledge (Rose, Spinks and Canhoto, 2014). Methodology refers to the means by which reality and knowledge are best acknowledged based on researchers' philosophical stance (Pluye and Hong, 2014). The researcher believes about the nature of knowledge determines the methodology used to understand the existence of reality (Waite and Hawker, 2019). The methodology provides a theoretical prospective of the recognition of strategies, techniques, and methods of addressing research questions (Yin, 2011; Campbell, 2016; Brookshire, 2018). Methodology falls under two main research methodologies quantitative and qualitative (Yin, 2002; Patton, 2003). Each one of these methodologies is associated with different set of strategies and methods of extracting and analysing data (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Collis and Hussey, 2009).

Qualitative research methodology is associated with in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon and the perception of individuals assigned to it (Yin, 2011; Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research involves gathering nonnumeric data from participants who are involved in the researched phenomena (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research depends on data gathered through interviews, questionnaires, observation, documents, and case studies (Creswell, 2002). Qualitative researchers use inductive method in building themes from emerging patterns while analysing gathered data and presents research findings by interpreting those themes and sub-themes (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Waite and Hawker, 2019). Qualitative research is known for in-depth discussions, better understanding of participants views, experience, having the researcher as part of the researched phenomena and flexibility (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative researcher is interpretivist in his philosophical stance, subjective in his understanding of reality and inductive in his research method (Yin, 2011).

Quantitative research methodology is associated with objective ontology and positivism research philosophy and based on testing theories and verifying the relations between variables. Quantitative methodology is based on proving the existence of a single reality through testing hypothesis and validate a theory (Creswell, 2014). This research methodology gathers numerical data promoting objective empirical evidence approach of gaining knowledge (Bryman, 2012). Quantitative research is deductive in its method of testing developed hypothesis in understanding the relations between variables to validate an existing theory.

3.4 Research Philosophical Position

The research philosophical position defines the approach taken by the researcher including research philosophical stance, strategy, methods, and techniques to address research questions. The research philosophical position determines the research design, data gathering and analysis techniques (Omotayo and Kulatunga, 2015). Studies and research related to distributed leadership during the phase where organisations are undergoing large scale transformation initiatives are limited in their numbers. Furthermore, limited number of studies on network leadership has been conducted. Network leadership research was not extended beyond the attempts of defining its concept to other research domains. Therefore, this research is being conducted to address the research questions that emerged from the critical review of the literature by expanding network leadership to the domain of organisational

transformation. This is done through exploring network leadership during organisational transformation through the lens of social network theory.

Qualitative methodology expands the research and studies related to leadership (Alvesson, 1996; Bryman, 2006). Qualitative research methodology has been considered suitable for this research for two main reasons which are strongly correlated to the research aim. Firstly, qualitative research methodology is a constructive method which assists in extracting evidence of social cultural nature linked to traits such as merits, beliefs, social context of networks and their behaviours (Mack *et al.*, 2005). Secondly, this approach provides researchers with a holistic view which results in the emergence of new knowledge (Creswell, 1994). Due to its nature, this research used an interpretivism epistemology, subjective ontology, and an inductive explorative approach to address research questions. This research framework strategy will be instrumental in examining the research problem and answer the research questions. This study pursues a qualitative methodology where research questions focus on the response to issues such as what, how and why. The researcher ontological position is subjective in understanding the existence of reality. This research believes that there is no single realty, but multiple realities linked to different situations and circumstances. The research philosophical position is interpretivism. Inductive reasoning approach is followed in this research as a suitable method in leadership related studies (Antonakis *et al.,* 2004).

Inductive reasoning enhances the researcher's ability to construct a theoretical background through gathering data, bridging research objectives with summary findings from gathered data and developed framework (Thomas, 2006). Inductive approach is usually linked with qualitative research and distinguished by the process in which the researcher collects data to formulate or develop a theory as a result of data analysis (Schadewitz and Jachna 2007). The decision to proceed with a qualitative methodology is based on an in-depth examination of research questions and the overall expected contribution to knowledge (Edmondson and McManus, 2007). Interpretivist approach focuses on qualitative research methodology for the purpose of extracting more data and information. Therefore, statistical, and quantitative methodology approach is not going to be used as a research methodology in this research. The research philosophical framework is illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Research Philosophical Position Framework

| Subjective Ontology | → | Interpretivism Epistemology | → | Inductive Approach | → | Qualitative Methodology |
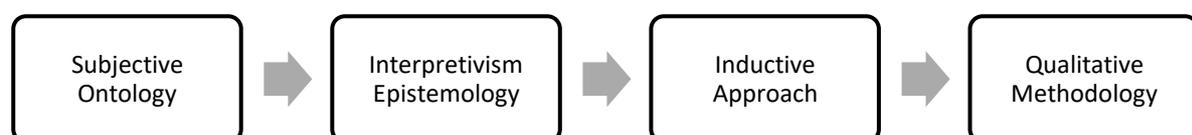
3.5 Research Design

The research design is a road map which guides the researcher towards investigating and answering the research questions (Cooper, Schindler and Sun, 2003; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The research design assists the researcher in setting research parameters such as research methodology, philosophical approach, investigation technique, unit of analysis, phenomena, conceptual dimensions, and the reasoning thinking process for data collection, analysing and interpretation (Yin, 2015). The central factors of this research designs are summarised in table 12 below.

Table 12 Research Strategy and Design

Area of Study	Issue related to examining the Notion of Network Leadership
Ontology and epistemology	The reality is the emergence of network leadership as an outcome of the intersection of distributed leadership with organisation transformation and social network theory.
Phenomenon analysed	Examining the emergence of network leadership and the contribution of this theory to leadership and organisational transformation literature in Bahrain oil and gas.
Literature review	Reviewing leadership literature in chorological sequence alongside organisational transformation literature. Social network literature and actor network literature were reviewed as potential underpin theory. Also reviewing network leadership literature.
Type of the study	Theory conceptualisation and building: this study will conceptualise network leadership theory through capturing the dimensions of this emerging leadership and expanding it to the organisational transformation domain.
Data Collection approach	Semi-structured interviews in Bahraini Oil and Gas.
Research process	Descriptive study
Sample	Theoretical sampling (selects 32 chairmen and top executives).
Research quality	Consider divergent views to maintain the quality of this study. Trustworthiness is ensured (i.e., credibility in preference to internal validity transferability in preference to external validity/generalizability, dependability in preference to reliability, and conformability in preference to objectivity). The study also talks about ethical considerations.
Data analysis	Following Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis six steps process technique.

3.6 Research Quality

Research process has to be aligned with quality regardless of the methodological approach used to assure the reliability and validity of the research (Morse *et al.,* 2002). Therefore, different aspects of quality maintaining are taken such as trustworthiness and ethical consideration (shenton 2004; Anney, 2014; Kornbluh, 2015).

3.6.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is defined as a standard to evaluate the rigour of qualitative research findings (Lincolin and Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness are standards upon which qualitative research is evaluated on that includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincolin and Guba 1985; Morse *et al.,* 2002).

3.6.1.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined "as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings" (Anney, 2014, p.276). Credibility authenticates whether research findings are credible or not and an accurate interpretation extracted from gathered data (Lincoln and Guba, 1986; Anney, 2014). Researchers embrace the following credibility strategies to meet qualitative research trustworthiness criteria: prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, triangulation, member checks and persistent (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Those credibility strategies are explained below:

Firstly, prolonged engagement is described by Lincoln and Guba (1986) as "lengthy and intensive contact with the phenomena (or respondents) in the field to assess possible sources of distortion and especial to identify saliencies in the situation" (p. 77). Secondly, persistent observation is described as a thoroughly pursuing of elements found to be important through researchers prolonged engagement in the research field. Third, peer debriefing where a researcher attains the seek feedback from fellow researchers to improve the quality of research findings and conclusion (Guba, 1981). Fourth, data triangulation strategy "involves the use of multiple and different methods, investigators, sources and theories to obtain corroborating evidence" (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007, p. 239). Triangulation assists researchers in examining the integrity of participants feedback and reducing bias. Triangulation is achieved by using one or more triangulation techniques (Lincoln and Guba, 1986). There are three major triangulation techniques, investigator triangulation, data triangulation and methodological triangulation (Guba, 1981; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Anney, 2014). This research used a theory triangulation to explore the research problem from different perspectives. Fifth, member check is the "process of continuous, informal testing of information by soliciting reactions of respondents to investigators' reconstruction of what he or she has been told" (Guba, 1981, p. 77). Member check is essential to eliminate research bias by cross check if participants responses has been misreported or understood by the researcher.

This research followed credibility strategies through the distribution of interviews transcripts copies to participants. The primary data was presented to fellow researchers, practitioners and in seminars to simultaneously validate the research. This makes use of responses from researchers and practitioners interested in leadership and organisational transformation domains. These responses and comments assisted in understanding participants stance on the research subject.

3.6.1.2 Transferability

Transferability is "provision of background data to establish context of study and detailed description of phenomenon in question to allow comparisons to be made." (Shenton, 2004, p. 77). Transferability refers to research generalisability through transferring the research findings to other domains (Shenton, 2004; Bitsch, 2005). According to Bitsch (2005) "researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through thick description" (p. 85). The purpose of providing detailed description to allow readers to come up with their conclusions and generalise the findings to other research domains (Polit and Beck, 2010).

3.6.1.3 Dependability

Dependability is the degree upon which research findings are consistent allowing the work to be repeated by future researchers (Shenton, 2004; Rolfe, 2006). Dependability is defined as "the stability of findings over time" (Bitsch, 2005, p. 86). Research dependability is achieved through audit trail, code-record strategy, stepwise replication, and peer examination (Guba and Lincoln, 1982; Schwandt *et al.,* 2007). This research utilised measures to evaluate the validity of data gathering methods of this research. The researcher recorded all interviews to ensure the consistency of data recorded. All transcripts were scrutinised against interviews scripts to ensure the accuracy of data and no negligence of any data. The researcher seeks the feedback of fellow researchers to audit and comment on decisions taken all though all research stages.

3.6.1.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which researchers could confirm the findings of the research (Anney, 2014). Confirmability is "concerned with establishing the data and interpretations of

the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination but are clearly derived from the data"
(Tobin and Begley, 2004, p. 392). Qualitative research confirmability is achieved by
conducting audit trail, triangulation, and reflexive journal (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bowen,
2009). The researcher considered the methods used to justify the reasoning for making
decisions. The researcher also acknowledged the limitations of research techniques. The
researcher acknowledgement of limitations and benefits reduces the research bias and
assures the presentation of accurate data that precedes the research course of action. Table
13 below summarises the research quality criteria.

Table 13 Research quality criteria.

Criteria	Description
Credibility	• The distribution of interviews transcripts copies to participants. • Primary data was presented to fellow researchers, practitioners and in seminars to simultaneously validate the research. • Data triangulation
Transferability	• Providing detailed description. • Transferring the research findings to other literature domains.
Dependability	• Recorded all interviews to ensure the consistency of data recorded. • Transcripts were scrutinised against interviews scripts to ensure the accuracy of data and no negligence of any data.
Confirmability	• Achieved by conducting audit trail. • Triangulation to avoid bias. • Acknowledging research limitations and future area of study.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

It is very essential and crucial for researchers to comply with ethical and moral norms when
conducting research. Researchers deal with moral and ethical issues when conducting their
research. Therefore, ethical regulations such as copyright, data distribution policies, rules of
privacy, writing rules are designed to preserve intellectual property interest while supporting
collaboration. All research has ethical issues with regards to participants, withdrawal rights,
recruitment and volunteering which are the main ethical considerations which are taken into
consideration in this research (Anderson 2015).

The ethical issues are seriously thought of and considered in process of research completion
to ensure the compliance to ethical and moral norms of academic standards as those issues
are pretty much related to principles of morality (Miller *et al.,* 2012; Gauttier, 2019). Official

consents have been obtained from participants who are senior executives and chairmen of National Bahraini Oil and Gas. This consent is obtained by a form which allows the participants to decide to voluntarily participate in the research with the condition of presenting them with the information regarding the possible risks and gains of this research (Appendix 4).

Once the proposed research sample of top executives and chairmen of Bahraini National Oil and Gas provided their consent, issues regarding the research were outlined with participants. Participants were considered to be the decision makers and main implementers of any organisational change. They were ensured by the researcher that issues regarding their participation and contribution to the research will be addressed. For example, participants were ensured to be given the option to withdraw from this research if seen appropriate by the participant. Some issues such as time and venue were handled in a flexible way to ensure no disruption of participants' time schedule. Such initiatives were taken to show appreciation to participants, restoring confidence and respect between researcher and participants. The methodological information and data are ensured to be fair and will not be discriminating or biased. Data gathering and data storage were conducted in a disciplinary manner according to the (Data Protection Act). The data gathered was collected directly from the source ensuring the confidentiality of data and that they were securely preserved during the research process to assure the authenticity of the gathered data.

3.8 Research Sampling

Research sampling is the process of identifying and selecting participants as a sample representing the unit of analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989). Research sample represents a group of individuals, items or objects abstracted from the unit of analysis (Harris and Sutton, 1986). Sample is an unbiased portion acting as a subset of the unit of analysis utilised in different research settings (Patton, 2003). Theoretical sampling technique was utilised as a sampling technique for this research. Theoretical sampling is defined as "selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups of individuals, or institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions" (Teddie and Yu, 2007, p. 77). Theoretical research sample is assembled by participants with knowledge and information related to the research context (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Morse *et al.,* 2002).

3.8.1 Unit of Analysis

Unit of analysis is the body that mounts what is being examined in the research or the element being investigated (Eisenhardt, 1989). Having a suitable unit of analysis that highlight who and what is being investigated in the research is fundamental in identifying participants (Patton, 2003; Yin, 2012; De Vaus and de Vaus, 2013).

This research explores the research problem in Bahrain Oil and Gas. Bahrain Oil and Gas is an integrated holding company ,consisting of business divisions: upstream, downstream, petrochemicals and services. Each of those divisions form the units of analysis. The Oil and Gas industry is undergoing continuous transformation initiatives due to fast developments in cutting edge technologies and breakthroughs which enhances the efficiency and quality of production. The Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance 2016 imposed increasing fossil fuel emissions. This has forced the industry to go through large scale organisational changes to meet the target of reducing fossil fuel emissions below the level of 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. Therefore, organisations operating in the Oil and Gas industry are challenged to meet those international emission levels reduction to remain competitive in global markets. Bahrain Oil and Gas has been going through organisational changes to maintain their production quality meeting new international standards. Those transformational changes were challenged not only by implementing latest technologies but changing the ways different divisions operate to maintain their upmost performance levels and implement those organisational changes. Therefore, organisational leaders who have been part of transformational changes were considered as the research sample. Those leaders have been part of transformational initiatives as leaders or team members during their career.

3.8.1.1 Sampling Process

The research sampling is a selection process where number of individuals or elements are selected from the unit of analysis as participants in the research. This research focuses on the following divisions: Noga, Noga Holding, Bapco, Tattweer, Banagas, Gpic, Bafco and Asy. This research unit of observation is embedded in the units of analysis composed of Chairmen, CEO's and executives leading companies in Bahrain Oil and Gas. The unit of observation was selected with the aim of gathering data that represents the units of analysis. This research is

conducted in Bahrain Oil and Gas , where different divisions are continuously undergoing large scale transformational changes. Literature suggests that the critical role of leadership emerge in organisations going through transformational initiatives (Kempster *et al.*, 2014; White *et al.*, 2016).

The unit of observation and research sample might suggest that this research is following a great man leadership theory. This research has pursued with a theoretical sampling approach. Unlike other sampling methods theoretical sampling aim to generate and develop theoretical data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). This calls for participants with specific characters and experience in leadership and organisational change domains. Theoretical sampling refers to identifying participants who are appropriate to understand the emergence of a theory and the extension of this emerging theory (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Theoretical sampling was used to extend the understanding of the emergence of network leadership and further expand its concept to organisational change domain (Pettigrew, 1988; Eisenhardt, 1989). The criterion for selecting executives and chairmen were based on the theoretical sampling of organisational leaders who are exposed to organisational transformation implementation obstacles and leadership issues in the Bahraini Oil and Gas. Another important criterion was their exposure to transformative and change management initiatives in the last 10 years as leaders and previously as employees. The participation response rate was 81%. This included 8 chairmen and 17 top executives from CEO to GM level. This approach is based on identification of participants with experience, knowledge and aware of the research topic. Some scholars went beyond that stating that researchers have to consider the willingness, availability of those individuals to participate and the capacity to reflect their views related to the research (Spradley, 1979; Bernard, 2002). The proposed theoretical sample was 32 participants of which 26 where available and agreed on the participation in a semi-structured interview. Although the research participants have various management profiles which might suggest a diversion and variation to their interpretation of the research topic. They have been selected based on their exposure to various leadership roles throughout their career paths. The participants have been exposed to various leadership challenges within the organisation, as leaders are rotated in different leadership roles and positions. Those participants provided thick description and in-depth discussion of the emergence of network leadership from various perspectives. Organisational leadership is assembled by leaders and executives from different backgrounds and qualifications. The participants selection is shown in table 14 below.

Table 14 Participant's selection

Division	Type	Selected Sample	Total
Noga	Regulator	• Minster/Chairman • CEO • DCEO • DCEO • Advisor	5
Noga Holding	Holding Company	• CEO • COO • CIO	3
Bapco	Downstream	• Chairman /CE • DCE • CFO • GM BMP • GM HR&ADMIN • GM Marketing • GM Maintenance	7
Tattweer	Upstream	• CEO • GM Exploration • GM Supply Chain	3
Gpic	Upstream	• President	1
Banagas	Upstream	• CEO • GM HR & Finance • Manager Finance	3
Bafco	Service	• MD	1
Asry	Service	• MD	1
Chevron	Downstream	• Chairman BH • MD Middle East	2

3.8.2 Data Gathering Method

Data gathering process has two methods of information primary sources and secondary sources which are used to gather the data form the research (Patton, 2003; Kallio *et al.,* 2016).

1. Primary Sources

The main or primary source of data used in this research was gathered from semi-structured interviews, which was conducted with the selected sample designed for the aim and objective of the research (Mclnyosh and Morse, 2015).

2. Secondary Sources

Other research related to the research topic, organisational documents and data collected by those stakeholders for other than research purposes were used as basis for building the theoretical aspect and specifying the evaluation of interviews.

3.8.3 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were selected as an appropriate approach to investigate and explore the emergence of network leadership in organisations going through their planned organisational transformational changes. The interviewed participants were asked to express their views and perspectives on issues linked to the research topic. The semi-structured interviewing approach was seen by many scholars as a preferred interviewing tool in qualitative methodology approach to research (Yin, 1994; Bryman and Bell, 2007; McIntosh and Morse, 2015; Bell, Bryman and Harley, 2018). The flexibility nature of semi-structured interviews presents interviewers with enough space to build up on the main ideas which are discussed during the interviews. Although semi-structured interview is a popular interviewing method, it still has its limitations. Semi-structured interview main limitation is its influence on participants by research bias and the limitation of the research objectives (McIntosh and Morse, 2015; Kallio *et al.,* 2016).

Semi structured interview technique creates a bond between the participants and the interviewer. The informal interviewer and participant contact are established by the review of the ethical consideration forms which provides the participants an understanding of the fundamental nature of the research topic. This gives the researcher the ability to get a deeper description and understanding of both the research and participant (Bamberger 2012; Li, 2020).

Semi-structured interviews have many advantages such as flexibility allowing researcher to deeply penetrate the research problem and gather comprehensive data. Researchers may exercise their personal skills to extract maximum data during the course of the interview (Bryman and Cramer, 1999). Overall, the interview approach is a more effective tool than questionnaires. Interviews allow researchers to gather more data from selected research sample who might be reluctant or not interested in answering questions through a questionnaire (Burns, 2000; Kumar, 2005). There is one major concern to researchers using the semi-structured interview approach which the time spent to complete those interviews which might be a huge time-consuming factor specially when the targeted sample is big (Burns, 2000). The reasons mentioned in this section justify the use of semi-structured interview method as the main method of data gathering. This research needed a time frame of two months to gather data through those interviews.

3.8.4 Interview Protocol

The interviews quality is the upmost essential element of the research as it ensures the authenticity and the originality of the data gathered during this phase of the research (McIntosh and Morse, 2015). Three levels of best practices for interviews were used to ensure the quality data extraction and its validity to the research objective and purpose.

- Pre-Interview Level

In the pre-interview level, researcher starts by collecting data and information linked to the case studies. The researcher also pays great attention towards getting the ethical consents and confidentiality agreement or NDA (none disclosure agreement) if required by organisations or individual participants. The process of arranging the appointments and proposed venues with participants is another important pre-interview preparation element.

- The Interview Process

During the interview process, the researcher comprehensively explained the objectives and the aim of the research (Burnard, 1991; McIntosh and Morse, 2015). Ethical considerations are to be shed light on and official permit for the interview and the recording of the interview signing the university 'BBS FORM' which is designed for this purpose (Morse and Field, 1995). The interview starts with non-leading questions following various types questioning techniques which engage the participant in-deep discussion which enriches the data gathering process. To achieve this targeted in-depth discussion, the utilisation of questions inserting, questions examining, and questions coordinating is essential to this process. Finally, the researcher expresses his thanks and gratitude to the participant for his collaboration, coordination and agreeing to contribute his knowledge and time for this research.

- Post Interview Level

Researcher makes sure to save all the gathered data and store them properly and safely. The researcher has to communicate with all participants expressing his gratitude for their generosity in sparing their time and effort towards contributing to the research. The gathered data is to be logged, comment added, and transcripts copies saved at the same day of the interview. The interview protocol will be documented and distributed to participants as necessary (Morse and Field, 1995).

3.8.5 Data Analysis Procedures

The development of the data analysis procedures will be ahead of the data gathering process as to avoid the query of any irrelevant information which would be time consuming. The content analysis of the interview's techniques will be decided and set-in advance to the analysis process could be executed effectively and efficiently (Lewis and Silver, 2007).

1. Recording

A recording unit was used for recording the interviews after taking the verbal consents of the participants. The participant was notified when the recording unit starts or stops recording.

2. Transcription

A word-by-word transcripts will be logged of those conducted interviews using a transcription qualitative analysis to provide a rich in-depth analysis tool which would help in converting the spoken words into a useful text (Burnard *et al.,* 2008).

3.8.5.1 Relevance of Thematic Analysis technique

The nature of qualitative methodological approach research forces the researcher in a central point of the reality and truth being researched. As stated by Denzin and Lincoln (2018) "Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena regarding the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). There are many strict analytical techniques which have been developed by the qualitative methodological approach to research in order to facilitate the maximum extraction of useful and meaningful reality from such observations. The qualitative methodological approach technique used in this research is thematic analysis. The thematic analysis technique is a "rigorous, yet inductive, set of procedures designed to identify and examine themes from textual data in a way that is transparent and credible" (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012, p.15). Thematic analysis is a useful tool for this research which assists in analysing data, recognising and categorising meaningful themes. Firstly, thematic analysis is a flexible systematic process which assists researchers to code gathered data to generate nodes and themes. Node is the smallest analysis unit which captures that portion of data relevant to research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2015).

Secondly, the flexibility of thematic analysis allows the researcher to generate nodes as much as identified which are segmented to themes meaningful patterns providing an assembled structure where researcher's observations are outlined. Thematic analysis approach is seen

to be useful for this research due to the fact that it assists in capturing participants' reflections, experience, and perceptions of the research subject.

Thirdly, thematic analysis is applicable for small case studies which require few numbers of participants, larger interview research where the number of participants could be sizable, homogenous, and heterogeneous samples (Terry *et al.,* 2017).

Finally, it could be utilised for data oriented inductive approach or theory oriented deductive approach to data coding process (Braun and Clarke, 2015). Table 15 summarises advantages and disadvantages of thematic analysis.

Table 15 Advantages and disadvantages of Thematic Analysis

Advantages	Disadvantages
Flexibility of the method	Flexibility can make guidelines development for higher-phase analysis very difficult.
Relatively easy and quick method to learn and do.	When connected with other qualitative analysis methods.
Accessible to researchers with little or no experience of qualitative research.	Thematic analysis has no kudos as an analytical method.
Results are generally accessible to educated general public.	
Useful method for working within participatory research paradigm, with participants as collaborators.	
Can usefully summarise key features of a large body of data, and/ or offer a 'thick description' of the data set.	
Can highlight similarities and differences across the data set.	
Can generate unanticipated insights.	
Allows for social as well as psychological interpretations of data.	
Can be useful for producing qualitative analysis suited to informing policy development.	

Source Braun and Clarke (2006).

3.8.5.2 Semi-Structure Interview Design

This research used a semi-structured interview technique by asking different types of questions to participants. The questions asked were related to distributed leadership, organisational transformation initiatives and network leadership through the theoretical lens of

social network theory. The questions were asked to understand the notion of the network leadership assuming for the sake of this research that it is one of the dimensions of the intersection between distributed leadership literature and organisational transformation literature.

3.8.5.3 Demographic Information of Participants

Demographic information refers to specific attributes of research participants. This research included the following demographic attributes: years of experience, business segment and educational background. Table 16 below illustrates the demographic information about the participants.

Table 16 Demographic information about the participants

Division	Years of experience	Educational background	Segment
Int 1	47	BS,ME	Upstream
Int 2	27	BS,ChemE	Downstream
Int 3	37	PhD ChemE	Upstream
Int 4	35	PhD	Upstream
Int 5	38	BS,ChemE	Downstream
Int 6	30	BS	Regulator
Int 7	41	PhD ChemE	Upstream
Int 8	25	BS, ChemE	Downstream
Int 9	32	BS,PE	Upstream
Int 10	39	BS,ME	Upstream
Int 11	31	BS,ME	Regulator
Int 12	28	BS,ME	Upstream
Int 13	32	BS,ChemE	Downstream
Int 14	30	BS,ME	Downstream
Int 15	28	BS,CE	Upstream
Int 16	29	BS,ME	Services
Int 17	37	BBA	Downstream
Int 18	24	BS,CE	Regulator
Int 19	31	BS,EE	Upstream
Int 20	29	BFin	Downstream
Int 21	33	BS	Regulator
Int 22	28	BS,ChemE	Downstream
Int 23	32	BS,ChemE	Upstream
Int 24	28	BS,ME	Service
Int 25	24	BS,ME	Regulator
Int 26	31	BS,ChemE	Downstream

3.8.5.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered from participants interviews were analysed using thematic analysis approach. The interview results were then discussed and compared with other findings from the literature reviewed, published studies and papers. We will discuss below the description of interview data analysis.

3.8.5.4.1 Utilisation of Qualitative Data Analysis Packages

A thoroughly comprehensive transcription of the carried-out interviews was generated using a transcription package NVivo 12 Pro (Edhlund and McDougall, 2019). This research used the qualitative research NVivo 12 (Mac OS) software version 12.6.1 (Edhlund and McDougall, 2019). This software assisted the researcher with data transcription analysis, coding, and content analysis.

3.8.5.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

The gathered data was captured during the transcript analysis process. The researcher focused on composing questions during the interviews based on participants responses to adequately persuade the research problem. The logged data which was captured in the transcript was summarised and explained in the research question's sequence. The data captured in the transcript will be analysed more than once to ensure the correct interpretation of the gathered data and thematic analysis will be utilised on those interviews. Potential themes and sub-themes will be characterised which could help in offering opinions on the emergence of network leadership in the view of organisational leaders. The outcomes of the thematic analysis will lay out responses addressing the research context.

3.8.5.4.3 Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique used in this research is based on the (Braun and Clarke, 2006) thematic analysis approach to qualitative based research methodology. This analytical approach is thought to be useful for research of qualitative approach. This approach is based on a six-phase process for nodes and themes generating and development as described in table 17 below.

Table 17 Six-phase process theme generating

Phase	Description
1.Famillarising yourself with the data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2.Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3.Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4.Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic map of the analysis
5.Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6.Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis, selection of vivid, compelling extracts examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis

Source (Braun and Clarke, 2006, P.35)

3.8.6 Analysis Strategy

This research used the Braun and Clarke (2006) techniques in the data analysing process. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) the researcher should query precise relevant questions which help extracting data that would answer the research questions rather than querying a volume of questions. The gathered data will be segmented in this section of the chapter on the basis which defines and allows the conversion of the extracted primary codes to the examination of themes and sub-themes emerging from the in-depth data analysis. The emergence of themes and sub-themes evolves from categorising the coded data into different nodes. The inductive reasoning allows the researcher to conclude general ideas from the gathered data by considering repeated themes which allow addressing the main research questions. The inductive reasoning used for the purpose of this research is governed by proceeding from specific events to more generalities. This means that whenever the researcher detects any repetition of ideas, patterns of thinking, qua schemata, the researcher can declare it as generalisation of the participants views on the emergence of network leadership in the domain of organisational transformation.

The gathered data is explored from an interpretivism approach which is aligned with the central research questions theoretical structure. The phenomenological analysis method was founded and developed by Edmund Husserl in the early 20th century. This analysis method was developed to examine and understand 'things themselves' (Husserl, 2012), as it is an

approach to qualitative research which is interested in true experience, concerns and observations with teams or groups having many interpretations to reality and objectives. This leads to the understanding that the gathered data could be viewed as it appears to rather than interpreting the data to comply with the theoretical or interpretative researcher's agenda. The research central questions will however focus on addressing the research problem by discussion of the interpretation of the gathered data. The gathered data from the interviews will mainly carry the response of what and how the targeted sample has experienced the research problem. The gathered data is carefully studied and analysed in the research questions to the extent where participants clear responses to sub-questions are extracted to answer those research questions.

3.8.7 Presentation of Data: Coding Process

3.8.7.1 Presentation of Codes

This section of the research methodology chapter will describe the codes allocated to the gathered data. The coding process is important for the assistance for the proper conducting of the interpretative phenomenological-thematic analysis. Those codes are foundational in understanding and interpreting the extracted data from the gathered data which will be described in the emergence of network leadership.

This research adopted a certain philosophical perception of individual agency concept, where the agency concept is cited as the individual ability to act and react. That is where questions which were used to capture participants perception of their preferred leadership approach during large scale transformation initiatives. It is then when conflict was noticed between the way some leaders described their leadership approach and the way they looked at suitable leadership approach to implement planned organisational transformation. These conflicts refer to organisational and industrial cultures which those leaders are exposed to. Therefore, leaders implement different series of agency, capacity to act and respond to the problem of identifying the suitable leadership approach during transformation initiatives. Social network theory was assumed by this research to be the suitable social study theory to understand the social capacity and traits which differentiate individual to be categorised as suitable or unsuitable leader in a specific situation at a specific time. The emergence of network leadership was explored and discussed in the final research question where Codes (nodes) where created and categorised in an inductive reasoning.

3.8.7.2 Presentation of Themes and Sub-Themes

This section will present the themes and sub-themes which are revealed by the means of code application to the gathered data regulated by the schemata which pivots around the concept of social network theory between individual and heteronomous. Themes and sub-themes will be described and presented in the sections and figures 9,10,11 below.

Figure 9 Research Question 1 Main Themes and Sub-Themes

Figure 10   Research Question 2 Main Themes and Sub-Themes
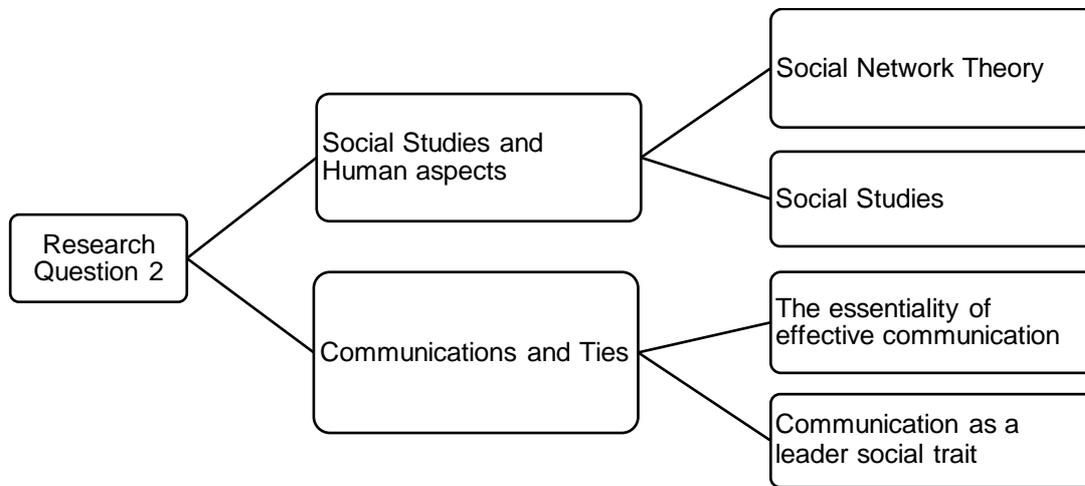
Figure 11 Research Question 3 Main Themes and Sub-Themes
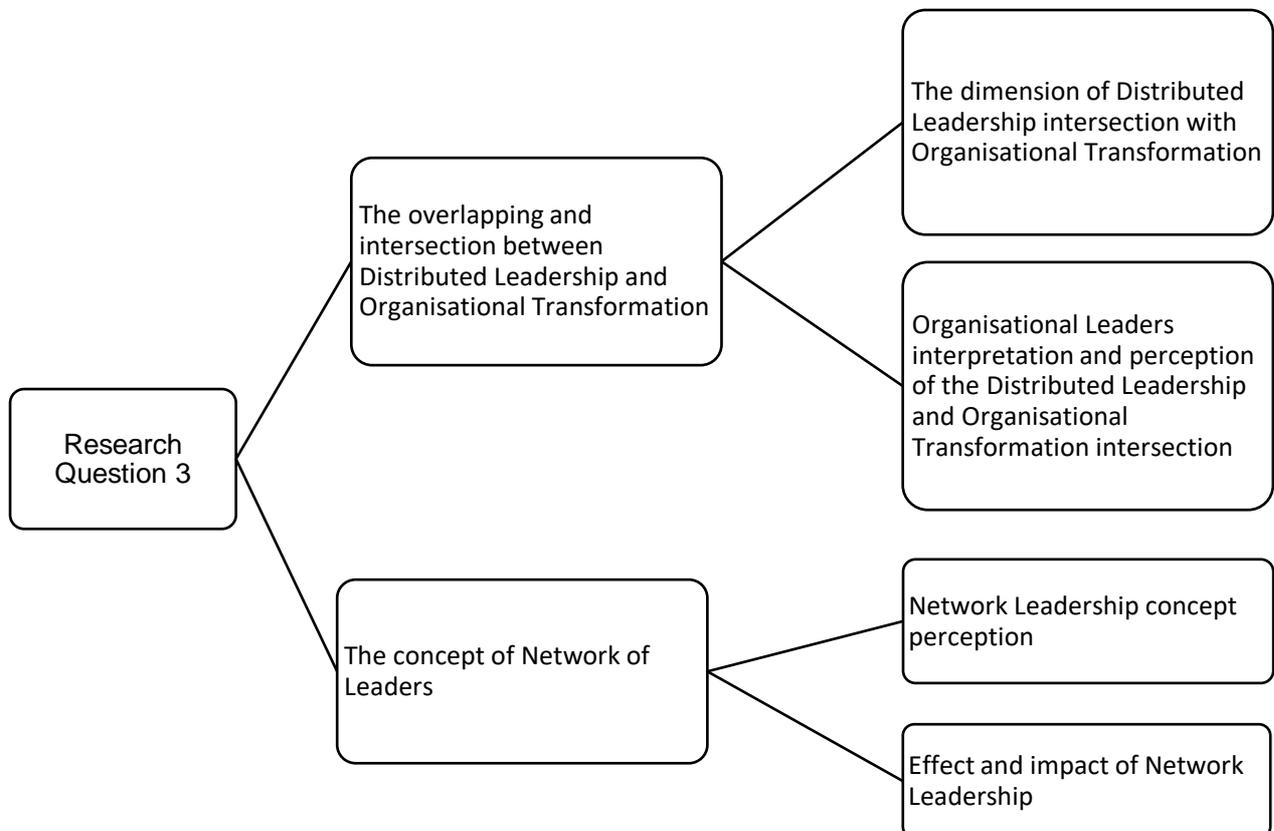
3.9 Research Confidentiality

The confidentiality of information and participants is a key element of this research. This research captures the personal reflection of organisational leaders' experience throughout the course of their career in the Oil and Gas industry. This research complies with Brunel's protocols outlined by the Research Ethics Committee. Part of the research process a Research Ethical approval for the commencing of data collection process was requested and obtained from the Brunel's Research Ethical Committee. As such, a Questionnaire package was sent to all targeted research participants containing participant information sheet acknowledging the participants' anonymity, stating that any publication of the collected data will not be issued unless prior approval is granted by participants and describing the research subject (See Appendix 5). A consent form was sent to the participants seeking their approval to participate in this research, confirming receiving all related research information and confirming the participants' right to withdraw at any time up to the 20th of May 2020 (See Appendix 7). A copy of the ethical approval letter (See Appendix 3) and the interview questions (See Appendix 6) were sent as part of the research questionnaire package. Due to the seniority of those participants, the researcher contacted them directly to explain the aim and subject of this research before setting up the interview date.

3.10 Summary

This chapter began with the introduction to the research questions, a brief description of the research problem and research objectives. A holistic view of research and data analysis approaches used throughout the research justifying the utilisation of those approaches. A clear explanation of data gathering methods with regards to their design, handing out procedures and content was presented, in addition to a short description about the means in which data gathered will be interpreted and analysed. Ethical issues which this research has taken into consideration were also summarised. This chapter presented the used methodological model throughout the research, to review briefly the theories related to the research problem. This chapter should provide the reviewers with an in-depth understanding course and plan of action followed during the process of data gathering and analysis. The following chapter will explore the outcomes and results of the study and discuss them in detail.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction and Overview

The previous chapter was a full explanation of the research methodological approach and the philosophical mind set facilitating the investigation of the research problem. This chapter will analyse the gathered data through a semi-structured questionnaire carried out through face-to-face interviews with decision makers and top executives in Bahrain Oil and Gas. This research has embraced a qualitative methodological approach to understand the reflections of the selected research participants on their perception and experience of leadership practice and organisational transformation. This research targeted 32 senior officials of Bahrain Oil and Gas, where 25 of them where available and agreed on participating in this research.

4.2 General Findings: Main Themes and Sub-themes & Contextual Presentation

This section will present the research findings in a contextual presentation of leadership styles practiced by participants and their perception of suitable leadership approach during organisational transformation. Obstacles to the implementation of organisational transformation are also presented in this section. This section will list and describe main and sub-themes which emerged during the coding process of the semi-structured interview questionnaire into transcripts. The contextual presentation of findings, main themes and sub-themes are presented in tables 18 and 19 below.

Table 18 Contextual Presentation of Findings

Participants Leadership style						
Authority Leadership	Collective Leadership	Democratic Leadership	Mixed Leadership	Team Leadership	Transactional Leadership	Transformational Leadership
2	2	4	5	6	4	2
Suitable Leadership During Organisational Transformation						
Distributed Leadership	Collective Leadership	Democratic Leadership	Network Leadership	Mixed Leadership	Transactional Leadership	Transformational Leadership
6	2	5	2	6	1	3
Obstacles to Organisational Transformation Implementation						
Human Resistance	Effective Communication		Lack of Vision	Leadership Approach	Organisational Structure	
6	10		2	4	3	

Table 19 Themes and Sub-themes Description

Level	Main Theme	Sub-Theme
Organisational Level	Leadership type in organisation going through transformation initiatives	Distributed leadership
		Leaders' perception and description of their leadership style
		Team leadership approach
	Organisational Transformation initiatives as understood by leaders	Obstacles effecting organisational transformation implementation
		Important elements ensuring organisational transformation implementation
		Organisational leaders' perception of organisational transformation
		Suitable leadership approach in organisations going through their transformational phase
	Organisational leader's team/collective leadership approach	Organisational leaders' perception of Distributed leadership
		Distributed leadership implementation in organisations going through organisational transformation
Social & Individual	Social studies and human aspects	Social network theory
		Social studies
	Communications and ties	The essentiality of effective communication
		Communication as a leaders' social trait
Literature	The overlapping and intersection between distributed leadership & organisational transformation	The dimension of distributed leadership intersection with organisational transformation
		Organisational leaders' interpretation of the distributed leadership and organisational transformation intersection
	The concept of network of leaders	Network leadership concept perception
		Effects and impact of network leadership

4.3 Themes Analysis as Discussed by Participants in Research Context

The themes and sub-themes were identified and assembled based on an inductive thinking as discussed at three different levels. The first set of themes discussed leadership approach at an organisational level. At this level, leaders' personal experience in their leadership post, perception of suitable leadership style, description of their leadership style, their understanding of organisational transformation, organisational leaders' perception of distributed leadership, obstacles to organisational transformation achievement from leaders' prospect, the impact and effectiveness of distributed leadership on transformational initiatives was investigated. The second level of themes discussion was on social and individual basis. At this level, leaders' perception of social network theory on human aspects, social distribution of leadership tasks and the social network theory impact on leadership theory was investigated. The third level of themes discussion was based on literature review findings which led to the construction of the conceptual framework.

4.4 Findings on Research Question 1 at the Organisational Level

The research captured the experience and reflection of those participants from an organisational level of perception related to leadership issues. The focus of this question besides reflecting on organisational leaders' personal experience was investigating their perception on subjects of interest to this research such as organisational transformation, obstacles to transformation initiatives implementation, leadership theories, suitable management styles when implementing organisational change, the situationally distribution of leadership and organisational point of views on distributed leadership. The themes generated at this level of discussion are leadership types in organisations going through transformation initiative, organisational transformation initiatives as understood by leaders and organisational leaders' team/collective approach perception.

4.4.1 Leadership and Organisational Transformation Perception at Organisational Level

Leadership approach and style emerged as a result of participants' response to the first research question. The participants' feedback, and discussion was captured and categorised to main themes including sub-themes.

4.4.1.1 *Main Theme 1: Leadership Type in Organisations Going Through Organisational Transformation Initiatives*

In this main theme, participants expressed their views related to leadership approach and essentiality in managing the organisation through their transformational initiatives. The identification of a suitable leadership approach to manage an organisation through its transformational phase was highlighted by those participants. Leadership was looked at as a challenge and management as a wide spectrum of different individual characteristics and views. The following quote highlights these views:

> '*You need a leadership management style which can accept challenges and leaders that can accept different views' (Int 1).*

> '*The leader is visionary, decision-making person, problem solver person, target and goals executer' (Int 8).*

Leadership is said to be needed in a more flexible approach to management. However, strong personality is essential to lead the organisation. The following quote reflects on this view:

> '*You need a more flexible sort of leadership. But again, I go back to assertiveness. You need to have strong personality to really lead and you need to lead by example' (Int 2).*

Organisational leaders also recognise the complexity of organisations and economic environment which requires leadership approach that engages more participation in opinions and thoughts. The business growth and expansion process make it more challenging for leaders to solely lead the organisation. The complexity of organisational structures and the geographical spread make it almost impossible for a single individual to lead the entire organisation.

> '*Consultative, I would think consultatively because not a single person nor a single personality has the intelligence and the brain to think of all aspects of the transformational process.' (Int 4).*

We shall discuss the leadership approach which participants perceived as suitable in managing their organisation during transformational initiatives, assuring the execution of those planned organisational changes. Most participants stated that the team form of leadership is

preferable in achieving organisational goals, although some participants have identified less team-oriented leadership styles as effective in transformation initiatives execution. Those leadership styles and their affects will be discussed comprehensively in the following sub-themes section.

4.4.1.1.1 Sub-Theme 1: Leader's perception and description of their leadership style

Participants have discussed their perception of leadership and described their leadership styles in detail. Although participants came from the same industry, the leadership style they applied and implemented in their organisational post varied from one leader to another. Team /collective leadership approach was the preferred leadership approach amongst participants. Participants who described their leadership as authoritarian expressed the need for such leadership approach in organisations operating in hazardous environment. This authoritarian approach was adopted by those leaders working with operational related posts.

Collective leadership approach to organisational management was adopted by participants. There is a shift in organisational leaders' mind set from organisational authoritarian leadership approach towards more team/collective approach, where leaders and team members collectively cooperate with each other to achieve the collective organisational goal. This is achieved by aligning the team members' goals and views together with organisational goals. The following quote highlights the above discussions:

> '*I consider my leadership as team player sort of leadership style. I always believe in collective views rather than a singular view, and I always try to engage my team in whatever I do. I make sure that all my team members participate in the process of taking any decision about the business, facilitating the process, listening to views, and trying to align them as much as possible.' (Int 21).*

The decision-making process is also perceived by those leaders as based on collective participative basis which stimulates innovative ideas that could help achieving the decided organisational change in a more efficient way. This was highlighted in the following quote:

> '*Decision is based on your team's sort of ideas and collective views. I always believed that teams would add value because when you are with teams and people having different views and different ideas crucial decisions are formed.' (Int 21).*

Working with team members who are diversified in their background and qualifications would make leadership a more collaborative and collective decision-making process. This is supported by the following quote:

> '*A collective leadership style seeks to work with the necessary range of people, solicit their input, discuss alternatives, believing that diverse team is the strongest approach to a good answer to any particular question. I would be responsible for the final decision of the group, but I would attempt not to reach that without input from everybody else' (Int 18).*

Democratic leadership is another construct of team/collective leadership approach to management, where participants described it as their leadership style and perceived it as a convenient leadership style. Participants saw this approach as means of engaging team members in the decision process through taking everyone's opinion in the decision or action to be taken based on majority opinion. Organisational leaders believe that the whole organisation is accountable in the decision-making process. Those participants believe that it is more partial in organisation going through structural or transformation changes, where the participating team members in the decision making will enhance the decision-making process and bring it closer to reality of the operational environment due to the easy flow of communication. The following quotes supports the above discussions:

> '*Instead of keeping all the leadership accountability on the top of the organisation, team members should democratically interact in the decision-making process' (Int 6).*
> '*Democratic participative leadership style is the closest to reality as I am able to involve my team while making decisions. It works well for organisation with team members who are highly skilled and experienced. The best part of this kind of leadership style is that the communication is active upward to downward. It also, requires leaders to be creative, considered and competent' (Int 7).*

Democratic leadership approach as stated by participants is the willingness of team members to interact with at network or team level to take a decision are expressed in the above quote. Democratic leaders according to participants in this section believe in the results of engaging team members in participation during the decision-making process and implementation of organisational changes. A key element in democratic approach to leadership is the process of identifying team (network) members with suitable traits, characteristics to assemble the team. A leader is unable to democratically run a team who lacks knowledge, capability, and training to achieve the organisational collective goal. Democratic management-oriented

leaders in many cases adopt more authoritarian leadership approach in assembling their teams before engaging team members in decision-making process. The below quote reflects this idea from the view of an organisational leader running a transformational initiative within his organisation.

'*It is more of participation, and willingness to come up with solutions to work with teams and groups who make things easier and under management. ' (Int 8).*

'*From my point of view, you need to change your style to adapt to the situation and I shall give the example of myself taking over the modernization program. I came into the project after it had been in progress for around 18 months. So, I had to take over an unsettled team who hadn't been fully developed, and the organisational structure to manage the project wasn't really in place. So, in the early days, I actually had to take quite a directive or autocratic style in just to get things done. It was necessary for me to set up a team quickly to establish hiring key leaders underneath me and to get that in place as quickly as possible because, once you've got people in place, you can take a more democratic view in managing the team' (Int 9).*

A number of participants stated that they are leading their organisations based on a mixed leadership style, where a leader exercises his management responsibilities by multiple or a combination of different leadership styles as required. The leadership style adopted is based on the situational need at a specific time. Mixed leadership approach and the situational need of mixed method leadership approach is highlighted in the following quotes:

'*A blend of leadership which will be more suitable for the organisational transformation to achieve and deliver results' (Int 1)*

'*My leadership style is more of mixed leadership practice method where I am inspiring as well as authoritarian, collaborative in a manner when situation requires collaboration. Since we are operating in an area with high hazards and threats to humans, I am also authoritarian when it comes to operations in the factory itself. So, my leadership style is actually one of a mixture or a blend of leadership practices and methods" (Int 3).*

'*Mostly, a combination of democratic and authoritative styles is needed depending on the situation and needs. I have here different situations which need different approaches for the best interest of the company and the employees' (Int 5).*

Mixed method leadership approach is more of flexible open-minded approach, where leaders are more opened to adopting different leadership styles separately or simultaneously. This idea is shared amongst leaders of mixed method-based leadership approach. The following quote states this idea:

> *'It's a combination of one or two. If it's a brand-new project, a start with a democratic move to distributive as your team is established. As people gain trust within the team, this allows people to do what they are good at. So, you can't stick to a single style. In my view, more of transactional and charismatic leadership as well as participated team-oriented leadership is needed to convince the organisational workforce with the importance of transformation initiatives for the organisation' (int 22).*

Team approach to leadership was practised by participants who viewed this approach as a suitable leadership approach in a dynamic business environment. Team leadership is perceived by participants as a practice of teamwork, cooperation, participation and delegation of responsibility and power amongst team members. The following quote is an example of the delegation perception of team leadership:

> *'I tend to delegate those who have shown the capability to take full responsibility. I'm sure people can take on full responsibility and I do hold people accountable. I actually expect mistakes because mistakes are a learning experience and I don't take punitive measures with individuals who make one or two mistakes, but only if they consistently repeat the same mistake' (Int 11).*

This approach to leadership is more of proactive open-minded team-oriented leadership rather than traditional rigid leadership approach. In this team approach to leadership leaders are seen more like team players rather than leaders who are holding to power. Team leadership is perceived by leaders of this approach mind-set to organisational management as humble leader who encourages innovation and creativity by inspiring team members to perform at their best. The engagement of team members alongside the encouragement to take part in assuming roles in decision making is an essential part of the logic supporting leaders in their argument is the suitability of this leadership approach. The following quotes are examples of leaders' perception of team leadership approach.

> *'My best approach to leadership is actually to be more or less part of a team rather than a person sitting at the top and directing people. I'm also very interested in listening to the team and what they have to say. I never speak first, I let people say their views,*

and then I would make up my mind on which decision or which direction is the best way to go. it is more or less an open and transparent discussion rather than just giving directives because people after all if they feel that they are being directed on everything they become lazy and will escalate up. That's not the right decision sharing, understanding and listening to views not hearing' (Int 14).

'My leadership style is leadership style is more of team and democratic participatory leadership, where I engage my team in decision making process and share with them some of my responsibilities as much as possible' (Int 15).

'I consider my leadership as a team player style of leadership. I always believe in collective views than a singular view and I always try to engage my team whatever I do. Decisions should be based on your team sort of ideas and collective views. I always believe that teams would add value because when you are with teams, people having different views and different ideas at the same place can form more informed crucial decisions' (Int 21).

'I like to involve others, pick other brains and ensure that everybody in my team contributes positively from the discussion to the decision-making process' (Int 23).

Team leadership approach to management was perceived by many participants as a favourite choice of leadership approach which they practice, while fewer participants still practiced more rigid classical leadership approaches. Although a significant number of participants described their leadership approach as a mixed method leadership approach, they still practiced one of the team leadership approach concepts. Participants justified this start with a more classical approach due to the hazardous nature of the industry they are operating where safety of humans and assets is essential. Transactional and charismatic leadership approach was identified by smaller number of participants described as leadership practice which they exercise on operational level, but when it comes to organisational management level, team collective leadership was identified as a more suitable leadership choice to them. We can conclude that team leadership approach is perceived by those participants as a suitable leadership approach, however to some participants it is practiced situationally. That is an interesting observation and conclusion of this section, where even participants who do not exercise team-oriented leadership at all organisational and operational level perceive it as a suitable leadership practice.

4.4.1.1.2 Sub-Theme 2: Distributed Leadership

In this section, the participants' perception of distributed leadership in organisations going through organisational change is captured. Distributed leadership was perceived by participants as leadership approach assists leaders in achieving planned transformation initiatives. Those participants' discussions confirmed that organisations are complex due to their structures and their context. The concept of sharing leadership amongst teams or networks through distributing responsibilities and power based on the availability of specific characteristics required to perform a certain duty. Interviewed participants stated that their understanding of the importance of distributed leadership in organisations going through large scale organisational transformation efforts to achieve and implement planned change initiatives. This team-oriented leadership approach does encourage team members to be creative due to the inspirational approach of leadership delegation to network members. The following quote is an example of the participants' expression of the growing organisational and business environments complexity:

> *'Let me tell you that there is no single suitable leadership style, there is a leadership practice which states a certain organisation in a specific sector. Collective, participative, and other group-oriented leadership practices are more effective in organisational change. In other words, team/collective distributed leadership are more suitable in todays' global complex environment' (Int 2).*

> *'I think distributed leadership in organisations going through transformation is important. One single leader cannot be everywhere or does everything every time throughout. Those who lead and work with a team of leaders need to adjust to their expectation and style of leadership. Give them the opportunity to lead, allow them to be creative. Such approach would be more appreciated for organisational transformation compelled to adopt a style of leadership' (Int 4).*

Distributed leadership to those participants is an approach which encourages constructive atmosphere amongst team or what this research refers to as network members. This atmosphere is a result of the notion of leadership distribution amongst members and aligning their induvial goals to the organisational collective goal. This goal alignment between individual and organisational goal assures the efficient implementation of organisational transformation initiatives. The below quote is evidence of the above discussion:

'In my own perspective, distributed leadership can create a positive transformation if it will be done to large scale transformation initiatives. It will change the work culture where everyone from top to bottom level will have and feel responsibility as leaders of there are according to their respective expertise' (Int 5).

Participants interviewed in (Int 6,7,8) highlighted some essential insights of their perception distributed leadership which will discussed in this section. Distributed leadership to interviewed participants is a team-based oriented approach which promotes the concept of passing down accountability from top organisational leadership to team (network) members. Distributed leaders are a source of inspiration which influences team (network) to perform and implement organisational transformation initiatives. The practice of distributed leadership is an influential leadership approach which increases the creativity amongst team (network) members. The effectiveness of distributed leadership evolves from the improvement of information sharing, in addition to effective communication between teams and teams' members. Implementing distributed leadership helps organisations achieve their organisational goals including transformation initiatives. The below quote is an example of some participants' insights:

'Distributed leadership increases the innovation within teams and competition to prove who is more capable and skilful to be considered a future leader. Organisational growth itself forces management to distribute leadership amongst leaders due to the complexity of the organisations themselves and the growth elements' (Int 15).

Interviewed participants (Int 9,10) discussed the essentiality of choosing potential leaders who are capable of implementing organisational transformation initiatives as expected by organisational leadership. Participants' understanding of distributed leadership is based on the mind-set of sharing different leadership roles between team members in a way which brands this leadership style as a multi-functional leadership approach. Distributed leadership is considered a multi-functional leadership due to the possibility of having different team (network) members engaged simultaneously in different leadership roles and functions. The level of teamwork and collaboration amongst teams (networks) enhances the coordination between teams across the organisational boundaries.

'My perception of distributed leadership in organisations going through organisational changes is that it would create more channels of communication between the bottom and top of the organisation. The distribution of leadership can be a delusion of risk of

management failure and mediate messages and communicate across different organisational layers' (Int 13).

The above is a quote stating that distributed leadership is understood as a tool of management enhancement. The enhancement this participant is pointing to is based on the effective and clear communication between different organisational layers. Having clear messages and effective communication flowing both vertically from the top to lower organisational hierarchal levels and horizontally across organisational boundaries assist in aligning individual and organisational goals.

Many participants stated that empowerment is a natural result of power delegation and leadership role sharing. Team members empowerment in the view of those participants boosts personal responsibility to achieve the roles delegated. The below highlights this discussion.

'The distribution leadership perception in my view is basically in line with the empowerment process where we in Bapco are promoting. We try delegating power and authority to our subordinates to lead and be accountable for their actions and decisions' (Int 15).

'My understanding of distributed leadership is empowerment from the CEO down through the management chain which is often something that is a reason for business transformation. So distributed management is to share the power amongst all, sharing the influence amongst a number of managers in the workplace across a large workforce and respect each contributor to their particular immediate subject matter expertise' (Int 16).

Some participants who expressed their views on distributed leadership as an effective leadership approach in organisations going through transformational phase are leaders who have practiced it but are not familiar with the term itself. There are many leaders in actual organisational environment who are distributed and team-oriented leaders, however they are not familiar with distributed leadership as a leadership theory. The following are examples of such organisational leaders with the same prospective:

'While I am not very familiar with the term to be frank with you, but again distributed leadership is something that we practice. For example, we are taking this organisation which I just took over to our extensive automation both commercially, financially, and

operationally. So, you know that we are doing this through a medium size team but working with the mechanics team so that everybody is for his department and his function. But they keep working together in order to keep this business ahead during transformation and everybody is aware of what are others doing. So, opening here a channel of communication is very important and probably this is also contributing to a successful distributed leadership' (Int 17).

'The larger your organisation is, the more delegation you have to give out, and ultimately if the targets and objective at the top level are clear, then it is very easy to gauge and monitor. Keeping your eye on KPI's and sure that everybody has discrete targets is essential. So, you don't lose track of where you are and assist your leadership team and this is going to be a continuous structure. People don't stay forever in their roles' (Int 19).

A very interesting perception of distributed leadership is stated in the following statements, which agrees with the opinion of the effectiveness of distributed leadership and its suitability in different scales and ways of execution of planned organisational changes:

'In my opinion, they are very effective and could be used as much as we can, maybe in different scales and different means and different leadership vehicles but it should be used' (Int 20).

'So, the distribution of leadership requires what we call a personality a diversity (everyone is different). We've got diversity and inclusion is one of our core elements beliefs. As a result of that, we look across the organisation and identify diversity as a key which brings in the distribution to begin with, whether it is at the leadership level or at the middle management level. So, we tend to bring in people from diverse backgrounds, we also tend to bring in people with diverse leadership styles. There is an element of diversity in leadership, which I may put it in a way that if you have a big organisation and distribute and reach out to branches out to all the people who need to hear and see. This resonates with people and builds resilience and motivates them as a result of that. So, to me distributed leadership actually touches on the diversity and inclusion pieces because not everyone speaks and some love to be listeners. (Int 22).

The above is another interesting interview with a leader of a much-diversified division within Bahraini Oil and Gas. This participant identified diversity in all its forms from ethnicity to

personal traits and leadership styles to be the main element of distributed leadership as understood to him. The diversity enriches the organisational experience through increasing the individual capacity to lead as a result to the knowledge exchange between different organisational members. The diversity the participant was pointing to is the cultural, social and knowledge diversity which all can promote more efficient potential leaders.

Interviewed participants (Int 14,18,21,23) described their perception of the uniqueness of this approach in a way that highlighted the results of the coordination, collaboration, responsibility, and accountability elements on network members. Participant in (Int 18) stated that *'I think as described it is essential to an organisation going through large scale transformation to have this leadership out there involved, engaged, coordinating with others, bringing those ideas to the table, resolving them in the direction the corporation is to move'.* This reflects the uniqueness of distributed leadership to participants in this section, where interaction process between network members makes the leadership practice a more dynamic process through actors' interactions with each other.

Although recognising the uniqueness of distributed leadership, participant in (Int 21) expressed the need of dictatorship leadership to execute large scale transformational initiatives alongside different type of leaders who are fit to lead different activities. *"You need a leader who has sort of dictatorship to really lead that type of activity. But at the same time, there are other activities where you need people to be engaging. You need people to engage with others".*

As a conclusion of this sub-theme discussion distributed leadership is perceived by participants as a suitable leadership approach in organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives. Although many of those participants confirmed different styles of leadership to be their preferred style, they viewed distributed leadership as a way forward to execute organisational transformation initiatives and achieve organisational goals. This discussion described distributed leadership as a unique leadership style which delegates and empower team (network) members to be more innovative and creative. Setting up a team of potential leaders with diversified traits and knowledge is a booster to achieve organisational targets. Leadership according to distributed leadership participants' is collective, collaborative, sharing and coordination efforts between team (network) members. The role of distributed leadership as viewed by participants is to delegate, empower and identify potential future leaders. Leadership approach is a multi-function activity which demands leaders with different traits and capabilities to perform their delegated leadership role. To many participants,

distributed leadership is a leadership approach which is assembled by leaders with different leadership styles that are necessary in certain situation and transformational phase. The ability of distributed leaders to align individual interest to organisational interest is essential in the collective achievement of the overall organisational aim. Distributed leadership is identified by participants to fit small, large, complex, and hierarchical organisational structures. The process of distributing leadership was perceived as a means of dilution of management failure risk. The distribution process ensure that every element of the delegated leadership role is assigned to a suitable leader to perform that leadership role.

4.4.1.2 *Main theme 2: Organisational Transformation Initiatives as Understood by Leaders*

This main theme emerged as a result of the inductive reasoning approach this research has adopted. In this main theme, participants have discussed their perception of organisation transformation initiatives. After coding of data and categorising nodes four sub-themes emerged under this main theme. Those identified sub-themes have identified obstacles to organisation transformation, situational distribution of leadership and suitable management style during such phase.

4.4.1.2.1 Sub-Theme 1: Obstacles effecting Organisational Transformational Implementation

Participants in this section answered the question addressed to them gauging their insight on their views on the main obstacles to organisational transformation. The biggest obstacles as stated by participants fall under three main obstacles which will be discussed in this section. One of the main obstacles to organisational transformation was human resistance towards change. The human sociology tends to refuse the idea of getting out of their comfort zone. Participants who recognised human resistance to organisational change as a challenge and obstacle in achieving planned large-scale transformational initiatives linked it to the essentiality of distributed leadership. The importance of distribution leadership in views of those participants are derived from the need to align individual and organisational vision to overcome the organisational uncertainty. The following quotes states the above discussions:

> '*Resistance to change is one of the main issues here, you know people usually prefer to secure where they are. They don't want to change and that is the challenge' (Int 1).*

'The biggest and most famous organisational change obstacle is the organisational population resistance to change and uncertainty any change creates in employees' cognitive thinking of transformation initiative. This way, distributed leadership is important as it helps alignment of goals and missions of individual and organisation' (Int 3).

Other participants who perceived human resistance to organisational change as the biggest obstacle to organisational transformation, recognised communication as an instrumental tool in the achievement of organisational change. Participants rationalise the essentiality of effective communication to the fact that it assists leaders aligning organisations and individual goals. The effective communication of organisational messages aims to explain the rationale behind the organisational decision to implement transformation initiatives. Such effective communication does convince organisational members of the necessity of the organisational change. The following quotes is an example of the above:

'In my point of view, it will be resistance to change which is the biggest obstacle to organisational change' (Int 5).

'One of the biggest obstacles is the resistance to change and new process which comes from your own team, as change is mostly perceived by people as a threat to their comfort zones. Also, miscommunications can serve as an obstacle as messages and information need to be consistent and present throughout the change process timeline' (Int 7).

In order to implement planned large-scale organisational transformation initiatives smoothly, organisational leaders should justify and explain the reason why transformation initiatives are important. Organisations should convince their members of the urgency and essentiality of organisational change. The ability of organisation to persuade their employees with the importance of transformation initiatives helps overcoming obstacles to organisation transformation implementation. The following quotes supports the above discussion:

'The biggest obstacle is people resistance to change which is a full responsibility of the organisational management to explain the need for change and the necessity for change' (Int 13).

'The obstacles are in resistance and if you are a good leader, you should be capable of convincing others, or at least trying it and moving on with it. The change which

transformational change always starts with individuals. I am not talking about leadership in the world by saying what's in it for you' (Int 14).

The other obstacle which was mentioned by participants to be a barrier of better achievement of organisational transformation is communication. This organisation transformation barrier is addressed some participants. Those participants expressed their concerns about the miscommunication '*Miscommunications can serve as an obstacle, as messages and information need to be consistent and present throughout the change process timeline' (Int 7)*. The flow of communication across organisational boundaries and different levels of the organisational structure. Having an effective communication and smooth flow of information is a complicated process which needs effective and competent leaders who are capable of moving the right message to the whole organisation. The following confirms the above discussion:

> *'Effective communication is the easy sentence to say, but actually not to do. It is difficult to try to get your best people on board in an interesting way, at least in my view and I tell the folks out here is your company which will succeed or fail on the first line supervision because that's the person the rest of the workforce under him actually listen to. They don't listen to the CEO or general manager; they listen to that first supervisor' (Int 11).*

As much as having ineffective communication is an obstacle to organisational transformation, means of communicating is even a bigger obstacle. The message has to be understandable to all the organisation's members. The type of message or communication targeted to different organisational members should vary according to the qualification and nature of the employees' role. The following quote is an extension to the above insight:

> *'The biggest obstacle to me personally is how you communicate with people, especially the talented and skilled ones. It's always tough when you have to make a big transformational change within your organisation which impacts people' (Int 22).*

The rest of the participants' insights linked to obstacles effecting organisational transformation implementation were the lack of vision, leadership, uncertainty, and organisational structure. Participant in (Int 17) identified the lack of clarity and vision as the biggest risk towards the implementation of organisational change. A clear organisational vision makes it easier for team members to understand why and for what reason this transformation decision has been

taken. Uncertainty was another obstacle that few participants saw as a main obstacle in the implementation of organisational transformation. The uncertainty obstacle is better described in the following quote:

'Change in its form is a very painful thing for people around the world, whether to change the job which they are doing or the context of the job which they are doing or the way they have been trained and developed to do a certain job. So, change in every aspect of it is a very painful process for human being all over the world. Therefore, what holds most of the transformational efforts back is the sort of system to change. The only way to ensure that you minimise that and to ensure that you are a positive catalyst to promote the transformational process is to teach and train people to be able to adapt to change extremely quickly. Going through the learning curve will change, the faster you make it, the better your probabilities and chances of succeeding in your transformation process' (Int 23).

Leadership was perceived by other participants as being an obstacle to implementing organisational transformation initiatives. Suitable leadership in the opinion of those participants does construct a solid base to reach the organisational goal through leading the organisation. Having a leader who is knowledgeable and capable of manging the organisation reduces the risk of failure. A participant expressed his thought about having a suitable leader in the following quote:

'I would say having a leader who would never been a manager is an obstacle, because if he doesn't understand the business right from the bottom to the top, it will be very hard for him as a leader to take wise decisions or probably get the company on the proper track for the future' (Int 20).

Participants (Int 12,16,18) thought that organisational structure is an obstacle to organisational transformation. A proper organisation structure defines the roles and responsibilities of each organisational member, where every individual knows what to do and what is expected from him. This promotes more positive comfortable atmosphere which motivates organisation members to perform at their top levels.

To conclude this section, we have to mention that the biggest number of participants looked at organisational and human resistance as the biggest obstacle in the implementation of transformation initiatives. However, those participants viewed communication as an obstacle

which represents a barrier between the organisational leadership and organisation members. Due to the lack of effective communication between different organisational layers and boundaries, an uncertain atmosphere is created, where the aim and the necessity of such initiative is not clear. Taking a holistic view of the participants' feedback to research questions revealed the link between those answers as described above.

4.4.1.2.2 Sub-Theme 2: Elements Essential to Organisational Transformation Implementation

The participants' opinion of the elements which are essential to organisation transformation was discussed in this section, where the researcher was able to extract data. The extracted views and opinions of those participants capture their accumulated experiences throughout their organisational leadership role. In this section, participants discussed comprehensively the elements of success to organisational transformation which is detailed below.

Social and cultural elements were identified by participants as an essential element of successful organisational transformation implementation. Participants expressed their belief that social element is the most important factor in the implementation of transformational initiatives. As organisational members are the main pillar of an organisation. The execution of planned or unplanned organisational change will be performed by organisational members. Having the right people with the right characteristics and talent to execute such changes is essential. Organisational and surrounding environment culture is another element linked to social factor. Those organisations, where organisational culture is open to changes and aligns the individual interest to the overall organisational interest has less resistance to changes. The following quote confirms the above:

> *'I think that the most important element in any organisation is social structure which influences people to work in order to achieve their collective goals. So, there is a certain cultural behaviour within the organisation. If you get the trait, you will achieve your desired level of achievement. When you favour a network leadership as a preferred leadership style, transformation will be a success. There are numerous organisations which start implementing certain initiatives, but they don't achieve the expected results from those initiatives because people are not culturally ready or leaders initiating the initiative don't understand whether they are doing it correctly or not' (Int 2).*

Many participants acknowledged that the social, human, and cultural aspect helps leaders in managing social resistance to change. The quote below states this idea:

'One of the important elements which you have to consider in organisational transformation is people and their social and *cultural resistance to change. So, you have to learn how to manage resistance to change, because in any transformation, if there is a barrier you have to go around it and manage it in order to achieve the transformation'* (Int 12).

Interviewee 23 highlighted the importance of the ability of the organisation and the leader to bridge any gap between the organisational versus the personal culture. Bridging the cultural gap between organisations and employees helps in facilitating the transformation process. According to this participant, organisational leader should try to inspire and motivate organisational member to adapt to the organisational culture. If individuals do not have the ability to adapt to changes, then organisations are hardly able to achieve their goal.

Leadership to participants was recognised as the most important element of successful implementation of organisation transformation. To those participants, leaders were a main pillar of successful organisational change which ensures effective execution of transformation initiatives. As discussed by participants, the personal traits, social skills, and leadership quality are components of success to any organisation which plans to stay competitive in the industry it operates in. It is a mission on the organisation's leadership to choose the potential leaders who are capable and willing to lead their organisation towards the achievement of its overall organisational goal. Participant in (Int 6) stated that *'Choosing the right leader with the right leadership attributes, authenticity, people oriented and believe in organisational change and communicate the business case and rational supporting the transformation decision….The transformation plan should be explained and justified by leaders to convince that this is the way to future'.* This is why leaders are expected to have some social traits which allow them to socialise and communicate with their people. Inspiring employees to perform their role and influencing to achieve their organisational goal depends on the leader's ability to communicate with their workforce.

Interviewee 15 stated that *'The most important element of organisation transformation implementation as I see is the effectiveness of leadership management in the convincing process of the employees and team members of the importance of those organisational changes to the future, which is the organisation's future to show or at alignment and ability of*

alignment of the two goals together'. Organisational leaders should be effective in managing their team members to achieve the desired organisational transformation initiatives.

According to participants (Int 3,7,10,13,20), suitable leadership style and leaders are capable, knowledgeable, with social traits and facilitative in executing the transformation plan. Suitable leaderships to those participants are leaders with vision who look at the organisation in a holistic view. Such leaders are able to convince their team members with the benefits expected from the execution of the organisational plan. Knowledgably leaders are capable of pursuing and inspiring organisational members with the reasons why they have to contribute to performing their delegated and assigned roles. Leaders with social traits are competent in communicating the message to a wider audience because of their social capabilities making them more influential and exposed to the organisational workforce. Those identified characteristics help making the leadership process and the leaders themselves more facilitative in performing their leadership role. Leaders are expected to line up strategic organisational vision, mission, and goal to individual goals.

Some participants (Int 12,14) argued that communication to them is important given that organisation transformation plan and its objective are clear and agreed on. The organisation's objective of this change has to be recognised by leadership to be what the organisation really needs to revive and thrive. Only then communication is effective and could add more reasons for the organisational transformation plan. The quote below is a statement reflecting the perception of communication importance:

> *'I think understanding and communicating the clear goal is going to be the most important, and that's where top management and top leadership responsibilities come through. Communicating that clear organisational goal because once you start having a clear idea about what the goals are you can start the transformation initiative implementation' (Int 19).*

Having an effective communication plan which clearly defines the goals, means and reason for the transformation plan is pillar in the successful implementation of the transformation plan. Information smooth flow is always needed from under to up and cross organisational boundaries educating the organisation on the economic and commercial benefits of change. This leads to creating the motive to all organisational force that this change will impact them in a way that enables them to reach their goals (Int 22). The following statement is a good closure for the importance of communication in organisational transformation:

'Communication is the key. If you don't have a proper communication plan, your transformation might fail. You might not deliver what you are trying to achieve and communicate. The social networking has a huge impact on communication. That's why you need to communicate very clearly your message to the organisation and your objective has to be clear and properly communicated. In today's environment, the social networking is a key to any drivers' (Int 21).

Some participants saw leadership as the most important elements in the execution of organisation transformation initiatives, others looked at communication and some viewed social and cultural aspects as important elements. No doubt all those elements are essential in achieving the organisational goal. The implementation of planned large-scale transformation changes will need leaders who knowledgably are qualified, and competent to inspire the organisational members to perform at their top level. Although knowledgeable leaders are essential to this process, however if those leaders don't have social traits and proper communication plan, they will not succeed in delivering the organisational message which states the reason, need and essentiality of this change to the future of the company and its collective goal. Leaders are also supposed to influence their followers to adopt to the new transformational culture through motivation and convincing them that their goals and organisational goals are collectively aligned. Participants who saw communication as an important element of transformation execution assumed having the right leader in place and so those who viewed leadership as the most important element assumed those leaders having an effective communication plan. Even those participants who perceived social and cultural aspects as being of importance to the execution of the plan assumed that leaders with suitable social and cultural trait were selected as organisational leaders. This where we confirm from the above discussion that leadership in a very essential part of having an essential role ensuring the implementation of the transformational plan.

4.4.1.2.3 Sub-Theme 3: Organisational Leaders' Perception of Organisational Transformation

In this section, participants described organisational transformation from their experience as leaders in their organisations. In their views, organisational transformation is a change process which is necessary for the organisation existence. However, participants again discussed some of the pillars essential to organisational transformation execution. Participants shared the same main concept of organisation transformation, they even defined it similarly and understood the essentiality for organisations to transform. They acknowledged the fact that it

is the way to maintain the organisation's continuity and competence in a fast-changing global business environment and growing organisational complexity. However, they cited it from three different prospective which will be discussed in this section.

Leadership was the first prospective being of great contribution to organisations planning large scale transformation initiatives. Participants identified this process as an organisational activity which needs to lead as managed in the suitable way. The following quote confirms the above:

> *'Large scale or what we also refer to as radical changes are required to have special and unique leadership approach which really helps convincing and inspiring organisational actors in the importance of this change to the future of the organisation'* (Int 1).

> Participants (Int 5,8) stated that the process of transforming organisation is only successful when the vision is clear and defined by the top of the organisation. As transformation is a challenging process to individual due to the uncertainty it creates within the workforce, it is up to leaders to dilute that uncertainty risk through their leadership practice. This is why capable change management agent is required to influence employees with the necessity of the organisational change. To those participants leadership is a driving force of organisational transformation.

Participants (Int 13,14,17) commented that organisational transformation is not achievable as expected if the overall organisational culture does not promote team-based oriented leadership approach. Based on their comments, distributed leadership is a suitable organisational management structure for organisations to manage not only their transformation initiatives but also their day-to-day business. The transformation process in their views demands leaders who are more agile, flexible, inspiring, and proactive to deal with different events which emerges during different stages of the transformation process. The following quotes could be perceived as an abbreviation of the above:

> *'You need to have a mixed bag of different leadership types on your management team to manage different stages and situation of organisational change. This is what I believe is needed because you can't have a single source of leadership'* (Int 17).

> *'Leadership is about understanding people, working with them and leading them to achieve desired goals based on their social studies and human aspects which should certainly influence leadership to a great extent'* (Int 20).

Communication was the other prospective where organisational transformation was cited by participants. In their arguments, they stated that the need of active and effective communications between different organisational levels is essential to achieve the organisational goal. Educating members of teams and organisational members with the need and necessity of change is only achievable through proper and effective communication. Therefore, leaders with good communication, social and motivational skills should be trusted to lead during the transformation phase actively communicating organisational messages. Organisational members are to be made aware of their expected role and performance results through the smooth flow of information. The clarity of the organisation's message and flow of information creates an environment which is more inspiring and motivational to perform the expected role of each organisational member.

Organisational culture is the last prospective that participants cited as the main transformation factor to be paid attention to. To participants (Int 15,18), organisational culture which promotes changes is dynamic in its day-to-day activity and are less resistant to transformation initiatives. So, organisations are to motivate their employees to be an active part of every transformation or organisation change activity which happens within the organisational boundary.

As a conclusion for this section, leadership to many participants is recognised as the force which drives the organisational momentum towards achieving its goals and mission. Suitable leadership is very essential to trust with the role of leading the organisation towards implementing the delegated responsibility of implementing the transformation plan. Team oriented leadership approach represented by the distributed leadership practice is an instrumental leadership platform which structures the roles and delegates leadership roles to suitable individuals with the required capabilities. Other participants saw communicating as a factor which would be the means of successful organisational transformation implementation through overlaying information from the top to the lower levels of the organisational structure and horizontally across the organisation. Communication creates certainty and promotes comfortability between employees as it makes things clear about the rationale and reason for change. However, both leadership and communication are linked together, as participants who looked at leadership as the pillar of organisation transformation initiatives expressed their views on suitable leaders with communication and social skills who are able pass on the organisational communication and information. Team based leadership and distributed leadership in particular is capable of influencing, motivating and aligning individual to collective organisational goal through communicating the essentiality of the organisational change to the organisation's future. Organisational culture was the last prospective that participants saw as

the foundation for organisation transformation stating the need for an environment and culture which promote change. However, there is a link between this prospective and the earlier discussed prospective as is within the capacity of leaders to promote and inspire individuals to adapt to changes creating an environment which is less resistant to change. That is again achievable through trusting suitable leaders who are efficient and effective in their communication abilities as discussed earlier.

4.4.1.2.4 Sub-Theme 4: Suitable Leadership Approach in Organisation Going through Transformation Phase

Participants' opinions, views and understanding of those leadership practices which are instrumental in achieving desired organisational transformation results were intended to be captured under this sub-theme. In this section participants identified team/collective leadership and its constructs as suitable leadership to implement organisational changes. Participants' interpretation of different team/collective leadership constructs will be discussed in this section. Democratic leadership approach was identified by few participants as a suitable leadership approach during transformational change. Participants (Int 1,5,8) identified democratic leadership as a leadership approach which ensures the involvement of every single individual within their teams in the decision-making process. The engagement of team members in the decision-making process is done through open discussion and allowing everybody to express his opinion where the decision is taken collectively after agreeing to the majority opinion. On higher managerial hierarchal levels, concerned leaders will be involved collectively in the decision-making process. The below quote is an expression of participants' views of this leadership style:

> *'Building the team decision making process around a democratic conceptual style of management is a convenient way of practicing leadership. A democratic system is built up to try getting all things around the team and team members trying to give the right advice. The team is disciplined to take the majority opinion which works as a good model for success' (Int 8).*

On the other hand, collective leadership was identified by participants to be a suitable leadership approach to organisations during their transformational phase. The description of this approach and its perception to organisational leaders will be reflected in the following statement:

'I would think it has to be consultative or what is also known as collective leadership because not a single person nor single leader has the intelligence and the brain to think of all the aspects of the transformation process on his or her own. It needs everybody collectively working together because there are so many things that could come up during that transformation process' (Int 23).

Collaborative leadership is another construct of team/collective leadership approach which participants recognised as suitable approach to organisations going through their transformational phase. Participants looked at collaborative leadership as a suitable approach in leading organisations throughout their transformation phase. In their discussions, they confirm that a suitable leadership style could differ from sector to sector and from business to business. However, more collaborative leadership guarantees more coordination and collaboration between team members through aligning their goals to the organisational goal. This in return could lead to more efficient and effective execution of the organisational transformation initiative. Embracing more team-oriented leadership styles such as collaborative leadership can help influencing leaders of more classical approach to leadership to shift their interest towards more collaborative leadership style. The following quote adds to the above description and understanding of collaborative leadership as discussed by participants (Int 7,18):

'Leaders need to understand that it is important to be collaborative. You need to work with and for everyone. Management collaborative leadership is all about making people work in a certain way. You need to understand the importance of continuity and sustainability which means continuous meetings, follow ups and inspections of how things are proceeding' (Int 19)

Distributed leadership was acknowledged by participants to be their leadership approach of choice during organisation transformation. The following quote highlights this discussion:

'Being part of organisational transformation efforts within an organisation can be both easy and extremely difficult at the same time but let me tell you that there is no single suitable leadership style, there is a leadership practice which states a certain organisation in a specific sector. However, collective, participative, and other group-oriented leadership practices are more effective in organisational change. In other words, team/collective distributed leadership is more suitable in todays' global environment and that is what I believe in' (Int 3).

This quote states that the participant realises the complexity in the organisational environment and its surroundings. This complexity is both in the context and the structural assembly of the organisation which makes it more convenient for newer team-based leadership approaches to replace classical versions of leadership. It also discusses the situational aspect of leadership where organisations operating in a certain sector will need a set of different leadership styles which would suit the organisation in that sector.

Participants embraced distributed leadership characteristics which basically push down a lot of its authority and responsibility in a formal structure which serves the purpose of the transformation process. Empowerment through delegation, sharing responsibilities, accountability and choosing potential leaders based on their suitability to lead in certain situations are the main characteristics which make distributed leadership the choice of those participants. The following quotes confirm the above discussion:

> *'As we talked about distributed leadership, I think if we apply that distribution of leadership on an organisation, it is like what we call delegation of responsibility to appropriate people. So therefore, if you apply that and ensure not to be centralised in managing, you can run an efficient team of future leaders. Organisations need to work and align all their resources together to succeed, working together collectively to achieve a target' (Int 12).*

> *'Again, a suitable management and leadership styles are those potential contributors to the transformation process and thoughtful transformation of things. This is not achievable if the organisation and culture does not promote team participating and sharing leadership approach. This is why distribution leadership is a suitable platform for organisations to be back to manage not only their transformation plans, but also their daily and day to day business class' (Int 15).*

Authoritarian leadership was adopted few participants as a suitable leadership approach during organisational change. The authoritarian leadership as discussed by participants are more of classical discipline-based leadership approach. In their perception of suitable leadership style, participants mentioned strong leadership. This approach was recognised by leaders who are exposed to operational management. The following quote describes the above in participant's own words:

> *'Having a strong leadership is key success in organisations as big as Bapco where you need everyone to strictly perform at his top level to maximise output and achieve desired results. I expect my managers to perform their roles through the authority*

assigned to them by the approved schedule of authority. It is only through discipline that organisations are able to achieve their goals' (Int 14).

Leadership with more communication focus was identified by participants as a suitable leadership approach towards achieving organisational transformation goals. In their argument, they highlighted the need for leaders who can communicate and interact with members. In their views, communication influences individuals to achieve organisational goals. The effectiveness of leadership which pays great attention to communication does motivate employees to perform and reduces the change resistance. The flow of information as discussed earlier reduces the uncertainty which is usually associated with any change and makes the overall picture clearer to organisational members. The following view states participants opinions:

'Leaders with communication skills promote collective listening and understanding of organisational goals. It is probably more like cheerleaders. The more you communicate the more your organisation understand the need for change. So, I lean towards communicating traditionally or virtually, reaching out, checking in and showing people the reasons for taking certain directions and providing answers to their questions. This is what I call leadership with strong communication leaders and that what makes the transformation journey smooth' (Int 22).

'Leaders need to have strong follow ups, continuous meetings, and inspecting the dedicated subordinate delegation of authority to achieve the transformation execution which means that you have to have strong communication leaders' (Int 20)

As discussed above, more team-based leadership approach to organisational management was perceived in a positive way as being more suitable for organisational management including transformation initiatives. However, it was notable that even those participants who chose leadership styles promoting communication effectiveness and transparency in message conveying were indirectly referring to team oriented leadership approaches. On the other hand, fans of team/collective leadership recognised distributed leadership which was proven in chapter two to be the extended form of team-based leadership to effective in effect management tools. The main feature which differentiates distributed leadership from other team-based leadership constructs is that it oversees the whole organisational goal examining the organisation from a holistic view. Some participants said the classical discipline authoritarian leadership models are suitable in their views and that was justified based on the

nature of their business. However, a single management style will not ensure successful organisational management. Even when operating through different environment and various related obstacles, a variety of leaders with different characteristics is needed to solve different managerial issues which could occur.

4.4.1.3 *Main Theme 3: Organisational Leaders /Collective Approach*

In this section, we shall discuss participants' understanding of team/collective leadership approach, explore their interpretation and its impact.

4.4.1.3.1 Sub-Theme 1: Organisational Leadership Perception of Distributed Leadership Effectiveness

Participants' perception of the effectiveness of distributed leadership will be explored in this section. The analysed data will exhibit participants perceptions of distributed leadership. Participants stated that distributed leadership is effective leadership approach during transformational phase. The effectiveness of distributed leadership according to them emerges from the ability of this leadership approach to align employees' goals to organisational goals in a collective overall goal.

> *'I think it is very effective, especially for transformation purposes. So yes, distributed leadership is quite effective' (Int 1).*

> *'The distributed leadership in an organisation going through transformation is very effective and important because if you are a leader who is putting ideas the transformation plan needs to address the benefits of the new strategy, the importance of the transformation and the tough time which might occur during the transformation process itself' (Int 2).*

The following quote reflects participants' views that distribution leadership influences the quality of relationship between team members and their leaders during:

> *'In my opinion, distributed leadership helps making employees feel their leader close to them, making an effort to understand them, allow them to lead initiatives and come up with their own creative ideas. In doing so, they feel that they truly matter and own*

their process of change. Coordinating and aligning efforts are required from time to time to ensure the desired outcomes are achievable and the selecting of the right members for the right task is made' (Int 4).

Distributed leadership according to participants is suitable for smaller as well as larger organisations and their related initiatives. Distributed leadership is even more essential in larger scale organisations, where complexity increases both in context and structure *'Highly effective due to the complexity of organisations and their surrounding environments' (Int 13)*. The essentiality of distributed leadership approach besides its effectiveness, is its nature of preparing and identifying future leaders who are capable of leading organisations through initiatives such as organisational transformation. The following quotes confirms the above view:

'It depends on how big the transformation is, it is an evolution or a revolution or somewhere in between? If it is a small evolution, then fair enough meaning there is no problem with the executive team themselves directly administrating it as it is physically small, and you can do it so that it is not such a big deal. But I think what is on the other side even if it is small and this is a good chance to train some of your brightest stars to try to be active in this and try to do it in such a way which shows that you can prepare them for the future. But if you are going through more of a big evolution closer to revolution, then you need to be ready with your brightest stars with your highest potential future leaders identified. You have to identify them and use them because they are going to be your leaders of the future' (Int 6).

'As discussed, distributed leadership effectiveness is significantly essential not only because of its collaborative, collective and sharing nature but also because the organisation complexity is increasing by the day alongside organisational growth' (Int 15).

Participants (Int 8,9,14), who confirmed that distributed leadership is effective during organisational transformational, linked it to the effectiveness of the transformation decision itself. The collective, collaborative and sharing nature of distributed leadership accelerates the execution pace and reaction allowing team to achieve or even overachieve their targets. The characteristics of this leadership approach influences organisation members to achieve the organisational goal. The below quote confirms the above discussion:

> *'Distributed leadership, as we have discussed earlier share, participates leadership in a democratic way which empowers team members to exercise their leadership capabilities and exhibit their personal talent. So, yes it is effective in leading the change initiative itself based on collaborative nature of distributed leadership which again combines individual goal with the organisational goal in a collective goal' (Int 14).*

Participants stated that distributed leadership with its characteristics and nature of having different type of leaders and different traits could lead organisations through different situations levels. This nature makes the distributed leadership capable of managing different activities by different leaders who are capable of exciting their duties as required by the organisation. In other words, distributed leadership is a multi-functional management process which is able to lead multi organisational functions simultaneously based on its distribution philosophy of responsibilities and duties in a formal structured form. The following quote confirms and explains the above discussion:

> *'If you have multiple initiatives within the organisation, you have distributed leadership where you can achieve multiple targets. If there is a parallel work and there is a lot of specialisations which is important, our leaders do not have to be leaders in everything. When you are at the top, you need your leaders to be experts in their line of business. Leadership also means that somebody is in authority in his area, and you need people who need specialisation to get things done at the top you just need the skill set to bring it all together. When you get to execution you need specialisation. Those are the kind of leaders required to build up an organisation. This is how you distribute tasks and leadership within an organisation' (Int 19).*

Some of the participants acknowledged the effectiveness of distributed leadership in organisational transformation initiatives conditional to some factors such as leadership, transformation decision effectiveness, clarity of roles and responsibilities. The effectiveness of distributed leadership in the transformation phase would require according to participants' statements the transparent definition of roles and responsibilities of each member of the team. Having clear roles and responsibilities authorises every individual to perform his designated role in a matter which assists in achieving the organisational collective goal. The following quote supports the above discussion:

> *'The effectiveness will be achieved if the roles and responsibilities are defined, and you put targets and you put timelines for people to know that they have to achieve this*

target by this time using certain available resources. If you don't define and make it clear to everybody what is expected from them it is unlikely that they will succeed. Which will lead to the organisational failure to reach its goal' (Int 12).

Distributed leadership was not an effective management tool in achieving organisational transformational goal by a participant whose view will be stated below:

'Not effective, we need to operate in an environment of discipline and authority. The concept of teamwork is very effective but when it comes to running a special event such as an expansion or a transformation, it is important to manage through a proper hierarchal management structure where all are accountable to one manger. People will argue that team management theories are the most suitable. However, I think distributed leadership is not effective as it distributes the roles and accountability to a bigger number of leaders making the transformation more complicated than it is already is' (Int 22).

As discussed, distributed leadership is positively viewed as a leadership approach to achieve the organisational collective goal. The nature, character and idea of distributed leadership made it a leadership choice which participants perceived as an effective approach in implementing organisational transformation initiatives. There were participants who confirmed the effectiveness of distributed leadership with the conditions stated above. Those conditions are part of the fundamental structure of the distributed leadership mind set and philosophy. The definition of distributed leadership as a multifunctional leadership process that can lead different leadership activities simultaneously with different leaders was a valuable addition to the discussion. The effectiveness of this leadership approach was discussed and acknowledged by participants.

4.4.1.3.2 Sub-Theme 2: Distributed Leadership Impact on Organisation Transformation

Data was analysed in this sub-theme to explore participants' views on the impact of distributed leadership on transformational initiatives. In this section, we shall discuss the impact of distributed leadership on organisations going through their transformational phase. We shall test the level of impact which those participants think distributed leadership has on organisational transformation process. Participants did show great knowledge of different

leadership theories and their impact of organisations during their life span. They have confirmed the impact of distributed leadership on organisations which we shall discuss below.

Distributed leadership, as expressed by participant (Int 1), has significant impact on the organisation in a matter which it ensures that actions towards the implementation of the transformation plan is executed in a timely manner. The distributed leadership capacity of implementing, distributing roles and delegating authority amongst different team members makes the leadership practice more time efficient.

Distributed leadership is a platform of identifying potential leaders within organisational members, power delegation and distributing leadership amongst members based on their traits and characteristics. Participants confirmed the above discussion by expressing their recognition of the positive impact this leadership approach has on organisational performance level. The following quote confirms the above discussion:

> 'Regardless of the feasibility of the transformation itself, distributed leadership is very effective because it creates and breeds many future leaders and assists current ones in achieving optimal performance because they tend to distribute their powers and leadership roles to people who will do their best and will reflect positively on the official leader and informal empowered' (Int 3).

Other participants stated that the evaluation of whether distributed leadership has an impact on organisation transformation or not depends on the execution and implementation of the transformation initiative. Although distributed leadership encourages the sharing, collaboration, and coordination between team members to achieve the organisational goal, the extent of this collaboration will not appear before the result does. This argument has been made in the literature review chapter and yet highlighted in the following quote:

> 'In my opinion, practically speaking the best way is to evaluate the impact of distributed leadership on organisational transformation. As to the following issues, until millstones achieved level of cooperation from middle management and staff, level of confidence of team members, social network communication, ownership of a project approved by staff number suggestion and proactive and to initiatives is achieved' (Int 4).

Participants (Int 5,7,8,12) stated that distributed leadership has a significant impact but to what level, this is something that should be revealed in each teams' key performance indicator (KPI)

which gauges the collective performance on individual, department, and organisation level. The following quote confirms and expresses the above discussion:

'If you achieve your targets in other words you know what you want, what is the input and the output in the end., if you achieve it in the time frame, the allocated budget and the criteria that you set yourself, then this would be the best gauge of your success and achievement' (Int 12).

The impact of distributed leadership on organisation going through their transformation phase was discussed by participants and categorised under this sub-theme. The impact of distributed leadership was confirmed by participants, however some participants discussed more about the extents of this impact and the means of gauging this impact. Organisational transformation initiatives execution was positively impacted by distributed leadership practice, regardless of quality of the transformation itself. According to participants' opinions, characteristics and principles of distributed leadership makes it a suitable approach with constructive effect on transformational initiatives execution.

4.5 Finding on Research Question 2 at Social & Individual level

The research captured the personal experience and reflection of those participants at a social and individual level. This question aims to explore participants' perception of social studies impact on organisation transformational effort and then the impact of social network theory on distributed leadership. Participants' views the enactment of task distribution are based on the social capacity and traits of team members. The participants were asked about their perception of social network theory and its impact. The themes generated at this level of discussion are social studies, human aspects, communications, and ties.

4.5.1 Social Studies Impact Organisation Transformation at Social and Individual Level

Participants views on the effectiveness and impact of social network theory on distributed leadership were captured. The participants' perceptions of human aspects, social distribution of task enactment and their perceptions of the social network theory on organisation transformation initiatives were captured and categorised.

4.5.1.1 *Main Theme 1: Social Studies and Human Aspects*

In this main theme, participants' reflections with regards to the effectiveness of social studies and human traits on the implementation of transformation initiatives was highlighted. The participants' view of social network theory influence on organisational transformation and distributed leadership was explored comprehensively as it is linked to the research problem. Those captured reflections are categorised under sub-themes and nodes which will be discussed below.

4.5.1.1.1 Sub-Theme 1: Social Studies Perception in Organisational Transformation

This sub-theme answered a specific question of participants views on the influence of social studies on the effective leadership during organisational transformation. Participants stated that in an organisation of multicultural environment where people are diversified in their ethnicity and social beliefs, the social studies and related human aspects theories are important. Leaders need to talk to their team members and understand their cultural and social beliefs. As stated by participants, understanding organisational members social beliefs and cultural environment contribute to efficient execution of organisational plans: *'Absolutely it influences leaders because it tries to extract the maximum value using social and human nature aspects (Int 3).* The following quotes explains this above idea:

> *'Yes, it does have effect. We believe it is that aspect which can influence effective leadership because as a leader, you want to hear the feedback and understand how the population in your organisation thinks about anything that you wanted to know about that. If you are going through a transformation initiative, then you want to gather information about people's opinion on certain actions, decisions, or strategies. The feedback you get is very important for you as a leader to take the next step or make a certain decision. So, hearing from people and utilising social studies and human aspects is very important' (Int 2).*

> *'Leadership is about understanding people, working with them, and leading them to achieve desired goals based on their social studies and human aspects. It certainly influences leadership to a great extent' (Int 4).*

One of the participants acknowledged the effectiveness of social studies and human aspects although he did not fully use it as part of his leadership practice. The following quote explains the above:

> *'It is effective big time although unfortunately I haven't utilised that fully on a personal note, but I have seen it and I have seen people who have actually done it much better than me. They even reached a long way with it. I recognised it is only really more about two years ago and I started working on it not as much as I want to, but I truly believe in this day and age you, need to leverage of social network. It is a huge loss not actually utilising that stream because it is very effective. It gives you knew outlets for unlocking doors from overcoming hurdles. So, I truly believe in it, I have seen it and I am trying to learn from it' (Int 6).*

Social studies in general, and human related studies are considered by participants to be of positive contribution to organisation. The complexity of context and complications of today's organisational structure demand leaders to be emotionally intelligent and mores socially inducted with their team members. Understanding the organisational members mind set and human aspects of your employees will assist leaders to influence those team members to perform at their upmost to achieve the collective organisational goal. The below participants' quotes explain the above:

> *'Yes, social networks have positive and effective influence on organisational leadership and help in guiding teams especially in conflict or complex situations where it is needed to lead in achieving the common goal' (Int 7).*

> *'It is 100% effective. The trick for us as leaders is that we must have emotional intelligence. We must understand the human aspect of the decision making within our teams. We have different people with different attributes. We need to understand how to make that team work together to keep them moving in the same direction. Unless we understand what is driving those people, we shall never be able to get that done' (Int 9).*

Participants (Int 16,17, 18,19) shared the same general idea regarding social studies effects and human aspects on the achievement of transformational initiatives. According to them, social skills are exceptionally influential tools which drive leaders to influence team members by understanding them. The understanding of the human characteristics of your employees

assists in promoting creative positive environment by being aware of their needs, to be able to encourage them to achieve the organisational goal.

On the other hand, there were participants who didn't really think that social studies have any influence or effect on the implementation of organisations planned transformation initiatives. In their arguments, they claimed that it should not be taken into consideration as a tool or a means which has influence on the execution of transformation initiatives. They claimed that even if they could have some influence how it will be gauged and captured. They said that in some cases it might be an intangible factor that influences the transformation but to what extent and to what level, that is something unknown.

This section explored the effectiveness of social studies and human aspects and characteristics on transformation initiatives. As discussed above, many participants perceived social studies as an effective tool in organisations going changes. The effectiveness is based on the understanding of teams' mind-set, needs, social beliefs and cultural values. The social studies in their views are based on examining the human factor which helps facilitate and expedite the transformation process by achieving the set targets in a timely manner. Understanding the human aspects assists leaders influencing and manipulating individuals to align their goals and personal interest to the overall organisational goal. some participants stated that it is not notable to them but even if it had any effect it would be an intangible effect which is difficult to capture and gauge.

4.5.1.1.2 Sub-Theme 2: Social Network Theory

This sub-theme captures the participants' views and understanding of social network theory which this research utilised as a theoretical lens to explore the emergence of network leadership. Social network theory was categorised under the four nodes discussed below.

a) Situational Distribution of Leadership

The data categorised under this node was discussing the participants' views with regards to the distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities based on required characteristics for a certain situation. In their argument, not all leaders are suitable to lead in all situations. They acknowledged that specific leaders with the required traits are more suitable than others to lead in a certain situation. Many participants stated that leadership is best practiced when

leadership roles are distributed based on the situational requirement. Leadership is another factor which determine the selection of a specific leader to lead in a certain events or situation. The distribution of leadership which some participants referred to as the delegation of leadership is based on the situational requirement which determines the type of leader needed. Participants' statements below acknowledge the above discussion:

> *'It differs from one situation to another. So, leadership style with my people would be different from my leadership style' (Int 1).*

> *'Yes, definitely I would say leadership is very much situationally distributed. For every situation, you need a certain type of certain characteristics of leadership. But with that said, if you build your organisation from down upwards in a way that people understand the meaning of leadership at each level and they are acting as leaders because they are empowered as leaders, then people will start to get to a point where they will know how to use their leadership traits because they developed their leadership practice. Not everybody is born a leader, as we say. So, you try retaining your organisational transformation with different leaders suitable for different situations they might be exposed to' (Int 2).*

> *'From my understanding and experience, leadership is pretty much situational as different leaders are needed according to the nature of situation they are facing. For example, you need someone with a charismatic personality when it comes to dealing with people and an authoritarian leader when dealing with emergencies and more team collective distributed type of leaders when organisations are transforming. So, leadership is situational, and trait based in its identification of suitable leaders' (Int 7).*

Participants quotes above also discussed not only leaders' characteristics but also their leadership style. It acknowledged that different leadership styles are required in different stages of the transformation. This is due to the characteristics of distributed leadership where teams are assembled from different type of leaders with different leadership skills. Participants (Int 4,5,8) believed that suitable leaders are those who can adopt and change their leadership approach to organisational management by changing their leadership style to suit the current situation. Participants claimed that suitable leaders who lead the organisation throughout its transformational phase are those with combined or multi leadership approach to management. As discussed by participants, the situational distribution of leadership is one of the characteristics of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership is a leadership practice which

identifies different leadership tasks to different type of leaders, regardless of their status within the organisational structure. The distributed leadership is situational in the distribution of leadership task based on the availability of required traits, characteristics, and expertise to lead in a specific time or stage of the transformation process. Participants (Int 10,11,13) confirmed the above discussion during their interviews. They also added that the situation might shift rapidly and so the leader should be changed if he is not of flexible leadership mind-set. Leaders should be flexible and adaptive to different leadership styles which might be needed in different situations.

Some participants confirmed that choosing leaders upon which leadership roles are assigned to is based on the capacity rather than organisational position. Suitable leaders are those capable and best fit to lead in situation or event where their traits are more essential than their hierarchal status. The below participant's statement explains the above discussion:

> *'As you have experienced throughout the course of your leadership part from the executive management, there comes a moment when the junior most member of the executive management when you are dealing with certain incident in that particular time by default becomes the suitable leader because he simply has the competency to get that job done. So, leadership is situational and distributed leadership is considered a part of an effective leadership approach on senior level of leadership within the organisation' (Int 15).*

Other participant explained the situational distribution of leadership in the following:

> *'Yes, of course it is situational. However, a leader has to offer practicing leadership with agility and flexibility so that he doesn't have to sit in his post as a leader. He has to play different roles depending on the situation. So, sometimes he acts like chairman, manager, or team member. Because as I said, going through a transformation is very dynamic process which doesn't need to be rigid' (Int 17).*

One of the participants expressed his views of the situational distribution in the following way:

> *'Well, at different times, organisations like ours operating the energy industry goes through a lot of transformation efforts. Those transformation efforts are market and economical condition driven. So, you need different bunch of leaders, as sometimes we appoint leaders whom we change and switch around in our organisation. There are*

qualities which we need in this leader to be able to deal with a current economical challenge or with the corporate challenge. We need to form our leadership team from leaders who have different skills, capacities and capabilities which we might need at a given time where leadership will be distributed based on the need' (Int 22).

On the other hand, participants believed that the distribution of leadership is not situational. They argued that situational distribution of leadership meant that leaders' life span is short, and leadership is a long-term practice. In their views, the leadership practice is based on leaders' capabilities not on the suitability for certain situation. The following statement explains this argument:

'Well to me, the situational distribution of leadership is not situational, and it should be embedded in the culture of the company. If you keep a situation in the minute which leader moves somewhere else, the whole thought of having leadership in the company or in that organisation fades away. You need to put it as part of your culture. So, this is why I don't think it is situational' (Int 20).

This section captured the participants perceptions on the distribution of leadership roles based on the situational need. The identification of leaders is based on traits, capacity, competency, characters, leadership approach and the situational need of those leadership attributes. Leaders could be performing various roles during their leadership roles based on the situational demand. The delegated responsibility is based on the functionality of the leader. This is a principle of distributed leadership which leads us to the suitability of distributed leadership in organisations going through their transformational phase. Distributed leadership delegates leadership roles to potential leaders with different traits which are needed in different organisational situations and are assigned to lead based on the need and suitability of their traits at certain situations and organisational events. Other participants argued that it is not situational, those participants were those who are more towards transactional and classical leadership approach to management.

b) Social Network Theory Perception

The data categorised under this node represents the participants' answer to the third sub question of the second research question. Participants' perceptions of social network theory effectiveness on organisational transformation initiatives are discussed in this section. Social network theory focuses on the ties between network actors and pays much attention to the

interaction mechanism between actors. Participants understood the concept of social network theory and highlighted its positive effect on achieving organisational goals. Social network theory to them has its advantage and disadvantage which need to be addressed. One of the participants linked social network theory to distributed leadership in the following statement:

> 'The social network theory is an act of distributing power. It depends on the culture of the organisation. So, if you have a culture which is enabling the distribution of leadership in accepting the distribution of leadership on the entire organisation, you are going to have to worry belly chips and providing power to the organisation. This is because everybody is aligned and believes that leadership is enacted at different levels setting separate accountability between the new leadership styles' (Int 2).

Three quotes will be listed below which express the understanding of social network theory by organisational leaders and their perception:

> 'Social network theory is a concept which believes that human ties and their relation and exposure is very instrumental in achieving the organisation transformation goals and aims due to the enhancement of the cumulative performance of different networks and network members' (Int 3).

> 'The study of understanding how people internally and externally communicate and what their main concern may be, is used for better policy and strategy crafting as well as an affective channel to a knowledge sharing platform' (Int 4).

> 'Social network theory provides information about how people interact with each other which is important in the state of transformation. It also examines the relationship between people and how they are connected to each other in groups' (Int 7).

Participants discussed above their understanding of social network theory which is a structured social platform which leverages on the ties between network actors. The essentiality of ties and relation between individual interaction lies in the fact that they are instrumental in facilitating, accelerating the flow of information, enhancing knowledge exchange between actors and expediting the implementation of transformation plans. The significance of communication and information flow between different organisational layers emerged in the discussions as they were recognised as one of the principal tools of connectivity between network actors. This discussion is detailed in the following quote:

'Again, we have gone back to the theme of communication. It is very important to be able to connect with your workers because if you connect with your workers, they will go home and connect with their families. They will then become ambassadors for your project and your company. So, the trick is to be open and transparent because you want to prevent any miscommunication and rumours. So, if you want to get your message out there, communicate well and try to touch as many people as you can in a way that your message is consistent in the whole network' (Int 9).

Participants also expressed their recognition of social network theory effect on the implementation of transformation initiatives. The social network theory concept of examining human ties and personal traits network actors to determine suitable leaders with the required traits. The identification of actors or team members with suitable traits to implement organisational transformation are essential to the achievement of organisational goals. The following feedback on this discussion is stated below:

'I think the social network theory is important to be considered in organisations going through a transformation phase. So, leaders have to understand what are the traits your organisation needs? What are the personal limitations? What are your team members capabilities? You have to design your transformation based on those elements. Meaning that there is no point of putting a target which is not achievable, your target has to be achievable, realistic, based on the capabilities of your people and whether you are able to secure the financial resources. So, you adapt your transformation to meet this objective. So, you cannot put an objective which is too stretched or too small. If you feel that it's too limited, stretched, not aligned with your resources, therefore you will not achieve it in the end' (Int 12).

Participants (Int 15,16,17) thought that social network theory significantly impacts organisations going through their transformational phase. According to them the transformation deals with humans as much as it deals with non-human elements or machinery units: *'When dealing with people, you need to identify potential leaders who are able to handle social aspects of those ties between networks, actors, teams and teams' members to be able to operate efficiently and smoothly' (Int 15).* Therefore, social network theory is of positive effect on transformational initiatives implementation. The social network theory is perceived by those participants as a contributor to the implementation of organisational change as expressed below:

'Highly important and a major contributor to the success of transformation. My experience in organisations which I led is that a transformation effort is a form of a project management style concept which depends completely on their own team style, human factors and the social network theory is essential in order for me to deliver this strategy through the team' (Int 17).

In his discussion, participant (Int 20) described social network theory as a platform which facilitates and expedites the transformation process. The leveraging on ties between team members (actors) and personal traits of leaders has positively impacted the transformation initiative implementation. One of the participants who is a member of a multi-national major company in the oil and gas executive management highlighted the essentiality of social network theory. In his discussion, the complexity of organisation in their context, structure, cultural and ethnicity structure makes is more essential to utilise social network theory as an underpinning social theory to understand ties and relationships between team members (actor). According to the participant, the ethnic diversity and organisational complexity requires the organisation to operate in teams and networks. The following participant's discussion better explains the above:

'Social networking is important today, more important than it ever was. We have several employees' engagement with networks within the organisation. We have got for example women's network, Asian employees' network, recreation network and a lot of other networks. These networks are socially connected globally and learn from each other and evolve. So, it's a very important transformation element. We are more into bigger organisations which reach across boundaries, geographical locations connecting and learning from each other that I know in a very agile manner, because previously we had to wait for a classroom to meet with somebody and have a conversation. But the touchpoint does now, which will just like what you and I are doing right now. It is going to be employee engagement networks and social networks inside and outside. The corporations are going to become more and more impactful and effective learning and developing perspective' (Int 22).

As a conclusion of this node, social network theory has been described, perceived and acknowledged by the participants to be a social tool. This tool, as described by participants, is of positive impact and a contributor to the implementation of organisational transformation initiatives. The principles of social network theory support the concept understanding ties

between team members (actors) as means of relying on information, organisational messages communication and influence of employees to achieve organisational goals.

C) Social Network Theory Impact on Distributed Leadership

In this node, the research explores the impact of social network theory on distributed leadership and effectiveness of overlaying the social network theory upon the characteristics of distributed leadership. Participants' feedback answering sub question 4 of research question 2 was captured under this node. Participants discussed their understanding of social network theory and its impact as they evaluate the effectiveness of transformation initiatives through distributed leadership. Interviewed participants acknowledged through their discussions the impact of social network theory on distributed leadership and its implications on the organisational transformation.

Participants stated that social network theory is instrumental and influential in assisting identifying suitable leaders to lead the organisation during its transformational phase. To them, the impact of social network theory on distributed leadership is significant and needs to be carefully perceived and implemented. The following statements further explain the above idea:

> *'The way I look and see the impact of social network theory and social science in general on distributed leadership is the way it assists top management in identifying potential leaders and managers based on their social traits to handle certain situations which occur, assuming that all potential leaders have the merits but are different in their personal and social traits which could be a competitive edge towards their future escalation within the organisational hierarchy. So yes, I see great impact on distributed leadership by social network theory and enhancement to it positively' (Int 2).*

> *'The impact I see is that leadership concept is orbiting around the idea of concept of data distribution through identified potential leaders and social network theory revolves around the concept of better ties qualities which define the role of a network or team members growth in responsibility. Therefore, distributed leadership is impacted and complemented by social network theory at the same time' (Int 3).*

Social network theory evolves around understanding the ties between team members (actors) and their mechanism. This concept was discussed by participants in a way which demonstrates their understanding of the fundamental idea of social network theory and the

role it could play in organisational transformation. The following quote confirms the above discussion:

> *'The distributed leadership is impacted by social network theory through the ability to understand the quality and strength of ties between team or network members which provides a mean of identifying best candidates for higher leadership roles' (Int 7).*

The following statements is another example of the perception of some participants which states that there is an impact whether positive or negative which will determine the results of each impact and that:

> *'Yes, there is an impact which I think depends on the source of transformation source if it was positive or negative. If it is positive, it would really raise the moral, raise the motivation and so on. If it is negatively sourced, it will have a very negative impact on the organisation. I agree with the concept of the social network theory which defiantly impacts distributed leadership. I will give you an example of a leader who meets with his top management, so he has the right message and information to communicate to the whole organisation. He cascades this information to the lower level of the organisation. That is achievable if the right leader with the right social traits is placed in that position of cascading down information working in networks and groups of employees' (Int 8).*

> *'It is of significant impact because using social networks allows you to spread your message out there much faster and much wider than traditional methods. As I said before, you create change ambassadors because people will be talking positively about your message. it is probably the quickest way to get your message out there' (Int 9).*

> *'The impact comes from the social skills and the quality of the relations and ties which differentiae's how, what time and which one' (Int 13).*

We shall also discuss participants' thoughts and feedback (Int 19,20,22,23) on social network theory and its impact on organisational transformation implementation. They stated that *'once you have people believing that what is good for the organisation is good for them, then it is in every single individual best interest that the other counterpart succeeds rather than rivalry and organisation. You actually who are at the same level as you to also succeed because his*

success is yours and that is the ultimate organisational aim' (Int 19). This statement acknowledges what has been discussed in the relevant section in the literature review chapter describing one of the main characters of distributed leadership as able to align personal interest to the organisational goal, where the individual and organisational goals are perceived as the collective goal to them. Social network theory is utilised as an underpinning theory by which the organisational leadership uses to identify suitable leaders capable of leading based on his traits and characters. *'I think social networking is a strong tool in hand to use for many projects' (Int 20).* This shows how participants illustrate social network theory as an effective tool which leverages on the strength of human ties and relation that could be used not only in organisation transformation but in all organisation related initiatives. According to participants, (Int 22,23) examining ties strength between network actors alongside understanding the mechanism of those relation allows organisations to overcome organisational growing geographical complexity.

Social network theory is perceived by participants as an effective tool which assists organisations in their transformation initiatives throughout their continuous effort in linking different network within the organisation. In their discussion, the strong social networking of team members assures the efficient implementation of the organisation change. What differentiates suitable from unsuitable leaders to them is their social networking ability and influence which is a result of their traits. The organisational and social culture also influences the extent of the impact of social network theory on distributed leadership.

d) Social Distribution of Leadership

The data categorised under this node is participants' feedback on the distribution of task enactment and leadership role delegation based on social traits of potential leaders. This node simply captures the views and opinions of participants on the delegation of responsibilities based not only on the social traits, but also the capabilities of the individual to carry out the leadership duties as required. The social distribution of task enactment was acknowledged by participants as the main elements where choosing a suitable leader is based on.

Participants illustrated that the social skills, human aspects, and knowledge are essential elements upon which tasks or responsibilities are distributed to potential leaders are based on. This idea is acknowledged by the following participants quote:

'The distribution of task enactment or responsibility is based on social skills and more human dealing knowledge ensures the communication and awareness of the transformational need to increase the lifespan of the organisation' (Int 3).

In the above quote, the participant demonstrated that social skills make the effective communications between network actors more effectively and explained the impact of the transformation initiative on the organisation future. Therefore, in participant's view awareness of the organisational situation is essential to understand the need for change for the organisation existence. Another participant, who agrees on the idea that social skills, human trait, and organisation knowledge are main pillars on the allocation process of suitable leaders upon which task can be distributed had a slightly different interpretation that is stated below:

'Special distribution may help in understanding the human elements and what is required for effective implementation, however, should not be mixed with what became replacement based on competency, skill and understanding' (Int 4).

This participant assumed that the social distribution of leadership roles is instrumental in recognising human ties and their roles in the implementation of organisational transformation. Despite the essential role of human ties (relation), the competency and knowledge are still very important in the selection process of potential suitable leader to assume role and responsibilities.

According to participants, (Int 5,7,11,13) transformation initiatives are facilitated by the following social distribution of leadership roles based on individual knowledge and situational related experience. That is where organisations succeed in their transformation phase and are able to achieve their organisational goals. The distribution of leadership is situationally dependent on the credentials of those potential leaders in a way that puts the 'best player to play first'. However, social skills of leaders to those participants still had a major role in determining the delegation to a certain potential leader in a certain situation, where this potential leader's trait is best needed. The social distribution of task enactment to them is an act of leadership with holistic vision of the organisational situational demand of potential leaders to fill certain leadership gaps.

Participants also highlighted the positive effect of teams (networks) assembled by members of various quality, capabilities, and traits on the social distribution task enactment. According to participants, teams with various capabilities strengthen the performance of those teams in

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achieving their targets. The more those teams are equipped with potential leaders of higher calibre and different traits the more efficient those teams are in executing the transformation plans of the organisation. Teams (networks) with diversified members' capabilities ensure the ability to lead different situations and problems even if they occur at the same time. The following quotes illustrates the above idea:

'As I have stated at the beginning, I believe that a diverse team gets us, although the path might be little bit more complicated get us to the right answer because it engages a cross section of the organisation. What is important here is that you have effective team skills and that they have to be taught first so that people are not just using the team as an environment to exchange compliments. But they are actually a team engaged in resolving a problem or a task that they can give to them' (Int 18).

'Once you have a team working properly. It has a higher chance of success which means that the social distribution angle you talked about is going to be critical. Ultimately, whether to make it a clear point. I think it goes without saying that if you have someone capable as team leader in that category you would have a higher success rate to achieve these set targets than not' (Int 19).

'I think it is important to have people as I said earlier doing different things and giving people different tasks. You need to look at people who are interested in doing things and giving them assigned tasks they will succeed in them because they love doing what is given to them rather than just imposing something on them which they dislike. They will do it, but they will not accept it' (Int 21).

I would like to refer to the following quote as a description of situational distribution of task enactment as perceived and is aligned with participants' understanding of this concept:

'The more you give the team to do the more they succeed and come up with positive recommendation or a positive way forward, then they will own it going on forward rather than being told what to do if they do it. Then you make that happen and only then there is more chance of success down the road, or if they choose to do certain tasks yet that they are good. This is the part of the social distribution you get whenever you are managing a team, you are trying to get the best out of your people. So, if somebody is good in something then it is to your advantage to allow that person to run it. So, you

have to be flexible, and you have to move people around changing roles, responsibilities and react to the situation or the needs at the time' (Int 9).

On the other hand, participants thought that the task enactment on the organisation when it is going through organisational change should not be based on the social distribution concept. They argued that the distribution of leadership roles in those organisations are to be based on the qualifications' qualities of leaders rather than their social traits. In their views, they assume that capable leaders can execute the transformation initiative and implement the changes, regardless of their social skills or communication ability. The following participant's statement acknowledges this thought:

'I think it has nothing to do with social bearings. That has to be done purely on merits and competencies. You see the team who leads transformation. Transformational process within the organisation should not be looked at, as we have to say relatives or to have so many ladies on the team or different ethnicity let's say having so many African American, or so many Arabs in the team, or so many expatriates. It has to do with skills, with the ability to change adapt, change and flexibility. So, merits in the team members are what makes transformational teamwork not the social bearings at all' (Int 23).

This node captured the participants' perceptions of the distribution of leadership tasks and responsibilities based on social traits of potential leaders and their human managing skills. The task enactment based on social distribution where suitable leaders are chosen where they are best utilised has been stated by participants. It was few participants who stated that task distribution should be based on merits and capabilities alone rather on social bearing or human managing skills of leaders. However, social traits and human handling skills could still be considered as one of the merits and skills rather than totally discounted by them.

4.5.1.2 Main *Theme 2: Communications and Ties*

The effective communication and relationships between organisational members have been confirmed by participants in the sections above. Therefore, based on the inductive data analysis approach, this main theme related to communication and ties was identified. This main theme captures the participants' recognition of communications as an effective tool by which organisational message is effectively delivered to organisational members as well as

the exchange of knowledge. These ties between team members or otherwise known as network actors are acknowledged by participants in earlier discussed sections of this chapter as well as scholars' statements in the literature review chapter. Under this main theme two sub-themes were identified which will be discussed below.

4.5.1.2.1 Sub-Theme 1: The Essentiality of Effective Communication

Participants under this sub-theme confirmed the essentiality and importance of communication as a useful tool in implementing transformational initiatives. Participants illustrated their perception of the effectiveness of communication in a way which reflects their beliefs in the constructive output of effective communication. According to them, transformation is likely to be successful if the organisational message is communicated to all team members accurately, expected roles and delegated responsibilities are defined. This encouragers team (network) members to interact and operate in coordination to achieve the organisational goal in collaboration. The following participant's quote confirms the above discussion:

> 'The organisation needs to understand the importance of communication and people need to understand that importance too. People also need to understand that it is important to be collaborative and work with everyone. Management leadership is all about encouraging people to work with each other and this is not possible unless we have organisational clarity. The clarity is achieved only when we are able to communicate our message clearly and continuously throughout the company. You need to have sustainability, continuity, regular follow up meetings and inspection. This is for sure not possible if you don't have leaders with strong communications' (Int 9).

Effective communication as stated by participants is the ability to deliver the organisation's message throughout the organisation from top to bottom of and across the organisational boarder. When delivering the organisational message throughout the organisation different calibre of employees has to be taken into consideration. Organisations are assembled from different levels of employees who vary from highly qualified to simple employees at operational level. The following quotes illustrate the above discussion:

> 'If there is an evolving situation, the communication becomes extremely important at all levels of the organisation. When I say all levels, I mean from the top to the lower

base of it and across the organisation's sections and departments. You should communicate to every individual in the organisation' (Int 2).

'Things are changing globally and need to be changed in the organisation in order to get the message there. We need to work that communication throughout the entire organisation. From my experience, it is always a challenge when you have to make serious business strategy changes or organisational changes to communicate these decisions and changes effectively and continuously on those issues' (Int 3)

Participant stated that the transformation process is smoother when everyone in the organisation understands what is expected from him/her and, their responsibilities and roles. According to participants, organisation transformation is an effective execution element, which can be only achieved with clear effective communication efforts. This communication is interpreted in the means of making every individual understand what his rights and responsibilities are. The following participant statement complements this idea:

'I think if people are aware of their roles and what is expected from them and what is the output they need to provide, then, they would be more comfortable to take their assumed responsibilities, take decisions and implement the organisational initiatives or changes. If at the initial stages of transformation, you define the roles and you divide the roles among the different levels of the organisation, which will create a more comfortable environment for the execution of the transformation initiative' (Int 7).

Participants agreed that the effective communication is not as easy or simple as it sounds. To them, it is a complicated process as the complexity of the organisation itself. It requires the message to be tailored to different levels. Regardless of the individual position on the organisational chart, the same idea has to be communicated to him. According to participants, organisations of this performance are those who had accurate organisational message and information cascaded to their members. Those organisations have to have clarity and transparency which is achieved with efficient effective communication. The below reflects these ideas:

'So effective communication is the easy sentence to say, but actually it is difficult to get your people entirely on board and tell the folks out there here is your company will succeed or fail on the first line supervision because that is the person that the rest of the workforce under him actually listens to. They don't really listen to the CEO or the

General Manager they listen to their first line supervisor, so you have to win that supervisor over. He is your non-commissioned officer who should be aware of the organisation's intentions clearly' (Int 6).

'Most individuals in high performing organisations are those who know what to do and have the right information to do it. It is my observation is holding information at the top is always a mistake. It is always more effective and efficient to get everybody the information they need. So, transparency and information flow and not holding any manager, supervisor or holding information from them and then dictating what to do about it seems always to be a mistake. You have to have the right people having the right information in order to make the right decision' (Int 5).

Participants explained that effective communication which assures that the right message reaches everyone in the organisation helps the purpose of preparing everyone for the coming change. Effective communication is linked to the allowing the work force to recognise the essentiality of this transformation to the organisation. Due to this environment where the act of transparency and clarity is practiced by the management, knowledge is shared and exchanged between organisational members regardless of their position on the organisational hierarchy. The following participant's discussion highlights the above:

'Organisational knowledge is a very important outcome of communicating and interacting act between the organisation top level all the way to base of the organisation structure. If you are able to create and promote an environment where you see knowledge sharing and exchanging between your employees and their line supervisors, then you have a better chance in achieving your organisation goal' (Int 17).

This sub-theme discussed and highlighted the participants' views on the essentiality of effective communication. This was also confirmed in the participants' discussion about suitable leadership style to overcome obstacles to the implementation of transformation initiatives. The effective communication, as discussed by the participants, is a means of convincing organisational members of the need and essentiality of the transformation initiatives to their wellbeing as part of the organisational structure. Communicating with organisational members dilute the uncertainty risk and assures organisational members of the rational of the change. Knowledge and information exchange enhance the awareness level within the organisation and facilitate the efforts to achieve the collective organisational goal.

4.5.1.2.2 Sub-Theme 2: Communication as a Leader's Social Trait

Data captured in this sub-theme is related to participants' views of leaders' social traits that they perceived as essential in identifying potential leaders to manage the organisation. To them leadership is a practice which is fully utilised through effective communication. In other words, communication is a social trait which leaders need to achieve the organisational goal. The following expresses the above discussion in participants own words:

> *'My leadership style is more of participative leadership school of practice, but I have seen many successful leaders in my 30 years in this industry. Leaders who came and go some of them were highly qualified but failed and some others were all right but were successful. What you need when it comes to leading companies is the ability to communicate openly with people, all of the people of your company or simply don't look for a leasers' position. The ability to communicate, influence and work with employees was the reason why those leaders were successful' (Int 17).*

Participants stated that the fundamentals of distributed leadership lie on the foundation of being able to align organisational and personal goals together in a collective goal and identifying potential leaders based on their traits. Participants identified communication skills as social trait for potential future leaders. The ability of leaders to influence and convince employees with the decided changes emerges from their ability to clearly communicate and socially interact with them. The following quote is a discussion with one of the participants who confirms the above:

> *'I think distributed leadership is preferable in today's complex business structure where organisations are complicated in their expansions and ways of doing business. The social traits are what influences distributional leaders to identify their preferred young leaders to assume leadership responsibility when the time is right. To communicate is to influence and convince or even negotiate with employees' (Int 19).*

In their discussions, participants stated that this obstacle is due to the lack of clarity of the organisational vision which should be communicated to the entire organisation by the organisational leadership. They concluded that communicating the reason and necessity of the transformation to the organisational workforce reduces the human resistance obstacle and creates a healthy working environment. The communication trait was acknowledged as an essential leadership trait which is needed in the transformational phase. They confirmed that communication is social traits required in leaders to be able to communicate with their

organisational members all organisation related information. The effective communication is the means of influencing and encouraging the employees to accept the organisational change and working hard towards achieving it. The following participant's quote confirms the above discussion:

> *'It is human resistance to change as people have resistance to any change because it creates uncertainty. Convincing efforts have to be carried out by managers to remove any doubt which people might have about their future and the organisation future. If you ask me you have to have mangers with excellent social and communication skills to work this out and influence people to perform their roles as required' (Int 21).*

Participants discussed related suitable leadership approach during organisation transformation and their perception of social studies in organisations going through transformation. Participants perceived as the suitable leadership approach based on the ability of leaders to interact and communicate necessary information. Whereas Communication was continuously mentioned throughout the interviews as being an important element of leading, influencing, convincing, and accepting the decided changes. The process of organisation transformation was confirmed to be achievable only if the right leadership approach is practiced by leaders. Leaders are very essential part of this process and the leader's trait plays a great role in the success of this leader. In the above discussion, communication was confirmed as the means of assuring that the transformation is executed smoothly across the organisation and communication was identified as a social trait required in potential organisational leaders.

4.6 Findings on Research Question 3

This section aims to capture participants' interpretations of the research problem. The Participants responded to the question exploring their perceptions of the dimensional spectrum of the intersection between distributed leadership with organisational transformation through the theoretical lens of social network theory and the emergence of network leadership. The participants were asked about their perception on the network of leaders' concept which this research refers to as network leadership.

4.6.1 Intersection between Distributed Leadership and Organisational Transformation and the Emergence of Network Leadership

Leadership views on the spectrum dimension of the intersection of distributed leadership and organisational transformation literature are captured. The participants' views and reflections on the identified intersection will be discussed. The emergence of network leadership which is assumed by this research as an outcome of the identified intersection through the theoretical lens of social network theory will also be discussed. The participants were asked at the end to elaborate the concept of network leadership. Those discussions were captured and categorised to main themes and sub-themes.

4.6.1.1 *Main Theme 1: The Overlapping and Intersection between Distributed Leadership and Organisational Transformation*

In this main theme, participants' reflections and understanding of the intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation were captured. The conceptual model was also explained to participants alongside the research assumptions to accurately capture their reflection. Participants' responses to this identified intersection and gap were categorised to two sub-themes.

4.6.1.1.1 Sub-Theme 1: The Dimensions of Distributed Leadership Intersection with Organisational Transformation

This sub-theme captures the feedback on an essential important element of this research. The intersection between organisational transformation and leadership represents the core component of this research. The participants' views were almost identical with some differences in particular areas. Participants agreed that the spectrum of the intersection dimensions is wide and diversified, however it would be best to list those descriptive quotes and statements to illustrate participants' views clearly. Although they acknowledged the wide spread of dimension of this intersection, they still had highlighted certain areas which they thought were essential. Social aspects and communications were highlighted by participants to be one of dimensions of the intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation. They highlighted that the spectrum of this intersection is wide and diversified in its components, however they stressed on the social and cultural aspect of the intersection

'mainly social and sometimes cultural and political' (Int 1). The communication element was highlighted by those participants as the main element, but there are other elements which shape this intersection which is stated in the following statement:

> *'The intersection dimension is big with communication, relationship, company politics, personal traits, quality, time and a lot of things that craft this dimension, but all those communications are important part of the dimension' (Int 7).*

Participant in (Int 9) stated that the communication is an important intersection point between the two subjects as it assures everyone is aligned to the overall organisational goal as stated in earlier sections in this chapter. The example he brought about the group of companies having 31 projects in hand with an accomplishment of 80% highlighted his views regarding the essentiality and validity of effective communication. From his discussion, we can notice his views about the transparency and its impact on elevating the level of transparency by communicating to organisational members on the implication and the necessity of a certain decision.

Other participants of this same segment who believed communication to be an essential element of this intersection acknowledged that this intersection has a wide spectrum of components. The elements identified by the participants are in line with literature discussions. All components stated are related to leadership characters which are required in potential suitable leaders to lead organisations in their transformation. The below quotes also confirm the above discussion:

> *'Although communication is the first thing, I can think of it varies from the communication to company politics to a lot of components which are countless. But what I am considered of so far is firstly the communication functionality then traits, competence, effectiveness, skills, social capabilities and authority' (Int 13).*

> *'So, as I said it varies from alignment to clarity of objectives, strategy and organisation communication which core to the organisation' (Int 17)*

> *'Dimensions could be your skills, your competencies which are required and most of all is the communication. These are some of the elements of this dimension.' (Int 23).*

Participants referred to network leadership as an extended form of distributed leadership and a possible outcome of this intersection alongside other elements. The participants illustrated their perceptions in the following quotes:

'I think that the intersection here is an extended form of distributed leadership which is essential for organisational transformation, and I think I am repeating myself here, but you know the point is that you have to have a suitable leadership which distributes leadership across the organisation you can't achieve your objective and that is my opinion' (Int 2).

'As I mentioned in the previous questions, it is a very wide dimension but let me confirm to you that part of this intersection is an extension version of distributed leadership.' (Int 3).

'It is a wide spectrum of elements of dimensions which construct this dimension. But what really matters to me is the social skills, communication, effectiveness, and potential emergence of a new or team-based leadership approaches which facilitate the efforts towards achieving organisational goals more effectively and efficiently. This is what I can think of.' (Int 15).

'So, to me, that paradigm is especially in distributed leadership. We have a collective knowledge at that layer and beneath that we have a social networking cloud, collective layer they feed up into that network distributed layer and hopefully has the power to give an incredible result. All this is orbiting in a multi-dimensional layer.' (Int 16).

'I think every aspect of the transformation requires distributed leadership to function correctly. So, every dimension from communication through all of your human resources systems to your financial system you name it are connected. This is in my view an upgraded distributed leadership module.' (Int 18).

'Your skill and your competencies are required. These are some of the elements of that dimension. Sometimes you will not have the right people to lead you to the transformational process, so you need the right resources to take forward and sometimes it is making sure that your organisation, the people in your organisation buy into this transformational process and accept it as something which they are willing to go through. So, a lot of aspects which will form up the dimension or dimensions of all of this is distributed leadership' (Int 23)

The above participants' quotes highlight the identification of an extended version of distributed leadership and referred to as network leadership as one of the outcomes of this intersection. Participants stated that as wide as this intersection spectrum, an extension of distributed leadership function is an element of that intersection. According to them this intersection result

is very essential to the implementation of the transformation initiative. The social skills and communication effectiveness are the traits those participants identified in the new emerging team-based leadership concept which this research referred to as network leadership. The transformation initiatives which organisations decide to go through would certainly require a distributive leadership function to achieve its goals.

On this sub-theme participants confirmed the intersection but illustrated through their discussion that it is a wide spectrum and that they are not able to identify the spectrum and its dimensions. The following quote illustrates these participants' views:

> *'I think like many others, I am sure that it is an open dimension, and everyone can come up with ideas of what that dimension looks like and constructed from' (Int 20).*

As a conclusion to this sub-theme, it is worthy to reconfirm those participants acknowledgment of the intersection between distributed leadership literature and organisational transformation. This intersection was perceived by the participants to be wide in its dimensional spectrum and an open area for discussion of possible elements of this intersection. The communication, social traits, political and most of all new team-based version of leadership which was referred to as extended version of distributed leadership was highlighted by participants. The extended version of distributed leadership is what this research referred to as the concept of network leadership.

4.6.1.1.2 Sub-Theme 2: Distributed Leadership & Organisational Transformation Perception

The participants' reflections and views on the intersection are captured in this sub-theme. The identified intersection was acknowledged by participants who expressed in different ways which we discussed in this section. Many participants acknowledged the ties between those two subjects and highlighted the link between them. According to some participants the ties between these two subjects are expressed as an overlapping zone between them which has many spectrums. The following quotes highlights those discussion:

> *'I would call it an overlapping which is normal as both literatures complement each other. They cannot be performed without the existence of each other' (Int 13).*

'I think of it more as an ultimate link between the two subjects as any organisational change, will need leaders and managers to lead, manage and monitor this change. So, I think of it as an inter-link and a linkage between those two important subject organisational studies' (Int 15).

'Well, both are interlinked as I see them, because as I have said earlier with distributed leadership you need to have people doing different things, different activities and at the same time, you need to have proper leaders within those activities, those because of whom task solved. So those some does need to be led with the appropriate leader but at the same time in an ultimate leader who can put all the leaders together to bring them to one direction' (Int 21).

'I think there is a need for a union between distributed leadership and the transformation process. As you need people who will enable that to happen and when we talk about people we are really talking about leaders at different levels of the process, who are able to take you forward. So distributed leadership plays a major role for you to have the right people at the different levels to take forward this transformation and convert it into reality. It is very important, and you cannot do it by one person. The big leader, the big boss or the CEO will set the general outlook where he says we want to be here, and it is the responsibility of the organisational leaders to make the big boss vision happen' (Int 23).

From the above quotes, we can see how participants revealed their understanding of this intersection and from which angle they were perceived. The practice of leadership according to them complements the execution of the transformation process and the execution of the organisational transformation is not possible without a suitable leadership. The following quotes highlights this idea:

'Distributed leadership and organisational transformation overlap with each other in the area of leadership, and this is an important factor in guiding the organisation through one mission and vision. In both cases, leaders are given systematic autonomy to make decisions in a strategic and high-level areas of responsibilities' (Int 7).

'This is a connection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation. Usually, I go about it in a task force approach so that you assure that the leadership role is certainly listed amongst several members of the team in a challengeable format,

and this is the best way of looking at transformation strategies, where there will be multi-initiatives, and everybody would lead one of those initiative in a flexible method' (Int 17).

'Again, you can achieve much more by cutting into pieces and having individual leading various tasks to divide and conquer. If you have a problem with your organisational transformation, do you just tackle it in one attack, or do you distribute it over multiple heads if you can do that? Again, you have a better chance of success doing it in a much shorter period of time if you distribute leadership' (Int 19).

Some participants of the same segment expressed their thoughts about the intersection in a different way. In their discussion, they revealed that although they realise the intersection they still thought that there is a challenge in maintaining this intersection. This idea is better expressed in the following quote:

'So, the difficulty here is to try and keep the team aligned. It is the train station concept. So, you have to make sure especially when you have a multi-functional aspect that they are all working to the same goal, and they are not all trying to do many projects on their own. Now, the intersection is sometimes where I get little difficult because you usually have a problem where you get external stakeholders who are trying to influence the outcome of what you are trying to do. So, again it is upward management and communication as well as downward within your teams in the organisation' (Int 9).

On the other hand, participants stated that they saw a link between the two subjects but couldn't identify or believe in any kind of intersection or overlapping between the two subjects. The following statements will explain and illustrate the above idea:

'They are closely linked and were always closely linked but they are not overlapping nor contradicting each other' (Int 1).

'I don't see, and I almost don't see an intersection. If I am going to transform an organisation, I need distributed leadership. It is the only way it is going to work depending upon the size of the organisation if I am an organisation of two people I can. Directing teams in a military form where you have an organisation of hundreds of thousands whom you need to move you can only mobilize them through distributed leadership engagement' (Int 18).

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As discussed, participants interpreted the intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation as an interconnected overlapping subject. This intersection interpretation was expressed in the confirmation of the wide range of component of this intersection dimension. Some participants discussed an extended form of distributed leadership. The spectrum of this intersection to other participants was countless and huge in its spread. While most of participants acknowledged the intersection, small number of e participants argued that the two subjects are linked but not intersecting with each other.

4.6.1.2 Main *Theme 2: The Concept of Network Leadership*

This main theme captures the participants' interpretation of the notion of network leadership. The importance of this main theme emerges from the aim of this research to explore network leadership in organisations going through their transformation phase. The data captured in this main theme was categorised into two sub-themes that will be discussed.

4.6.1.2.1 Sub-Theme 1: Network Leadership Concept Perception

This sub-theme captures the participants' views and opinions of the concept of network of leaders which this research referred to as network leadership. The participants argued that the emergence of network leadership is essential to the achievement of organisational transformation initiatives, but its concept and practice is challenging and is not clear in its definition.

Participants perceived network leadership approach to organisational leadership as an effective successful management tool in the implementation of organisational transformation. This concept is based on the choice of leaders and individual with the right and suitable trait to lead the organisation towards achieving their transformational initiatives. Participants expressed the essentiality and importance of network leadership in the following ways:

> *'Well network leadership at such situation is very important because when you are going through a major change in a fast formation you need everybody to be in line. There is difference in opinions which are sometimes pushing back so that why you need everyone in line. Everybody is brought together and that is the most important element in any organisation going through transformation. People need to work*

together in order to achieve the goals they want. And that is the right leadership style. If you get the right trait leaders, you will know that when you start implementing your transformation plan and that is network leadership. If you want to transform your organisation the way you have decided through network leadership approach it will be a success' (Int 1).

'I think, and I can definitely say it exists and it is the best practice in a lot of organisations' (Int 2).

Other participants expressed their acknowledgment of network leadership as being best practiced in the form of leading networks within the organisation during its transformational phase. Those assembled networks according to those participants are the enablers to execute and achieve the desired organisational transformation initiatives. The following quote explains this idea:

'In the context of organisational transformation, I would like to think of the network of leaders as the process of building various teams of leaders within the organisation to help in the implementation of the organisation transformation. I would say it is a necessity and suitable to enable organisation transformation to establish such network which will help achieving of identifying empowering leader's potential, required resources, encourage continuous learning, knowledge sharing, quick deployment of resources, and enable effective communication between teams' (Int 4).

This statement explained the way participant viewed this leadership approach. According to participants, network of leaders' concept is constructed on the foundation of the identification of suitable leaders. Those suitable leaders are those with the ability and knowledge of effectively communicating, identifying required organisational resources to execute planned organisational change. This is achievable if organisational leaders are empowered and encouraged to assemble their teams based on the required traits to achieve organisational transformation goal. The network leadership to participants is a transparent form of leadership which is built on the functionality of leaders rather on their hierarchical position. This idea is stated in the following comment:

'In high performing organisation, it is communicating between functional groups at each individual level which determines the efficiency of information sharing. Transparency in the information and efficiency in the communications between functional groups at any level which is always the desired outcome. The execution of

leadership roles such as transformation depends on the functionality of leadership and the leader of that function rather the seniority of that leader' (Int 11).

The importance of network leadership to other participants is linked to the belief that it is effective in communicating and the ability to convey the organisational message across the organisation boundaries. The success of organisations achieving their transformation goals effectively is higher with leadership styles such as network leadership which leverages on the individual abilities and traits. The following quotes explain and confirm this idea:

'Network leadership is important factor of executing organisational change with networking and passing the message across to each and every individual within your organisation. I believe the notion of network leadership is essential to achieve your goals as an organisation. Because everyone has to receive the same message otherwise you are not going to achieve what you are trying to achieve' (Int 21).

'Network leadership philosophy is about your abilities as leaders to communicate with people and that work environment is all about dealing with people and getting the right people on board when they are required at the right time. There is no business or organisation which can walk, succeed, thrive and grow if they are not run by the right people' (Int 23).

Many participants thought that network leadership is an extension of distributed leadership, something which they practice in their leadership roles but is not defined. In their discussions, those participants agreed that they have been practicing network leadership without necessary knowing what form of leadership it is. Participants described this concept as assumed by the researcher in a form of formal and informal leadership approach, where the reporting channel is only clear to the leader himself. One of the participants commented on the concept of network leadership as *'this is like everyone who would be engaged in a transformation phase is practicing or have an involvement in this management approach which aims to achieve a common purpose or a common goal' (Int 5).* We shall discuss this perception best in the following statement to confirm the participants' acknowledgment of this leadership theory and prove the above idea:

'As I said earlier, this concept I referred to could be the network leadership you propose but let me tell you that network leadership is practiced but not identified or defined as it is there, but it is not visible. It is more of a cloudy formal informal at the same time' (Int 3).

Participants underlined network leadership effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the targeted organisational transformation. They stated that this concept is more of formal/informal management approach that is more concerned with the process of identifying leaders with the right attributes to lead the organisation in its transformation phase. Participants confirmed that this assumed leadership approach is more of a flexible leadership approach where leadership roles are expanded across organisational boundaries rather than operating in a traditional structured form. To them, the leadership role changes with the need for a certain trait or a talent to lead the transformation initiative in a certain phase. Participants thought of project management teams as good examples of network leadership, as you need leaders with different traits and skills who could be utilised at different stages of the transformation phase. The delegation of the leadership role is based on the necessity and functionality of the leader himself rather than his status within the organisational structure. According to them, leaders assume their leadership role based on the need of their skills at that certain phase. Participants had many descriptions to this leadership approach which will be stated and discussed alongside the whole perception of the concept below:

> *'Well, I can summarise it in the example of project management teams where you have different teams and levels of hierarchy and still all leads formally or informally dependent on the need within the status of the project' (Int 13)*

> *'This concept you are referring to as network leadership is a management practice approach towards leadership by functionality and effectiveness of leaders and is either formal or informal roles and ways of practicing their leadership when those network leaders are operating regardless of the organisational boundaries or organisational bureaucracy or even the hierarchy of the organisation and of the chain of command structure, such leadership is more visible in project management teams and higher level management committees. So, yes network leadership or fuzzy leadership or cloudy leadership is the reality we practice but not formalised properly and it depends on the traits and the characteristics of those attributes which could be identified by higher management and higher leadership' (Int 15).*

Other participants who confirmed the importance of network leadership in achieving the organisational goals by implementing the planned organisational goals expressed a valid concern they had. Those participants said that although this approach is a practical efficient approach towards leading transformational initiatives, it is still a challenge to put different types of leaders with different skills and knowledge together. Getting those leaders who come from

different back grounds or schools of thought and with different set of skills and traits together is challenging. Therefore, you need to assemble a diversified team yet an aligned one and then you have a successful team who can implement the decided organisational changes. The following quote confirms this idea:

'So, the difficulty you have here is that you are trying to bring different leaders together to try and make an underlying decision. If you get the right bunch, then you can make some very good decisions. But the problem with having senior leaders together or working together is each has his own strong personalities, his own views and to get alignment. The bragging rights of making the decisions can sometimes be quite hard. So, I think if you can get the right group together of like-minded individuals, they don't have to be the same type of persons but are aligned on what they are trying to do. You can actually get some good decisions made because the more views you hear the more views you can accommodate. You can only make better decisions with better and accurate information you get' (In 9).

On the other hand, participants confirmed network leadership to be an outcome of the intersection of the distributed leadership literature and the organisational transformation. The emergence of network leadership as a result of this intersection is also perceived by them as an extended form of more team-based leadership approach such as distributed leadership theory. This approach was confirmed by participants as an effective leadership approach and was witnessed on higher managerial levels where things are executed in a timely manner. The following quote explains and confirms the above discussion:

'The network of leaders or what you refer to as network leadership as I see is an extension of more team collective leadership targeting the aim of getting the job done at its best and in the fastest effective way. Although never heard of it until explained by you earlier, whatever it is there and could be seen at higher organisational level committees where things are executed in the fastest way based on the effectiveness of certain leaders' (Int 7).

Participants (Int 19 & 21) discussed the emergence of network leadership in a descriptive interesting way that will be stated below:

'Network leadership is the concept of multiple responsibilities, multiple tasks and its building blocks, everything which human engineering and science develops on the

concept of building. Once you understand how you break that up and if you use leaders as building blocks, you can fairly build up in fairly short amount of time, a vision and that is ultimately leaders on top. That is their number one responsibility, the details have to be left to those individual leaders and those leaders have to. As you go down into hierarchy, the leaders have to go more into specialisation. The more the higher you go up, the more generalisation you need and the more vision and mission, but the deeper you go. Leaders have to be more qualified and have more discipline' (Int 19).

'Well building relationships is one of the cornerstones or pillars of success in any business anywhere in the world, whether it is internal businesses, internal relationships with our counter parties within the big organisations prospective which we work in, in various departments or even externally with like-minded energy industry folks outside the industry who can bring up the best perspective the amazons and the googles of the world. This is why a leadership concepts such as network leadership becomes needed when more and more interaction between internal, external and counter parties within the industry is needed' (Int 22).

The network leadership concept which was assumed by this research is an extension of the team/based leadership approach to management, especially distributed leadership which was acknowledged by participants in their discussion. Participants highlighted the essentiality of choosing the right leaders with the right traits to lead especially the ability to interact with others and link individuals, departments and even organisations. According to them, the leadership ability to interact and link different components of the organisation or the industry together enhances the execution of the transformation initiative and the organisational goal achievement. Participants undermined their views of network leadership as assembling a network of leaders with different characteristics and traits which might be needed in different stages of the transformation phase are instrumental in leading across organisational boundaries.

4.6.1.2.2 Sub-Theme 2: Network Leadership Effects and Impact

This sub-theme discusses the effect of network leadership as perceived by participants. This assumed emerging leadership approach was acknowledged by participants as effective and of positive impact by participants. According to participants, network leadership is effective in

a sense that it ensures the execution and implementation of decided transformation initiatives in a timely manner. The following quotes confirms this discussion:

> *'In my opinion, the impact is significant in terms of making sure things happen on time'* (Int 1).

> *'Definitely and without any doubt, network leadership has significant impact on organisations planning to transform their organisation from a commercial and operational business prospective'* (Int 7).

The effective impact of this approach has been highlighted by other participants due to flexibility of this leadership approach, as you have leaders from different levels of the organisational structure which make the execution more accurate and time effective. According to participants, the wider spread of network leadership approach creates incubators for potential future leaders within the organisation. The following statement acknowledges highlights this discussion:

> *'Regardless of the feasibility of the transformation itself, the flexibility of the network of leaders concept approach is an advantage to target achievement whether it is organisational transformation or any other organisational initiative. It is very effective as it creates and produces future leaders and for those organisations with network leadership type of leaders, who are able to execute their roles efficiently'* (Int 3).

Some participants highlighted that although they realise the effectiveness of network leadership on organisations. However, they cannot confirm the level of its effectiveness unless they are able to gauge or measure the impact. According to those participants, the means of measuring the impact of network leadership is either through KPI's or the achievement of the organisational goal. The following quotes confirms the above discussion:

> *'Basically, network leadership impact would be shown in the business KPI's which include all the performance indicators'* (Int 5).
> *'If you achieve your targets in a timely frame and within the allocated budget, then that would be the biggest gauge of the achievement of your goals as a network leader'* (Int 12).

The impact and effectiveness of network of leaders' concept to participants is related to the characters of this approach. The network leadership as discussed is constructed of leaders

with different capabilities and sometimes multi-functional in their practice of leadership role. This makes those leaders effective and efficient in the execution of their roles and responsibilities. Due to the nature of the network leadership approach, different leaders are able to perform various activities or on some occasions one leader can perform effectively in different activities. The following participant's statement confirms the above discussion:

> *'Well, in my opinion and from my time as a part of leadership team in my organisation, the impact I see is positive and it is very dynamic as you have different leaders for different activities and in some cases one leader engaged in different activities which requires different personalities. Network type of leaders looks at things from right to left or left to right and bottom to top or top to bottom in a holistic view' (Int 21).*

Few participants said that even if they thought network leadership has impact or effect on organisation going through their transformation phase, it needs to be proven. To them the evidence of this effect and impact has to be based on certain criteria. This discussion has been addressed by the discussion earlier where participants stated that it is measured by the achievement of the transformation itself. Network leadership is a concept of delegation of power and empowerment based on the characteristics of the leader. In this approach and according to participants, the leadership role itself is flexible and could be performed in a formal or informal way. The effectiveness of this approach is extracted from the believe that those network leaders are carrying different skills and abilities which allow the organisation to carry out the transformation execution. According to participants, you can have different leaders engaged in different activities related to the transformation process and even a certain leader engaged in different activities simultaneously. Therefore, network of leader's concept is effective and positively impacts the transformation execution process, regardless of the worthiness of the transformation decision itself.

4.7 Member Checking

The process of members checking is an element of upmost importance ensuring qualitative research trustworthiness and internal data validity. This process is executed through exhibiting the data collected, sharing the coding process used to code gathered data and the final analysis to authenticate participants' response in accurate exhibition. The research participants were contacted and presented with the dataset which was confirmed to be accurately represented. Participants were presented with a brief feedback analysis about their leadership style as analysed and thought by the researcher based on their responses to the semi-structured questionnaire that they participated in.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, gathered data was analysed based on inductive method, qualitative methodological and interpretivism philosophical approach. The gathered data was based on a face-to-face semi-questionnaire interview. Gathered data reflected personal as well as organisational perception of the research related topic. The collected data was presented and then followed by the demonstration of the clusters of meanings which emerged from the research questions and discussions with participants. The data was viewed and then segmented to different themes and sub-themes based on the organisational level perception of leadership, social human studies impact on organisation going through transformational change and the literature level review of the identified intersection of distributed leadership with organisation transformation. Those identified themes which emerged from the data gathered presentation were thematically analysed in the terms of the research questions with the aim of exploring the emergence of network leadership. Participants identified Network leadership by its concept, network leaders attributes and network leaders practices which are highlighted in tables 20, 21, 22 below.

Table 20 Participants perception of Network Leadership Concept

Interview	Network ties	Strategic views	Cultural diversity	Role distribution	Holistic approach	Knowledge based
Int 1	X			X		
Int 2		X				X
Int 3		X				
Int 4				X		X
Int 5				X		X
Int 6			X			
Int 7		X			X	
Int 8						
Int 9			X			X
Int 10	X			X		X
Int 11	X					
Int 12			X			
Int 13					X	
Int 14		X				X
Int 15				X	X	
Int 16		X	X			
Int 17						
Int 18				X		X
Int 19					X	X
Int 20	X					
Int 21	X					
Int 22	X					
Int 23			X			
Int 24		X		X		
Int 25						
Int 26				X		X

Table 21 Participants perception of Network Leaders Attributes

Interview	Effective Communication	Knowledge sharing	Visionary	Social skills	Innovative	Personal traits	Influencing
Int 1	X					X	
Int 2		X		X			X
Int 3					X		
Int 4	X	X				X	X
Int 5		X		X			X
Int 6	X						
Int 7			X		X		
Int 8	X						X
Int 9						X	
Int 10		X		X		X	
Int 11	X	X					
Int 12				X		X	
Int 13			X				
Int 14		X			X		
Int 15		X		X	X	X	
Int 16	X			X			
Int 17			X			X	
Int 18		X					
Int 19			X				X
Int 20							
Int 21	X						
Int 22	X			X			
Int 23	X					X	
Int 24		X					
Int 25		X			X		X
Int 26	X				X		X

Table 22 Participants perception of Network Leaders Practices

Interview	Aligning beyond organisational boundaries	Connecting initiatives to sector initiatives	Linking scattered organisation network & cluster	Exchanging role-based on functionality
Int 1			X	X
Int 2			X	
Int 3		X		
Int 4			X	X
Int 5		X	X	X
Int 6				
Int 7				X
Int 8		X		
Int 9			X	
Int 10	X			
Int 11		X		X
Int 12			X	
Int 13	X			
Int 14				
Int 15	X		X	X
Int 16				
Int 17				
Int 18		X		
Int 19				
Int 20			X	X
Int 21			X	
Int 22	X	X	X	
Int 23				X
Int 24				
Int 25			X	
Int 26		X		

Chapter 5

Research Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was an analysis of the gathered data through a semi-structured questionnaire carried out through face-to-face interviews. In this chapter, we will discuss the findings extracted from the qualitative philosophical approach analysis from gathered data based on semi-structured face to face interviews discussed in chapter 4. This research explores the emergence of network leadership and expands its concept to the organisational transformation domain. There are limited literature and research exploring network leadership beyond its concept and definition (Silvia and McGuire, 2010)

5.2 Overview of the Research Study

The aim of this research is to explore distributed leadership with organisational transformation through the theoretical lens of social network theory exploring the emergence of network leadership. These literatures intersect with each other creating a wide spectrum of dimension which this research assumes network leadership to be one of the constructs of this dimension. This study discussed different leadership theories in a chronological sequence to understand the emergence root of those theories and explore the potential of identifying new leadership approaches. The organisational transformation literature was also discussed, where it stated that leadership is an essential element in the implementation of organisational transformation initiatives (Kempster *et al.,* 2014; White *et al.,* 2016). Although leadership was identified as a main pillar of large-scale transformation initiative execution, it has not identified which type of leadership approach or the type of leader and at what stage of the transformational phase (Denis *et al.,* 2012; White *et al.,* 2016).

This research semi-structured questions where categorised to capture the participants opinions with regards to the research topic from three different prospects. The first prospect captured the organisational perception of suitable leadership approach in managing organisations throughout their transformational phase. The reflections of those participants' experience as leaders in oil and gas were also captured under this prospect. The second

prospect explored the social and individual level perception of social network theory impact and effect on the implementation of transformational initiatives. At this level, the social perception of leadership, suitable leaders to lead organisation and social traits effects on implementing the organisational transformation are captured. The third prospect was at the literature level where the participants' comments on the identified intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation literatures were captured and analysed to explore the emergence of network leadership. The importance of those prospects was derived from the fact that they assist in understanding the views of the research participants of many aspects related to the research topic such as: (1) leaders' perception of their leadership style; (2) leaders' perception of suitable leadership approach during transformation initiatives; (3) participants' perception of distributed leadership and its impact of organisational transformation initiative; (4) social studies and personal traits effects on the transformational process implementation; (5) the spectrum of the intersection dimension interpretation and the network leadership emergence perception.

To attain the above research objectives, the research topic literature was reviewed. Leadership literature was discussed and presented in a chronological development sequence all the way to newer leadership concept. Leadership literature reviewed suggested distributed leadership to be a suitable leadership approach in growing complexity of today's world, where organisations are more complex in content and structures (Gronn, 2002; Turner and Baker, 2018). Organisational transformation literature was reviewed as well, where it confirmed leadership as an essential element of transformation execution and implementation. However, organisational transformation literature did not specifically highlight which type of leadership approach, type of leaders or in which stage of the transformation stage (Kempster *et al.,* 2014; White *et al.,* 2016). Social network theory was used as an underpinning theory to understand the mechanisms of the ties between different organisational actors. This research overlayed the principles of social network theory upon distributed leadership during planned organisational change to explore the emergence of network leadership. Finally, the conceptual model is exhibited and discussed in this chapter. The objectives and aims were addressed as illustrated in table 23 below.

Table 23 Chapter Objective Addressed

Chapter 2	• Reviewing leadership literature, organisational transformation literature and social network theory. • Identifying the gap in literature • Exploring the link between the viewed literatures. • Reviewing social studies theories. • Developing a conceptual framework.
Chapter 3	• Developing the methodological philosophical approach. • Developing the data gathering tools and philosophy.
Chapter 4	• Analysing gathered data. • Discussing participants' views and perception.
Chapter 5	• Exploring and confirming the conceptual model validity and the research proposed notion of network leadership
Chapter 6	• Concluding the results and the findings alongside the contribution and limitation of the research.

This research adopted a qualitative philosophical approach to investigate the research problem. Due to the limited research on network leadership, imperative strategy approach was used by this research. The data was gathered by semi-structured face to face interviews to capture the organisational experience of the participants in their current and past leadership roles in their organisations. The data gathered was exported to the NVivo 12 software version 12.6 for descriptive analysis and examination, where data were categorised to main themes, sub-themes and nodes which would be used in the data analysis chapter for better understanding of the gathered data. The participants' discussions and the research findings were explanatory of the dimensions of the intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation alongside the identification of network leadership. Research findings highlighted the satisfactory explanation of the conceptual model through the participants' discussion.

The conceptual model was developed where it demonstrated the intersection and linkage between distributed leadership and organisational transformation with social network theory. The results and outcomes of this study was encouraging and supportive as they agreed with the conceptual model emergence of Transformation Network Leadership. The research gathered data and findings were discussed and presented by outlining the supportive evidence of the research assumption and finalised by the conclusion.

5.3 Research Question 1 Discussion:

This section will discuss and highlight the findings which were analysed from data gathered through a semi-structured questioner face to face interview conducted with participants. The selected research sample represented the decision makers and top executives in Bahrain Oil and Gas.

This research question is asked to capture organisational leaders' perceptions of distributed leadership approach enactment during organisational transformation initiative. Those two subjects were explored separately as the number of research examining those two subjects together were limited in their numbers. This research explored the link between distributed leadership and organisational transformation.

5.3.1 Leadership Types in Organisations going through Transformation Initiatives

The findings of this research supported by participants' reflections on the subject of the suitable leadership approach in organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives. The participants' discussions played a pivotal role in acknowledging the literature review findings linking distributed leadership as a suitable leadership approach to organisational transformation implementation.

5.3.1.1 Leaders' Perception and Description of their Leadership Style

The research sample represents top executives and decision makers in Bahrain oil and gas which are operating according to them in an industry where discipline is essential, and safety comes at top priority. However, their approach to organisational management and leadership varied. It was expected that most of those participants are authoritarian and transactional in their leadership approach. This is due to the nature of the oil and gas industry where organisational members operate in hazardous environment and safety of organisational members comes as first priority. Surprisingly, team-based leadership approach was recognised by those participants as suitable leadership approach in the current volatile and dynamic business environment. Participants who described their leadership approach as traditional transactional authoritarian stated in their discussions that team-based leadership is a suitable approach to organisational management.

Team based approach leadership through its different constructs was acknowledged by organisational leaders as their practiced leadership approach to management. They justified practicing team-based leadership theory in a hazardous environment to humans and assets due to the increasing complexity of organisations in context and growth. This is similar to what was discussed in chapter 2 where it stated the shift from more traditional classical leadership theories to more team based dynamic leadership theories due to volatile environments and increasing organisational complexity (Hovik and Hanseen, 2015; Baker-Shelley, Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017; Turner and Baker, 2018).

On the other hand, smaller number of participants who described their leadership style of management as being a mixed approach leadership style, were in fact outlining one of the team-based leadership approaches as their choice of leadership style. Those participants started by stating their practice of transactional discipline-based leadership approach to organisational management but ended up their discussions with describing one of the team-based approach to leadership constructs. Those leaders who described their leadership style as mixed approach leadership stated that they practiced a combination of different leadership styles depending on the managerial level they are operating in. To those organisational leaders, the use of team-based leadership approach was situational and based on the management levels they were operating in. These participants acknowledged that at lower organisational level where discipline is a key factor to success of their operation more authoritarian and charismatic leadership are suitable but on higher managerial levels team-based leadership approaches become more suitable managerial tool in the implementation of transformational initiatives. This was an interesting observation in the data analysis chapter alongside the perception of participants who do not practice team-based leadership at any managerial level. These participants acknowledged team-based leadership approach and described it as a suitable organisational leadership approach in implementing large scale transformation initiatives.

5.3.1.2 Distributed Leadership

There are similarities between the distributed leadership literature and captured organisational leaders understanding of distributed leadership which will be discussed in this section. As much as distributed leadership scholars and researchers stated the suitability of this leadership approach in manging and leading organisation significant number of interviewed organisational leaders acknowledged and confirmed its suitability (Gronn, 2002; Bennet *et al.,*

2003; Cirrie *et al.,* 2009; Bush, 2018). Distributed leadership was recognised by organisational leaders as a suitable leadership approach based on the concept of increasing complexity in the context and the organisational size which makes it challenging for one single leader to manage the entire organisation (Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017; Wind, 2017). This was also acknowledged by organisational leaders in section 5.3.1.1 of this chapter where leaders described their leadership style as team-based approach mentioned increasing organisational complexity which requires distributed leadership approach to management. This is based on organisational leaders' recognition of the essentiality of the concept of sharing leadership amongst network members by distributing leadership and management roles on potential leaders (Gronn, 2002; Fitzgerald *et al.,* 2003; Currie *et al.,* 2009; Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017). The distribution of leadership role is based on leaders having the suitable right social traits and characteristics to perform a certain organisational role they are required to perform (Lumby, 2019). Different situations require different types of leaders with different set of traits and characteristics to perform the assigned leadership role they are chosen to perform.

Distributing leadership roles and responsibilities to potential organisational leaders regardless of their hierarchal position enhances the execution of any organisational initiatives. It also influences positive constructive environment where network members are able to perform their duties as expected and required (Alghanem *et al., 2020*). This is because of distributed leadership principles which enhances team members satisfaction by aligning their interest with the organisational goal. This is why distributed leadership is perceived by participants as a suitable leadership tool in managing and leading organisations as stated in the following quote:

> *'In my own perspective, distributed leadership can create a positive transformation if it will be done to large scale transformation initiatives. It will change the work culture where everyone from top to bottom level will have and feel responsibility as leaders according to their respective expertise' (Int 5).*

Distributed leadership effectiveness and suitability to organisational goal achievement as discussed in data findings and literature review are drawn from its nature. Distributed leadership influences team or network members to perform their duties at their upmost. This is due to the mind set of distributed leaders where they empower, delegate authority, distribute leadership roles, share leadership amongst team members, dispense accountability and responsibility (Fityzgerald *et al.,* 2003; Binci, Cerruti and Braganza, 2016; Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017). The distribution of leadership is however based on identifying potential suitable leaders on the basis of their traits and quality which are required to perform a specific role in a specific

time (Bush, 2018). It is organisational leadership which identifies potential leaders who are thought to be suitable to perform a designated management role that they are expected to be fit for. The uniqueness of distributed leadership approach to organisational management is its organisational knowledge sharing through effective communication and information exchange. This leads to better understanding of the organisational goal achievement essentiality to the future of individual and organisational goal which distributed leaders tend to align to a combine collective goal.

One interesting insight of distributed leadership reflected the data gathering process was that those leaders who described their leadership practice of various leadership styles, has recognised distributed leadership as an effective tool of organisational transformation initiatives implementation. This recognition of the uniqueness of distributed leadership in the implementation large scale transformation initiative was captured as a reflection of organisational leaders. Those leaders despite being anything but distributed leaders did confirm the suitability of this approach in the achievement of organisational goals. This is in line with distributed leadership discussions that states the popularity of this team/collective leadership approach as a constructive collaborative leadership effort that assist organisations to achieve their collective goal (Canterino *et al.,* 2020; Bush, 2018).

This research based on distributed leadership literature review perceived this leadership approach as a suitable leadership approach to organisations going through their transformational phase. However, interviewed organisational leaders referred to this leadership approach as a unique and effective approach in organisations planning their transformation initiatives. This is due to empowerment, delegation, sharing and innovative nature of distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002; Zhu *et al.,* 2018; Youngs, 2020), as well as its principles of sharing, collaborating, collectively operating and the ability of assembling networks of potential leaders, regardless of their organisational ranking with different expertise or traits (Gronn 2003; Turner and Baker, 2018; Arar and Taysum, 2020).

5.3.2 Organisational Transformation Initiatives as Understood by Leaders

There were similarities between the understanding and description of organisational transformation between organisational leaders' interpretation and scholars' definition. This was captured in the data analysis chapter, which captured the organisational and personal perception of large-scale organisational transformation initiatives. Under this discussion were number of aspects or elements which were perceived as influencers on the implementation of

those transformation initiatives. Those elements are discussed in the sub-sections below, stating that transformation initiative is a process which is essential for organisational survival and prosperity (Kempster *et al.,* 2014; White *et al.,* 2016; Kupa and Komlosi, 2020) and exploring leadership approaches which are suitable during different organisational phases (Canterino *et al.,* 2020).

5.3.2.1 Obstacles Effecting Organisational Transformation Implementation

Organisational leaders identified five main obstacles which affect the execution and implementation of large-scale transformation initiatives. Resistance to change is a part of cognitive composition of human psychological structure which links change to uncertainty is the first main identified obstacles (Burns, Hughes and By, 2016; MackKillop, 2018; Kovynyov, Buerck and Mikut, 2020). Interviewed organisational leaders expressed this obstacle as '*Resistance to change is one of the main issues here, you know people usually prefer to secure where they are. They don't want to change and that is the challenge' (Int 1).* This obstacle is pretty much related to other obstacles which in this research summed all to one factor that dilutes this obstacle with other obstacles.

Many organisational leaders who acknowledged human resistance as a main transformation initiatives implementation obstacle, recognised distributed leadership approach as an essential element of transformational process execution. That is due to distributed leadership character and the nature of aligning human personal interest and organisational goals to a collective organisational goal (Gronn, 2002; Fitzsimons, James and Denyer, 2011; Youngs, 2020). Collectively, aligning personal interest and organisational goals influences organisational members to execute the planned transformational initiatives as it serves their personal interest as well as the organisational goal. Practicing distributed leadership in organisations going through large-scale transformation initiatives reduces human resistance to change.

At the same time, other organisational leaders who believed that human resistance is one of the main obstacles to transformational implementation acknowledged communication as an essential element which dilutes this obstacle risk. Organisational leaders realised the outcome of effective communication assisting leaders in aligning organisational and individual interest into one collective goal (Mendy, 2007; Kupa and Komlosi, 2020). Effective communication assist in convincing organisational members with the importance and impact of implementing

the organisational transformation process on the future of the organisation. This is another reflection of this discussion, as distributed leadership nature evolves around the concept of working collectively to achieve organisational goal (Gronn, 2002; Hristov, Scott and Minocha, 2018; Baiyere, Sakmela and Tapanainen, 2020; Konvynyov, Buerck and Mikut, 2020). Convincing organisation members through unfolding the necessity and essentiality of those planned transformation initiatives are vital to the prosperity of the organisation.

Communication was the second main obstacle and a barrier blocking the achievement of transformation initiatives as planned and expected by organisational leadership. This research agrees with the dilemma of miscommunication being an obstacle to transformation efforts execution. The essentiality of communication in the transformation process emerges from the importance of sharing the same information both horizontally cross boundaries and vertically across different organisational layers. The effectiveness of communication throughout the organisation is a challenging process which requires competent leaders and suitable leadership approach that is instrumental in delivering the organisational message to the organisation's members. However, the means of communicating is even a bigger obstacle as it requires leaders with suitable social skills and traits.

The third obstacle identified was the uncertainty which emerges as a result of unclear organisational messages and communications which is one of the reasons of human resistance towards changes. The ambiguity created by ineffective communication is a direct cause of uncertainty and even the impression of the lack of vision at the top organisational level.

Organisational structures were identified as the fourth transformation implementation obstacle. As much as it could be an obstacle, it could also be overcome by implementing the suitable leadership approach to management which would follow up the implementation of a transformation initiatives as expected by organisational leadership. On the other hand, leadership has been identified as the fifth transformational implementation obstacle.

Those interviewed organisational leaders who perceived human aspects, lack of vision and miscommunication were indirectly referring to traits and characters needed in leaders during such phase. This research was referring to those traits and characteristics as suitable social and leadership traits which are required to lead organisations through their transformational efforts in different phases. Suitable leadership approach is a main pillar in reducing those identified obstacles as stated by participants. Resistance, uncertainty, and communication are

all related to leadership approach and leader traits and as highlighted distributed leadership as a suitable leadership approach. The nature of leadership which evolves around the concept of assembling network of leaders with various traits and competencies from different organisational layers makes it a more dynamic multi-functional leadership practice. It focuses on aligning personal interest and organisational goal in a single collective goal. This makes human resistance to change less harsh through convincing them by communicating clear organisational message stating the essentiality of change to the prosperity of the organisation. Therefore, implementing distributed leadership minimises the effect of those obstacles on the organisational goal achievement whether its organisational transformation or any other initiative. In other words, leadership as a management practice is the main obstacle effecting large scale transformational efforts of achievement unless suitable leadership approach is practiced.

5.3.2.2 Elements Essential to Organisational Transformation Implementation

Similarities were observed between data extracted from the face-to-face interviews and identification of leadership as an essential element of organisational transformation initiatives. This similarity proves the reviewed literature identification of leadership as an essential element and tool which is instrumental in the process of large-scale transformation initiatives execution. During the process of data gathering and analysis, some interesting observations were sighted linking organisational leaders' perception of essential elements on the execution of transformation initiatives to leadership. Although reviewed literature and extracted data acknowledged leadership as an essential element of organisational transformation, however the literature didn't highlight or specify which type of leadership style or leader (Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018; Arar and Taysum, 2020; Stark, 2020). Leadership was recognised by majority of organisational participants as the most important element leading to successful execution of planned large scale transformational efforts. Leaders were perceived by participants as pillars of planned transformational change execution. In order for those leaders to execute those initiatives effectively, they need to be equipped with the tools which assist them in executing those initiatives such as suitable traits, social skills, knowledge and qualification. Choosing potential organisational leaders who are both capable and eager to lead their organisations towards achieving their collective organisational goal is an obligation of the organisation itself. Leaders should be able to convince organisations members with the effect of transformation on the organisation future and influence them to efficiently execute

their duties as expected. Leaders are only able to convince and influence their team members, if they possess suitable social traits, personal skills and knowledge.

Leaders are expected to have social skills which enable them to communicate with team members, organisational workforce more widely and effectively. Leaders with knowledge convince organisational members, with the essentiality of transformation efforts in achieving organisational prosperity and growth. They inspire the whole organisation to perform at its up most to achieve the collective aligned organisational goal. These above are characteristics of distributed leadership theory (Lumby, 2019; Youngs, 2020). Distributed leadership is about assembling a formal platform where leadership is shared amongst team members with different set of traits and qualities which enable them to perform their leadership duties when the situation requires them to lead (Gronn, 2002; Bolden, 2007; Liu, 2020).

Communication was recognised by a significant number of participants as a contributor to organisational transformation execution efforts. No doubt that communication is an essential element of organisational transformation implementation process, as leaders communicating the organisational message assist in revealing the aim and necessity of the transformation initiative to the future of the organisation. Effective communication and accurate information define the roles of each individual, helping in the convincing and inspiring efforts of organisational leaders.

On the other hand, social and cultural element were perceived by a considerable percentage of organisational leaders as essential to transformation effort execution. To participants, social and cultural structures can be an essential element of transformation execution as much as it could be an obstacle to this process. Social and cultural element is an important element to achieve the desired organisational goal (Kovynyov, Buerck and Mikut, 2020). These elements are instrumental in managing human resistance to change which emerges as a natural reaction to any proposed change (Mendy, 2012; Heyden *et al.,* 2017; Stark, 2020).

The interviewed organisational leaders identified leadership, communication, and social cultural structures as main elements of organisational transformational implementation. However, those were also part of the identified obstacles to the execution of transformation initiatives. These elements although separately identified, they are pretty much linked to each other. Leadership has been recognised as the main element contributing to the implementation of the transformational initiative process without proposing the suitable leadership approach (Hughes, 2017; Waddell *et al.,* 2019). They listed the characteristics

required in the suitable leadership approach without naming it. According to them, leader should be knowledgeable, with social traits, capable of communicating, inspirable, convincing, and qualified. They even went more to stating that leaders should have different set of traits and characteristics to enable the organisation to implement its transformation initiatives. These are the characteristics of distributed leadership approach which believes in the principle of sharing knowledge, power, responsibilities and aligning individual interests to organisational goals (Gronn, 2002; Bennet *et al.,* 2003; Gronn, 2008; Turner and Baker, 2018; Canterino *et al.,* 2020). Communication, which was perceived as an element of successful implementation tool for organisational transformation, is one of the traits of suitable leaders. The effective communication of the organisational message and the necessity of the transformational effort is convincing the organisational with the rationale behind the transformation decision and proves the vision clarity of the organisation (Walo and Ringen, 2018; Baiyere, Salmela and Tapanainen, 2020). However, these are again one of the principles and characteristics of distributed leadership theory, the link between those to identified elements is clear here (Canterino *et al.,* 2020). Where communication skills is one of the traits and principle of distributed leadership, participants identified communication skills as one of the characteristics of a suitable leadership approach in organisations change (Turner and Baker, 2018; Yongs, 2020). On the other hand, social traits are recognised as one of the main elements of transformation implementation and again this is one of the characteristics of distributed leaders. Distributed leaders are expected to have a set of different traits and characteristics where social traits are one of those set of characteristics. Therefore, social traits element is related to the earlier identified leadership element. All of those identified elements are brought together under the concept of distributed leadership which this research identifies as suitable leadership approach in organisations going through their organisational phase (Cirrie *et al.,* 2011; Holloway, Nielsen and Saltmarsh, 2018; Liu, 2020). Based on the above discussions, leadership is an essential element in implementing planned organisational transformation plans and distributed leadership is the suitable leadership approach due to its principles and characters.

5.3.2.3 Organisational Leaders' Perception of Organisational Transformation

Organisational transformation process was discussed and was looked at from three different prospective. These prospective are linked together in reciprocal ties which proves the concept of the importance of leadership in organisational transformation implementation. This was stated in the literature review chapter, where reviewed literature stated that leadership is an

important tool which facilitates the execution of planned transformation initiatives (Denis *et al.,* 2012; Binci, Cerruti and Braganza, 2016; White *et al.,* 2016). The type of leadership approach which could be instrumental in this process hasn't been identified nor highlighted in organisational transformation literature (Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018). However, we were able to highlight the suitability of distributed leadership in organisational transformation implementation. This due to the identified prospects of organisational transformation leaderships' perception, where the communication and organisational culture were the two others prospective of transformation initiatives (Waddell *et al.,* 2019).

The identification of suitable leadership approach is of great importance to delegate the role of leading the organisation to implement planned transformational initiatives (Hughes, 2017; Stark, 2020). Based on this, leadership is perceived by organisational leaders as the main element which could ensure the execution of this process in a timely manner (Heyden *et al.,* 2017; Turner and Baker, 2018). Leadership literature stated that it is distributed leadership which is more suitable in leading organisation towards achieving their goals in a growing organisational complexity (Antonakis and House, 2014; Hovik and Hanseen, 2015; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Liu, 2020). Participants as well have identified distributed leadership as suitable leadership approach. The essentiality of communicating and explaining the importance of implementing those changes to team members highlights the need of team-based leadership, where teams are composed of leaders with different set of qualities, traits and exposed to different organisational layers (Li *et al.,* 2020). Social skills is another important trait of suitable leaders which enable them to penetrate different social and cultural structure whether organisational or social and this is one of the principles of distributed leadership (Bush, 2018; Turner and Baker, 2018; Li *et al.,* 2020). Therefore, those different prospective are brought together through suitable leadership style which has the leadership traits, effective communication, and social attributes.

5.3.2.4 Suitable Leadership in Organisations Going through Transformation Phase

At the literature review stage of this research more team-oriented leadership approaches to organisational management and leadership were acknowledged by scholars as being more suitable in leading organisations (Le Blanc, González-Romá and Wang, 2020; Li *et al.,* 2020). The philosophical prospective of suitable leadership approach is driven from the need of effective communication, convincing, delegating and power sharing class of leadership style (Alghanem *et al.,* 2020). This is due to the increasing organisational complexity in context,

geographical spread, and structures which in turn requires more flexible effective leadership approaches (Turner and Baker, 2018), which was also confirmed by the interviewed organisational leasers. Therefore, organisational leaders stated that leadership approaches with more concentration on effective communication is needed in transformational efforts. Although interviewed leaders have not specifically named or highlighted the leadership type, this research agrees and highlights the importance of adopting leadership approaches that are effective in conveying organisational messages. This is based on the fact of the need to convince the organisational members with the necessity of the transformational change to organisations' future. The arguments of participants and scholars were found to be very much similar in their views that effective communication sways team members to achieve the collective organisational goal and the alignment of the organisational goal motivates employees to perform reducing the natural human resistance to change (Burns, Hughes and By, 2016; MackKillop, 2018).

Team oriented based leadership approach to management and its construct were found to be widely recognised by interviewed organisational leaders as a suitable approach to organisational management during transformational initiatives (Hansen, Vaagen and Van Oorschot, 2020; Le Blanc, González-Romá and Wang, 2020). Majority of participants pinpointed this approach as suitable leadership style in organisations going through their transformational phase. As mentioned earlier, team based or what is referred to as team/collective leadership in chapter 2 is constructed of number of constructs upon which distributed leadership was recognised as a more comprehensive form of this approach.

Distributed leadership is what is also called collective leadership or collaborative leadership (Turner and Baker, 2018). Distributed leadership is not about an individual rather than people whom this individual is collectively working and interacting with, in other words, where individuals collectively operate creating greater value than one person can (Gronn, 2002; Holloway, Nielsen and Saltmarsh, 2018; Canterino et al., 2020). At the organisational level, senior leadership or the person on top simply can no longer deal solely with all complex economic environment and the organisational complexity. Distributed Leadership is about assembling a complete systematic process which collectively encourages the creation of innovative leaders who are able to lead different transformation initiatives within organisational boundaries. Distributed leadership was acknowledged by organisational leaders as an element of successful implementation of organisational initiative whether its transformational effort or any organisational initiatives (Liu, 2020; Bush, 2018). In organisational mindset distributed leadership is a shift from command, control, and authority leadership to more

collective, coordinative and collaborative leadership approach (Gronn, 2002; Arar and Taysum, 2020). Distributed leadership does not mean organisations has no top leader to the contradictory it identifies different leaders from different organisational layers with different expertise and skills carrying out formal/informal leadership roles which are needed in different stages of the organisational change (Alghanem *et al.,* 2020).

The empowerment, power delegation, responsibility sharing, and distribution of leadership were recognised alongside the holistic perception of organisational leadership being the basis for identifying distributed leadership as an instrumental effective leadership approach to organisational initiatives (Gronn, 2002; Fitzyderald *et al.,* 2003; Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017).

There are similarities in the perception of team-based leadership approaches between researcher presumption, participants and scholars' arguments reviewed in chapter 2. where distributed leadership was perceived literally as an extended form of team-collective leadership perception of organisational leadership. Those participants who highlighted their preferences towards more communication concentrated leadership styles were indirectly describing distributed leadership principles. As a closure to this section, team-based leadership approach represented by distributed leadership theory is perceived by both organisational leaders and scholars as a suitable leadership approach in organisations going through their transformational phase.

5.3.3 Organisational Leaders' Team/Collective Approach Perception

Team/collective leadership approach and its different constructs were recognised by majority of the participants in the above section discussion as a suitable leadership approach in organisational transformation. Distributed leadership was confirmed by significant number of interviewed organisational leaders as a suitable leadership approach in organisation going through their transformational phase. Another smaller group of interviewed leaders indirectly recognised the principles of distributed leadership theory as suitable leadership approach by highlighting the need of communication focused leadership. Distributed leadership was recognised by participants as a way forward and an effective element in leading organisations towards achieving their goals. This confirms scholars' statements of distributed leadership being a convenient leadership approach in today's highly competitive and complex environment to lead organisational initiatives (Bush, 2018; Fitzgerald *et al.,* 2003; Bolden, 2007; Currie *et al.,* 2011; Canterino *et al.,* 2020).

5.3.3.1 Organisational Leadership Perception of Distributed Leadership Effectiveness

Participants described distributed leadership as an effective leadership approach in organisations going through their transformational phase. Distributed leaders' interest evolves around the desire of achieving the entire organisational goal collectively rather that personal goals, therefore they align members' personal interest to the organisational interest (Floyd and Fung, 2017; Youngs, 2020). Aligning personal interest with organisational goal motivates team (network) members to achieve this collective goal (Gronn, 2002). The practice of distributed leadership as described by participants and literature pays attention to ties quality between team members (actors). Distributed leadership is assembled from potential leaders with different set of traits and skills which might be needed throughout different stages of the transformation (Gronn, 2002; Turner and Baker, 2018; Alghanem *et al,* 2020).

Distributed leadership is a leadership practice which could be embraced by all types of organisations regardless of their size, workforce or turnover. However, it is more essential to larger organisations where they are more complex in terms of context, structure, workforce, and geographical spread (Winlkinson and Young, 2005; Turner and Baker, 2018; Tourish, 2019). The philosophical reasoning of distributed mind set leaders identifies and verifies potential leaders with required characters to lead the organisation in different situations. The distributed nature which promotes sharing, distributing, participating, collaborating, empowering and mainly collective in its view of the organisation is supportive in the quest of achieving the organisational goal.

This team-based leadership theory construct seeks to create a formal platform where leadership is distributed, and its practice is governed by organisational leadership. This required the assembly of network of leaders with multiple traits which allow them to assume leadership roles when needed (Leithwood, 2019). This is based on the stage of the transformation process and the quality of trait needed to assume that role. Therefore, distributed leadership is acknowledged by participants and scholars' arguments discussed in chapter 2 capable of managing different activities by different leaders. This in return reveals distributed leadership as a multi-functional leadership practice due to its ability to manage different situations or events simultaneously as a result to the leadership distribution nature of this approach.

The effectiveness of distributed leadership in addition to all discussions above also emerges from the transparency of distributed leaders seeking to define the roles, responsibility and

accountability of each team member (Arar and Taysum, 2020). This motivates and inspires team (network) member to perform his role efficiently to achieve the collective organisational goal. The more roles and responsibilities are clear the more can be expected from team members in terms of their performance and organisational goal achievement.

As discussed above, distributed leadership is recognised by scholars and explored in this research by organisational leaders' reflections as suitable managerial platform of leadership. This is a result of the principles and nature of distributed leadership, where its understanding of leadership revolves around the idea of sharing, distributing, delegating leadership and power to leaders based on their fitness to lead (Holloway, Nielsen and Saltmarsh, 2018). The leadership role is assigned based upon the suitability of leaders' set of skills and traits to lead in a specific time where the situation requires his identified characteristics (Lumby, 2019; Lie *et al.,* 2020). The fact that distributed leadership aims to create a platform of leaders with various skills, makes the organisation capable of leading different initiatives and handling multiple organisational events due to it multi skilled available leadership resources. This is why this approach is perceived as the suitable leadership approach in leading organisations through their transformational initiative implementation.

5.3.3.2 Distributed Leadership Impact on Organisation Transformation

As distributed leadership effectiveness was discussed in the above section, where majority of the participants acknowledged it as a successful functional leadership approach which is instrumental in organisational transformation implementation. Distributed leadership was explored, and its principles were highlighted in a discussion to understand its effectiveness besides its impact on the execution of transformation initiatives. The effectiveness of distributed leadership as discussed and highlighted is no doubt associated with impact on the transformation process which will be discussed in this section. The principles of this leadership approach were found to be of impact on the implementation of large-scale transformation initiatives (Gronn, 2002; Holloway, Nielsen and Saltmarsh, 2018). The levels of this impact were explored through analysing the gathered data, where impact was confirmed by interviewed organisational leaders.

Distributed leadership has been perceived by participants as having significant impact of the transformation process, a statement that is agreed upon by literature and researchers. The distributed leadership principles of empowering, delegating responsibilities, aligning personal

interest to organisational goal and distributing leadership amongst their teams' lead to timely execution of the planned transformational plan. As discussed above this leads to inspiring team members to implement those planned large scale transformational initiatives in an efficient manner (Cannatelli *et al.,* 2017; Youngs, 2020). The philosophical perspective of distributed leadership of assembling a formal governed platform of potential leaders with various traits transforming the general perception of leadership practice during transformational phase (Canterino *et al.,* 2020). Organisations are capable of managing multi events which could occur during different stages of the transformation simultaneously due to the capacity having various leadership talents (Turner and Baker, 2018).

This leadership approach to management no doubt positively impacts the organisational transformation process, but the level of that impact will depend on different teams' capacity of executing and exercising distributed leadership principles. The level and significance of this impact can be gauged from each team performance which could be captured in their key performance indicators.

This impact was explored through participants' reflection from their experiences and available literature linking distributed leadership to organisational transformation. This impact was verified by interviewed organisational leaders nevertheless, some argued the extent of this impact, suggesting gauging it through the successful implementation of the process. Distributed leadership positive impact was a natural result of the formal assembly of a platform which encourages potential leaders to exercise their leadership skills when needed (Liu, 2020). This leads to the capacity of the organisation to engage in multi situations and organisational events throughout different transformational stages in a constructive way impacting the process of transformation execution (Hristov, Scott and Minocha, 2018).

5.3.4 Summary and Reflections on Research Question 1 Discussion

The first research question aimed at exploring the enactment of distributed leadership in organisations going through large scale transformational initiatives. The distributed leadership enactment is grasped from the interviewed organisational leaders' reflections on leadership and organisational transformation matters. Distributed leadership enactment was examined from three different perspectives to validate the level and the means of its enactment in organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives. This research proposes that distributed leadership is a suitable leadership approach in organisations going through their transformational phase, which is acknowledged through participants' reflections. Exploring the

perception of participants with regards to organisational transformation and leadership approaches with the attempt of gauging a suitable form of leadership as identified by organisational leaders was achieved.

Leadership style in organisations going through transformational changes was the first explored perspective. In this perspective, views about their preferred leadership approach were captured and discussed. Although the participants came from an industry where discipline is perceived as top priority and was historically transactional in their leadership, they recognised team-based leadership approach as their favourable practice. Some participants described their leadership approach as authoritarian and still recognised team-based leadership where all team members collaborate to achieve the organisational goal. Even more organisational leaders who described their leadership as mixed or a combination of leadership approaches acknowledged the importance of team-based leadership approach to achieve their overall organisational goals. They justified exercising different leadership practices due to the nature of the industry they are operating in, on lower technical level they practiced transactional leadership and on managerial levels they practiced team/collective leadership. Team/collective leadership approach was confirmed by organisational leaders as a suitable leadership practice, however some participants who adopted mixed leadership approach practiced it situationally. Organisational leaders who are not team-oriented leaders perceived this approach as suitable leadership practice acknowledging the literature review identified statement of the suitability of team/collective leadership in organisational management.

This research assumed distributed leadership to be a suitable team/collective leadership construct in managing organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives. This was based on the arguments that distributed leadership is instrumental in organisational goal achievement due to its principles. The collective, collaborative, participative, sharing, democratic and inspiring elements of distributed leadership increased its popularity amongst current leaders and scholars. This is due to its inspirational and motivational effect on organisational members to achieve the organisational goal through the execution of the planned transformation initiatives. Distributed leadership is concerned with creating a formal platform which governs the distribution of leadership to team members with required leadership skills and personal traits. When asked about their perception of distributed leadership, many of the participants recognised it as a helpful leadership instrument which facilitates the execution of planned transformational initiatives. Those interviewed organisational leaders acknowledged the suitability of this leadership approach due to increasing organisational complexity in context and structure as argued by scholars. The roots

of distributed leadership theory emerge from the complementary phenomenon of collective leadership which is based on sharing leadership amongst team members with different sets of traits. This perception of leadership creates a platform of leaders from different levels of the organisation who are exposed to different organisational layers, creating inspirable, motivational, innovative and creative momentum to achieve the collective goal. The above mentioned increasing organisational and business environment complexity makes it challenging for singular leadership believers to apply in a vibrant economical and business atmosphere. In other words, it is difficult for a single individual to manage the entire organisation efficiently alone. That is the rationale behind increasing popularity of distributed leadership. The more diversified set of characteristics, traits and skills are available to lead the organisation, the more likely success will be achieved in executing organisational initiatives and could be engaged in multi organisational events. This is due to the availability of leaders with various leadership skills which could lead when the situation requires them to assume responsibilities based on the requirement of their identified set of skills.

The constructive organisational atmosphere is based on the foundation of encouragement to team members to perform and be more creative in the way they do their jobs (Amels *et al.,* 2020; Arar and Taysum, 2020). This is due to the increased levels of individual satisfaction and self-stem driven from the alignment of personal interest with the organisational interest, which leads to the eagerness of employees to achieve the collective organisational goal (Lumby, 2019).

It is worth mentioning that the enhancement in capacity level of leaders to perform their assigned leadership responsibilities due to the knowledge exchange between team members, allowing the increase of organisational capability to perform multi organisational tasks (Liu, Bellibaş and Gümüş, 2020). This is a result of effective communication and information sharing nature of distributed leadership concept. The interesting observation from the extracted data is there where organisational leaders who are distributed, and team leadership oriented in its philosophical fundamentals without being familiar with it as a leadership theory. This suggests that distributed leadership is a common-sense leadership approach in such organisational complexity and volatile environment.

Participants perception of organisational transformation was the second prospective to be explored as part of understanding distributed leadership enactment in organisational transformation initiatives. This research approached this prospective by capturing the organisational leaders' views on obstacles, important elements, leaders' perception and

suitable leadership approach in organisational transformation. Five main obstacles effecting organisational transformation were highlighted amongst which are related or are due to each other occurrence. Human resistance, communication, uncertainty, organisational structure, and leadership were identified as major obstacles effecting organisational transformation execution. Human resistance was identified by participants as the main obstacle to transformation implementation and this is a natural reaction to every change which as a result that creates uncertainty amongst organisational members, which was perceived by smaller number of the participants as a main obstacle. Those two obstacles are related to communication and information exchange which is identified by organisational leaders as a main transformation obstacle. Effective communication and knowledge exchange amongst the principles of distributed leadership is the mean of reducing human resistance to changes and convince them with the necessity of the organisational transformation decision (Bolden, 2007; Bush, 2018; Canterino *et al.,* 2020). Human resistance towards organisational changes is due to the uncertainty which is associated with any kind of changes (Waddell *et al.,* 2019). Therefore, communication is an essential solution to dilute those two obstacles which are related to each other occurrence.

Organisational structure was identified by interviewed leaders as an obstacle to transformational initiatives implementation, and leadership practice was perceived the participants as another obstacle. In their argument's participants stated that unless having appropriate structures which define the roles and responsibilities of each team member it is challenging to achieve organisational goals. Leadership, on the other hand, is argued by participants of being the solid foundation of organisation goal achievement. This research perceives leadership as the platform where all responsibilities, power delegation and roles are defined making it clear to team members of what is expected from them during the transformation phase (Turner and Baker, 2018). Therefore, suitable leadership approach has a holistic view of the organisation resources allocation, defining roles and responsibilities of each team member, which are essential to achieve expected organisational goals.

The essential elements influencing the implementation of transformation initiatives were also discussed in this prospective to understand the genuine perception of organisational leaders. Three elements were identified from the organisational leaders' reflections to the questions asked which were as well identified as obstacles to organisational transformation initiatives implementation. Those elements are leadership, communication, social and cultural elements which were as well recognised as obstacles to organisational transformation. Leadership was acknowledged as the most important element of organisational transformation initiative by a

significant number of the interviewed sample. Leaders are identified by literature and confirmed by participants as being the backbone and pillar of smooth implementation of transformation initiative. Effective leadership no doubt assures the effectiveness of team members' in achieving personal and organisational aligned collective goal (Alghanem *et al.,* 2020; Attar and Abdul-Kareem, 2020). The achievement of top-level performance to implement those large-scale transformational initiatives demands knowledgeable, competent, motivational, inspiring, and socially skilful leaders (MackKillop, 2018; Woolsey, 2020). Those are compulsory characteristics of leaders who are able to influence their teams and colleagues to execute planned large scale transformation initiatives as called for by the organisation (Turner and Baker, 2018; Stark, 2020). As much as those characteristics are essential, they are not as effective without being associated with the right social traits which inspire and convince team members with the necessity of those organisational structural transformations (Fadnavis, Najarzadeh and Badurdeen, 2020). That's why organisational leaders identified social and cultural elements as essential to transformation initiatives execution. However, social, and cultural traits as argued by scholars (Horta and Santos, 2020; Kupa and Komlosi,2020) and proved by participants discussion as essential leadership characters. Those discussed characteristics in addition to the principle of assembling teams of potential leaders are the fundamentals of distributed leadership theoretical approach to organisational management (Gronn, 2002; Youngs, 2020).

Communication was identified by interviewed organisational leaders as a facilitative element of transformational initiatives process achievement. In our discussions in the literature review chapter and data analysis chapter, effective communication was identified as one of the essential leadership traits. This is as well one of the principles of distributed leadership and characters which is used to convince the organisational members with the necessity of change motivating them to achieve the collective organisational goal. Leaders are supposed to sway, influence and motivate team members to achieve and accept the new transformational culture by aligning personal with organisational goals in a collective goal. This leads us to confirm that leadership was the most recognised element effecting organisational transformation.

This perspective has taken into consideration the way organisational leaders interpreted and perceived organisational transformation theory. Again, similarities were identified between the elements facilitating transformation implementation, obstacles and the organisational leader's perception. Organisational leaders identified organisational transformation as a process and a means of transforming organisations towards being competitive and more profitable coping with global business environment changes. Organisational leaders acknowledged

organisational transformation as the means of maintaining organisational continuity in a swift rapid evolving business condition and growing organisational complexity. Organisational leaders confirmed scholars' arguments highlighting leadership as the major contributor to organisational transformation (Turner and Baker, 2018; Liu, 2020; Youngs, 2020). The literature reviewed stated that leadership is the biggest contributor to organisational transformation implementation, however it didn't state which type of leader and at which stage of the transformation process (Waddell *et al.,* 2019; Fadnavis, Najarzadah and Badurdeen, 2020). Communication was also identified as a major contributor to the transformation process through reducing the actor's resistance to change, uncertainty and convince organisational members of the feasibility of the organisational change (Kupa and Komlosi, 2020; Pashkus and Dragun, 2020). Organisational culture which promotes change is perceived a contributor to transformation implementation process, however this is very much achievable with having leaders capable of effectively communicating and willing to share knowledge with team members (Al-Kurdi, El-Haddadeh and Eldabi, 2020; Zhao *et al.,* 2020).

Organisational leaders' identification of suitable leadership approach was explored in this perspective to understand the intellectual orientation of those leaders. Distributed leadership was positively accepted by interviewed organisational leaders as suitable leadership approach during transformation initiatives implementation confirming the literature statement. The principles of distributed leadership assembled this approach as a facilitative organisational management tool due to its nature of forming leaders with different traits and characteristics in a formal leadership distribution structure (Canterino *et al.,* 2020; Youngs, 2020). This research views distributed leadership as a blend of different types of leaders who are utilised at different situations as needed and as the transformational stage requires. Due to its nature, distributed leadership is a multi-functional leadership approach, where different leaders could be engaged in different organisational initiatives simultaneously (Alghanem *et al.,* 2020; Liu, 2020). The effectiveness of this leadership approach is confirmed by both scholars and organisational leaders interviewed in this research (Brower *et al.,* 2020; Printy and Liu, 2020; Joo,2020).

Team/collective leadership approach is the third prospective, where distributed leadership theory is explored in organisations going through transformation initiatives. Distributed leadership was acknowledged by many of the interviewed organisational leaders as an effective leadership approach in organisational management. Distributed leadership was positively accepted as a managerial formal platform where leadership is distributed, and responsibilities are assigned to team members (Patterson *et al.,* 2020; Printy and Liu, 2020).

Those team members amongst which leadership is distributed are from different organisational hierarchal levels and with different sets of characteristics (Arar and Taysum, 2020). This helps creating a leadership incubator which provides the organisation with future qualified leaders. This comes as a natural outcome of the view of organisational leadership to distributed leadership theory.

This perspective shapes the principles amongst which distributed leadership is built on which believes in achieving the overall organisational goal collectively (Hristov, Scott and Minocha, 2018). These principles are constructed based on collective, collaborative, participative, sharing and distributing leadership to other organisational members without illuminating the accountability factors (Alghanem *et al.,* 2020). Although leadership has been distributed and team members are empowered to exercise leadership roles, they are still accountable to the team leader for executing their assigned roles (Holloway, Nilsen and Saltmarsh, 2018; Holloway, 2021). Distributed leadership can be described as a fabrication of different types of leaders with different sets of traits and skills which are suitable to manage different organisational events at the same time (Liu, 2020; Holloway, 2021). Organisations with distributed leadership mindsets are described by interviewed organisational leaders as multi-functional organisation with multifunctional leadership which has the capacity to lead different leadership activities at the same time. This is achievable because of the fundamental structure of distributed leadership which assembles a formal constructed structure of potential leaders amongst which leadership could be assigned to (Canterino *et al.,* 2020; Youngs, 2020). Interviewed leaders confirmed the constructive impact of distributed leadership on large scale organisation transformation initiatives. Regardless of the feasibility of the transformation decision itself, distributed leadership is a means of achieving the planned transformation initiatives in efficient timely manner as expected by organisational leadership (Lumby, 2019). The research investigated the distribution enactment of leadership in organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives. The organisational leaders' perception of distributed leadership was revealed through investigating the way those leaders exercised and practiced their leadership roles. On one hand, there were leaders who believed distributed leadership to be an effective leadership tool and means of managing organisations in a very complex and unpredictable environment. On the other hand, there were leaders with more classical approach to organisational management who stated that distributed leadership alongside other team-based leadership approaches are suitable leadership approach in transformational initiatives. Although the majority of interviewed organisational leaders either practiced or identified distributed leadership as suitable leadership approach to organisational management, they all perceived it as an incubator for organisational leaders' creation. The

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enactment of this leadership approach was a direct natural outcome of organisational belief in the complexity of organisational context and structures which made it extremely challenging to an organisation to be led through one single individual. So, the enactment was a sentiment of diluting the risk associated to organisational leadership through distributing responsibilities and task amongst bigger numbers of potential leaders.

5.4 Research Question 2 Discussions:

This section will discuss and illustrate findings extracted from the gathered data from semi-structured questionnaire during the face-to-face interviews. This research question aimed to explore organisational leaders' views on the effect of social studies research on enhancing distributed leadership effectiveness and impact. This research identified social network theory as a suitable social studies theory due to its nature which differentiates between human and non-human actors (Borgatti *et al.,* 2009; Carter *et al.,* 2015).

5.4.1 Social Studies and Human Aspects

The research assumption regarding the influence of social studies on organisational capacity to implement and execute large scale transformational initiatives were comprehensively discussed. The argument that actors are change agents who are distributed leaders in as much as they are brought together as situationally required and interact together in a collaborative way was reviewed (Liao *et al.,* 2018; Mathar and Gaur, 2020). Understanding organisational leaders' perception of the level of influence that social studies had on the enhancement of distributed leadership on transformation initiatives was essential in exploring network leadership.

5.4.1.1 Social Studies Perception in Organisational Transformation

Social studies and human traits were found by interviewed organisational leaders having effectively influencing the organisational behaviour towards planned large scale transformation initiatives. Organisational leaders' reflections acknowledged the literature statement confirming the impact of social studies in enhancing of transformation goals achievement (D'Innocenzo *et al.,* 2014; Benton, 2015; Neumeyer and Santos, 2018). Social studies are recognised by participants and scholars to be a positive contributor to

organisational leaders' capacity in executing planned transformation changes (Valeri and Baggio, 2020). Understanding organisational members' emotional needs and multi-cultural beliefs require leaders to be more emotional intelligent and socially induced to be able to motivate them to achieve organisational goals.

Social and human studies were perceived by interviewed organisational leaders as an effective assistant factor in organisational transformation initiatives implementation. This is based on the radical understanding of team members' intellectual formation, needs, social beliefs and cultural values (Neumeyer and Santos, 2018). Social and human studies are fundamentally based on the idea of exploring the human factor which speeds up and facilitates the transformational implementation through procuring the transformation process in a timely manner (Valeri and Baggio, 2020). This is why social network theory was assumed by this research as a suitable social study theory to investigate the emergence of network leadership.

5.4.1.2 Social Network Theory

The social network theory was discussed and considered during this research course as a suitable social theory which examines and explore the ties between different organisational actors. It is described by literature as a social assembled structure which is contracted of different type of actors. The suitability of this social theory is extracted from the fact that it doesn't only examine the ties between organisational actors, but it also explains the mechanism of this interaction rather than actors' characteristics (D'Innocenzo *et al.,* 2014; Benton, 2015; Shirado and Christakis, 2017). Although social network theory was claimed to be more oriented towards examining ties in groups rather than individuals, however these were not based at a solid evidence as social network principles are constructed on the practice of investigating different types of ties between social units (Cullen-Lester, Maupin and Carter, 2017).

Social network theory is an instrumental tool which facilitates organisations efforts in implementing their transformation initiatives through linking actors within organisational networks to execute those transformation initiatives at their upmost levels (Horak *et al.,* 2019; Kappler, 2019). Strong effective ties between network actors (members) assure efficient implementation of organisational transformation initiatives (Benton, 2015). Social network theory examines the social ties strength and interaction between different organisational actors which is essential in the process of organisational transformation. The stronger ties

between different organisational actors the more effective they become in reciprocal knowledge and communication exchange between different organisational layers (Valeri and Baggio, 2020). Change actors with well-established social ties, communication skills and knowledge are able to connect the larger scale networks within the organisational structures, regardless its hierarchal position (Carter *et al,* 2015; Arar and Taysum, 2020). Networks are formed from different actors which are dyadic, triadic, actor and subset, where social network theory highlights the interaction strengths and density ties between networks. Regardless of the size of the network, complexity or simplicity of its structure the connections between elements are not entirely random in their contextual occurrence (Leithwood and Azah, 2016). The formative construction of the organisational members mindset pays more attention to their networks, and it is up to those network leaders with strong social capacity to bridge gaps between networks identifying organisational opportunities. Therefore, social network theory empowers network leaders to investigate organisational loopholes and leverage on network leaders social and personal abilities to bridge those networks identified shortfalls acting as informal broker between different organisational networks where knowledge is exchanged (Shirado and Christakis, 2017).

Social network theory assists in identifying the capacity of personal and social skills needed to close up any identified organisational loophole within the network structure (Benton, 2015; Knoke and Yang, 2019). The social network theory principles evolve around exploring the density and quality of ties linking different organisational components impacting distributed leadership process of identifying right leader to fill the organisational leadership gap once identified (Meuser *et al.,* 2016; Bush, 2018). Social network theory impact on distributed leadership approach to organisational management is based on social networking ability, influence capability driven from social traits and the social cultural context which affects the process of choosing the right leader at the right time.

One important concept which was recognised by participants confirming the research assumption, was the social distribution of task enactment and organisational leadership responsibilities. This is based on the social traits and the capacity of network members to execute assigned leadership roles as required. This social distribution of task enactment as much as it refers to suitability of social traits, it also refers to the suitability of situation for a certain leader to exercise his leadership skills in that particular time (Borgatti *et al.,* 2009; Hristov, Scott and Minocha, 2018). Leaders amongst which leadership roles are to be assigned to are expected to be knowledgeable, socially skilful and able to communicate with different organisational elements (Horak *et al.,* 2019; Youngs, 2020; Zhao *et al.,* 2020). The

awareness of organisational needs and situational requirement in the process of the social distribution of task enactment is essentially needed.

The interviewed organisational leadership acknowledgment of the social distribution of task enactment confirms the leadership distribution of tasks based on the social capacity of potential leaders (Brennan, 2020; Griffin, 2020). This is due to the need of certain types of leaders with a specific set of personal social traits which enable them to influence and motivate network members to accept organisational changes (Jackson, 2020; Kupa and Komlosi, 2020; Holloway, 2021). The situational distribution of leadership was recognised by organisational leaders and stated by scholars (Gronn, 2002; Shen, 2019; Brennan, 2020; Alghanem *et al.,* 2020; Liu, 2020). In fact, the distributed leadership principles states in its fundamentals the importance of choosing suitable type of leaders who are fit to lead the organisation in a specific situation (Turner and Baker, 2018; Anggraini and Lo, 2020; Youngs, 2020). Leaders who are assigned management roles are not limited to a certain organisational level, they can be from higher or lower hierarchal organisational level depending on their trait suitability to lead (Anderson *et al.,* 2017; MackKilop, 2018; Li *et al.,* 2020). In other words, different leaders with different sets of skills are required to lead in different stages of the transformation phase and that's one of the characteristics of distributed leadership. Therefore, distributed leadership is situational in the sense that the distribution of responsibilities is constructed on the availability of suitable social traits, personal skills, organisational knowledge, desire and ability to lead in a certain stage of the transformation (Kappler, 2019; Canterino *et al.,* 2020; Valeri and Baggio, 2020). The distribution of leadership is situational based on traits, capacity, leadership type, competency, and the situational organisational need of certain leaders with specific set of skills to lead. This leads to the conformation of distributed leadership as a suitable leadership approach in organisations going through transformational changes.

5.4.2 Communications and Ties

The communication effectiveness and impact were acknowledged by organisational leaders in this research, and communication was mentioned as a favourable leadership trait. We shall discuss these two elements below to highlight their importance, relevance to the research objective and assumptions. These discussions are essential because they are linked to the identification of suitable leadership approach to organisational transformation initiatives. These two elements were frequently mentioned as obstacles to transformational initiatives implementation and as essential elements of leadership trait.

5.4.2.1 The Essentiality of Effective Communication

Communication essentiality and importance are confirmed by interviewed organisational leaders as a positive contributor towards the efforts of organisational transformation execution. Effective communication is a mean of convincing organisational members with the necessity of the transformation initiatives to the organisation existence (Lumby, 2019; Arar and Taysum, 2020; Kalogiannidis, 2020). The effort of aligning personal and organisational goal is not achievable without those leaders with effective communications ability (Youngs, 2020). It was notable that effective communication was frequently mentioned throughout the course of this research, as much as communication was perceived as an obstacle to transformational implementation, it has been highlighted as an effective element in achieving the organisational goal.

The human resistance to change is a natural result of the intellectual human formation which associates organisational changes with uncertainty (Turner and Baker, 2018; Waddell *et al.,* 2019). This is due to the ambiguity and unclear vision of the decided organisational transformational change (Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018; Kupa and Komlosi, 2020). On the other hand, effective communication is recognised as an effective element which is instrumental in the achievement of organisational goals (Massarik, 2013; Anderson *et al.,* 2017; Ballaro, Mazzi and Holland, 2020). Effectively communicating the necessity and essentiality of the planned organisational transformation motivates organisational members to achieve organisational goals by convincing them with the impact of this transformation on them personally (Walo and Ringen, 2018; Stark, 2020). That is done by aligning organisational goals to personal interest in a collective organisational goal (Liu, 2020). The clear effective communication of the organisational message to the organisations network accurately has a constructive impact on encouraging collaborative efforts to achieve the overall organisational goal (Canterino, Shani and Cirella, 2018; Jackson, 2020). It is the effective communication across the organisational boundaries at different hierarchal levels which transport the organisational message clearly and exchange knowledge between networks (Meuser *et al.,* 2016; Leithwood, 2019). Figure 12 below illustrates the effective communication attributes that enhances the implementation of organisational transformation initiatives.

Figure 12 Effective Communication Attributes
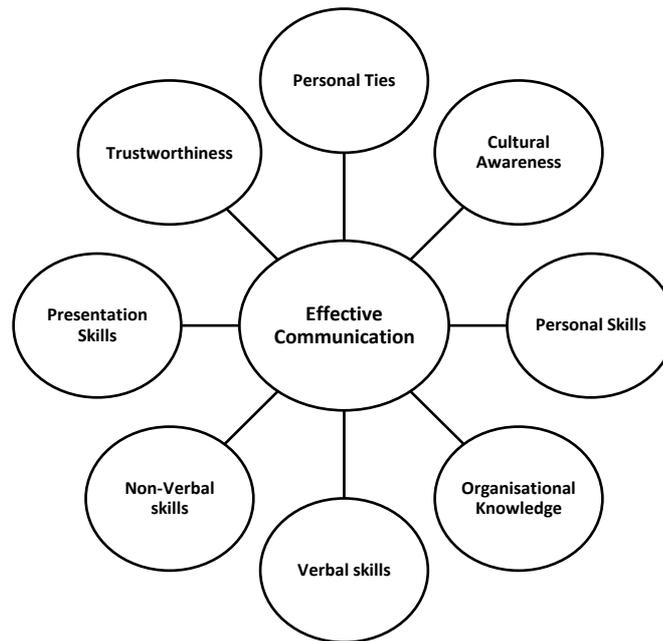
5.4.2.2 Communication as a Leaders' Social Trait

Social traits and personal skills were identified by organisational leaders as an effective element in the implementation of organisational transformation initiatives. Communication ability was specifically identified both as obstacle to organisational transformation implementation and an element to avoid any organisational change implementation obstacle. Effective communication as confirmed by scholars makes the transformation initiatives a smooth process due to clear organisational message flow and knowledge exchange between different components regardless of their structures' status (Chiu, Balkundi and Weinberg, 2017; Rosenbaum, More and Stefanie, 2018; Ballaro, Mazzi and Holland, 2020). Organisational leaders who described their leadership style as classical authoritarian leadership approach recognised communication as an important element in organisational management. Communication is recognised by interviewed leaders as a favourable social trait due to the capacity of convincing, motivating and inspiring of team members to achieve the organisational goal. Communication assists in aligning the personal and organisational goal in a collective organisational goal in collaboration between all organisational components (Walo and Ringen, 2018).

The effective communication is a facilitative managerial instrument in leading organisations where complexity is growing in structure and context by effectively conveying organisational message and exchanging knowledge between different actors (Ballaro, Mazzi and Holland, 2020; Bernnan, 2020; Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020). Communication focused leadership approach and actor's ability to communicate within organisational networks confirmed as suitable approach in organisations going through transformational phase (Leithwood, 2019). On the other hand, interviewed organisational leaders defined distributed leadership as an effective leadership approach in the execution of large-scale transformation initiatives due to its capacity to effectively communicate organisational message. Communication was frequently identified throughout this research course as an instrumental influencing, motivating and convincing tool which encourages the acceptance of decided organisational transformation initiatives. The process of organisational transformation is executed as expected by leadership subject to leaders' practicing of suitable leadership approach (Waddell *et al.,* 2019). As majority of the interviewed organisational leader recognised distributed leadership as a suitable leadership approach in organisations going through transformation initiatives based on the concept of the capacity to communicate information back and forth smoothly. This is due to its principle of assembling networks of leaders with different sets of traits amongst which communication is one of distributed leaders' attributes (Heyden *et al.,* 2017; Liu, 2020). Since communication is acknowledged by participants as a method of ensuring the transformation is explained to the entire organisation assuring the desire to execute this initiative smoothly, communication was identified as an essential social trait required in organisational leaders and change actors.

5.4.3 Summary and Reflections on Research Question 2 Discussions

The second research question aimed at examining the enhancement of social and human studies on distributed leadership practice in organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives. Social network theory in particular was identified as a suitable social theory to overlay upon the principles of distributed leadership due to its nature of differentiating between human and non-human actors. This research question proposes alongside the suitability of distributed leadership approach in organisational transformation, the suitability of social network theory as social study theory which enhances the practice of distributed leadership. Social and human studies' aspects were the first perspective upon which transactional leaders' perception was captured. Understanding their perception was instrumental in proving the research assumption regarding the enhancement to distributed

leadership practice in organisational transformation initiatives. From the gathered data analysis and furthermore discussion, organisational leaders thought that social theories constructively impact organisational leadership effectiveness and enhanced its capacity in achieving targeted organisational goals. Social studies are considered as a constructive contributor to leaders' ability to execute their roles during different organisational transformation stages. This is due to its fundamental established foundation of visiting human thought agents which facilitates the transformation implementation process.

On the other hand, social network theory was the second perspective upon which organisational leaders' perception was captured to understand their opinions on its effect on distributed leadership approach during transformation initiatives. Since distributed leadership is acknowledged as a suitable leadership approach in organisational transformation, social network theory is very much suitable social theory to be utilised as an underpinning theory which would be helpful in examining network leadership. The fundamentals of this theory are based on understanding the ties, strength, quality and mechanisms of the interaction between different actors, or even network within the organisational components' fabric. The mechanism of this interaction between actors gives an idea of the type of leadership approach which is suitable and prepares the ground for exploring the emergence of network leadership.

The distribution of leadership is situational and based on the suitability of leaders to be assigned a specific managerial assignment based on their set of skills and traits. The distribution of leadership is based upon the requirement of a certain situation for a certain set of traits in that specific time and transformation stage. The situational distribution of leadership is entirely based on the required leaders' traits to manage a certain organisational event, regardless of the hierarchal position. The identification of those candidate and potential leaders amongst which leadership roles are to be assigned to would be based on their traits, capacity, knowledge, characteristics, leadership mindset approach to organisational management and the situational demand. The assignment of leadership role is subjective to leaders' identified functionality and constructive influence on actors and networks.

An important reflection from the data discussion is the distribution of task enactment in organisation going through organisational transformation in not only based on social traits. The social distribution of leadership refers here to both the availability of required social traits and the situation that requires these specific social traits. This reflection is acknowledged by literature reviewed and confirmed by organisational leaders' opinions. The social distribution of leadership role is essential in confirming the essentiality of ties qualities and mechanisms

of interaction between organisational actors or networks on the capacity to execute organisational transformation initiatives.

Distributed leadership is constructively impacted by social network theory based on distributed leadership practitioners' mindset and the fundamental perception of social network theory on ties qualities and interaction mechanisms between different actors. The situational distribution of leadership proves the argument that distributed leadership theory in organisations going through their transformational phase as well as the social distribution of task enactment is effective in the implementation of transformation initiatives. These two approaches of distribution of leadership acknowledge the fact that leadership is assigned equally on the basis of right social trait availability and situational requirement of those social traits. In other words, social network theory extends the capacity of distributed leadership when laying its principle upon the characteristics of distributed leaders.

Communication and ties are another perspective upon which social network impact of distribution leadership enhancement was considered. Effective communication is acknowledged as an effective element of transformation execution and a trait required in leaders to influence, convince and motivate network members to achieve the collective organisational goal. The communication was continuously mentioned through the course of this research and confirmed by literature as a social trait required in leaders. The ability of leaders to effectively communicate with their networks strengthens ties between actors and encourages constructive actors' interaction making it a smoother process.

5.5 Research Question 3 Discussion:

This section is a discussion and an illustration of the extracted data gathered through semi-structured questionnaire. This question has targeted the participants' feedback on the literature review identified contribution to knowledge. Leadership related literature stated that team-based leadership theories were represented and reflected in the practice of distributed leadership as a suitable leadership approach (Gronn, 2003; Holloway, Nielsen and Saltmarsh, 2018; Patterson *et al.,* 2020). On the other hand, organisational transformation literature identified leadership as a main pillar and great contributor towards executing planned organisational change without specifying which leadership type or the stage of transformation (Kempster *et al.,* 2014; White *et al.,* 2016; Waddell *et al.,* 2019). Organisational mindset switch from centralised large scale hierarchal structures towards more interconnected network-based structures call for a multi-agency leadership approach (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Slyke

and Alexander, 2006). This research explored those subjects and developed a conceptual model. The conceptual model identified an intersection amongst which network leadership is an outcome of this intersection.

5.5.1 The Intersection between Distributed Leadership and Organisation Transformation

Organisational transformation literature and distributed leadership theory were found to be overlapping each other. This intersection was assumed to be an extended form of distributed leadership referred to by the network of leaders' concept. This concept was furthermore explored by overlaying social network principles over the characters of distributed leadership theory to explore the concept of network leadership. This research has segmented the analysis and discussion of this research question into two main prospective which are discussed below. However, this research question is essential in exploring the emergence of network leadership as an outcome of this intersection.

5.5.1.1 Dimension of Distributed Leadership Intersection with Organisational Transformation

Distributed leadership was found to be overlapping with organisational transformation and social network theory. This overlapping between distributed leadership, organisational transformation and social network theory was identified in the intersection dimension with a wide spectrum of elements. This intersection represents the main component of this research as it explores the emergence of network leadership as an outcome of this intersection and one of elements of this intersection wide spectrum. This intersection spectrum is widely assembled by different components which structure its dimension as confirmed by many participants. As much as identifying the wide spectrum of this intersection dimension components was important, however this research focused on exploring one particular potential element of this intersection which was recognised by participants as an extended version of distributed leadership referred to as network leadership. Communication, culture value, and social skills are the most common elements of this intersection which has been also reflected interviewed organisational leaders. As organisational leaders acknowledged the identified intersection they specifically recognised the emergence of a newer version of team-based leadership approach. This proposed newer team-based leadership approach is what this research refers to as network leadership.

5.5.1.2 Distributed Leadership & Organisational Transformation Intersection Perception

This intersection was acknowledged by interviewed organisational leaders and was interpreted in different ways as stated in the data analysis chapter. This research was keen on exploring the emergence of network leadership by viewing distributed leadership and organisational transformational intersection through the theoretical lens of social network theory. Identifying the links between those topics was achieved through highlighting the overlapping zone between those topics. This facilitated the examining of network leadership as a result of this overlapping.

This intersection and overlapping between distributed leadership and organisational transformation was acknowledged by participants' reflection and identified in of the literature review chapter. This intersection was acknowledged in the recognition of the wide dimension of this intersection spectrum. The dimension of this intersection contains unlimited components of this spectrum. However, an extended form of distributed leadership which is oriented and based on utilising personal alongside social traits with effective communication skills was identified recognising the research assumption. The identification of this form extended distributed leadership is an acknowledgment of the emergence of network leadership as an outcome of this intersection.

5.5.2 The Concept of Network Leadership

The network leadership concept was discussed and explored thoroughly as it represents the main contribution of this research. As the emergence of network leadership is assumed to be the outcome of the intersection between distributed leadership theory with organisational transformation and social network theory. The social network theory was overlayed upon the principles of distributed leadership to explore the emergence network leadership. Furthermore, network leadership was explored and extended in the domain of organisational transformation. Network leadership was confirmed by interviewed organisational leaders as an element of the wide spectrum of intersection dimension between distributed leadership and organisational transformation. Network leadership was recognised as an extended version of distributed leadership. The perception of this leadership will be discussed below alongside the effectiveness of network leadership concept during organisational transformation which this research refers to as Transformation Network Leadership.

5.5.2.1 Network Leadership

Network leadership was recognised by organisational leaders as an extension to the practice of distributed leadership during organisational change. Network leadership is an extension to the practice of distributed leadership during organisational transformation leveraging on the functionality of leaders rather than their status within the organisational structure (Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020). Network leadership is constructed on the dynamic evolvement of organisational mindset where leadership is unconventional in its approach, collective, distributed, down-up, facilitative, emergent, and innovative (Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020). This leadership approach is of much similarity to distributed leadership, however it is differentiated by its principles which focuses on the social, personal and communication skills which are instrumental in interconnecting organisational elements (Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020; Busch and Barkema, 2018). This leadership approach evolves around choosing individuals with sets of skills and knowledge to lead the organisation whenever their attributes and practices are required towards achieving the organisational goal (Lithwood, 2019; Pino-Yancovic and Ahumada, 2020). To many interviewed organisational leaders network leadership exists, and it is best practice in a lot of successful organisations. The fact that this leadership was practiced by some interviewed organisational leaders but not defined nor captured by literature was the reason for conducting this research. This was agreed on and confirmed by scholars (Dhanaraj and Parkhe, 2006; McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Popp *et al.,* 2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino, 2016). The following organisational leader agrees with the above discussion:

> *'The network of leaders' concept or what you refer to as network leadership as I see is an extension of more team collective leadership targeting an aim on getting the job done at its best and in the fastest effective way. Although never heard of it until explained by you earlier, whoever it is there and could be seen at higher organisational level committees where things are executed in the fastest way based on the effectiveness of certain leaders' (Int 7).*

Organisational leaders acknowledged the emergence of network leadership as an outcome of distributed leadership intersection with organisational transformation. To them, effective communication, social traits, personal skills, and knowledge were the basis upon which this intersection is constructed on. The means of exploring this leadership approach was facilitated by social network theory view which understands the quality and mechanisms of ties between nodes and networks (Meuser *et al.,* 2016; Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2019).

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Organisational leaders stated in their discussion that selecting suitable leaders with different sets of skills and traits is important in the process of organisational leadership as situationally required (Shen, 2019; Anggrainin and Lo, 2020). Organisational leaders in their discussion stated that network leadership to them is the leaders' capacity to interact and connect various scattered organisation components to enhance the transformation execution and the organisational goal achievement. They also stated that the network leadership practice in its core is about assembling a network of individual leaders with various traits and leadership styles which are needed in different transformation stages cross the organisational boundaries. The following organisational leader quote reflect the above discussion:

> *'In the context of organisational transformation, I would like to think of the network of leaders as the process of building various teams of leaders within the organisation to help in the implementation of the organisation transformation. I would say it is a necessity and suitable to enable organisation transformation to establish such network that will help with empowering potential leaders, getting required resources, encourage continuous learning, knowledge sharing, quick deployment of resources, enables effective communications between teams' (Int 4).*

Social network theory principles overlying upon the principles of distributed leadership gave the researcher a deeper understanding of the conceptual mechanisms of ties strengths and means of interaction between different organisational components (Stricker *et al.,* 2018). In today's complicated organisational structures, and volatile business environment organisational leadership became a challenge (Denis *et al.,* 2012; Mendenhall *et al.,* 2012; Turner and Baker, 2018). Therefore, the concept of dismantling classical organisational structures towards leaner networks and clusters is becoming a preferred practice in organisational management (Hristov, Minocha and Ramkissoon, 2018; Stricker *et al.,* 2018). This is a process of transforming organisation from the classical hierarchal organisational structure to leaner structures assembled by networks and clusters overcoming growing organisational complexity (Pratono, 2018; Wu *et al.,* 2020). Those networks and clusters are bridged together by a set of ties connecting different nodes in a functional mean of exchanging knowledge and information in an efficient way. This process of operating in an environment of different sized networks and clusters makes the transformation process in large scale organisations smoother (Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020; Endres and Weibler, 2020). Network leadership enhances the leadership of network-based structure by strengthening the quality of ties and efficiency of their interaction towards better exchange of knowledge and information flow throughout the organisation. Not only that but it goes beyond the organisation level to external

level of connecting organisation or even sectors (Bullington and Alford, 2019; Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2019). This process has more to do with leading organisations with holistic views and viewing the organisation from a wide-angle lens.

Network leadership is recognised by interviewed organisational leaders as a functional and instrumental approach in implementing large scale organisational transformation initiatives. They stated that network leadership is recognised as a leadership practice which is formal/informal operating both external and internal. This approach transforms leaders to effective functional leaders endorsing innovation, connects clusters, exchanges knowledge and utilises social skills leveraging on the strength of ties between different nodes and clusters (Peckham and Whitehead, 2019). The ethos of network leaders motivates leaders to assume leadership roles rather than being assigned to those roles and responsibilities (McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013). This leadership approach is intellectually distributive, collective, cooperative and coordinative in the way they exercise their assumed leadership internally and externally to achieve the collective organisational transformational goal (Provan and Kenis, 2008; Wind, 2017; Popp *et al.,* 2014; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020). In other words, the network leadership evolves around the concept of placing leaders in networks or teams based on their capabilities, skills, capacity and traits to uplift the organisation effort to implement the transformational initiative at it upmost level.

Network leadership are assembled by boundary spanners who practice their leadership roles and reach out to other networks crossing organisational and even organisations boundaries (Wind, 2017; Pino-Yancovic and Ahumada, 2020). They tend to link different networks, clusters, organisations, and sectors. Participants recognised network leadership concept as a natural common-sense leadership bridging and connecting organisational elements and shifting from bundled leadership to leaner functional networks assembled from different nodes. As discussed in this research, the growing complexity of organisations in terms of structure requires unique leadership approach to implement planned organisational changes (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Antonakis and House, 2014; Wind, 2017). Therefore, organisation hierarchal structures need to be transformed to the form of networks and clusters to be able to cope with vibrant business environment changes. Transforming organisations into a form of networks would require a leadership approach which is capable of connecting those dispersed organisational clusters in a collective effort to implement organisational transformation initiatives. Network leadership is a logical shift from traditional leadership mindset towards network-based leadership, enabling leaders to interact within as much as out of organisational boundaries (McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Silvia, 2010; Leithwood, 2019).

The influence of network approach to organisational management was recognised at the turn of the 21st century. Network leaders are nodes linking different networks and bridging different clusters to share information alongside exchanging knowledge in an effective way (Cullen-Lester and Yammarino, 2016). Therefore, communication abilities, social skills, knowledge, and understanding cultural aspects stands to be essential traits of change agents (McGuire and Silvia, 2010; Strasberg, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020). Those traits have been acknowledged by interviewed organisational leaders as a set of skills required in suitable organisational leaders to implement transformational initiatives. Those network leaders or what we referred to above as boundary spanners, where their traits are based on strong effective communication and social skills promoting knowledge sharing and information exchange (McGuire and Bevir, 2011; Stiver, 2017; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020). The philosophical composition of network leadership is based on cultivating the organisational mind set towards sharing information and exchanging knowledge rather than controlling the flow of information communicated between and across the organisation (Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Stricker *et al.,* 2018).

Converting organisational leadership practices from traditional or any other leadership approach to network leadership approach facilitates the organisational capacity to implement transformational changes (Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Popp *et al.,* 2014; Pino-Yancovic and Ahmadabad, 2020). This is due to the enhanced intersection and interconnection promoted by this leadership approach linking various dispersed organisational elements expediting the implementation of the transformation initiative. The shift of organisational management towards network leadership approach is instrumental in keeping up with business trends and economic volatility. The intellectual formation of this leadership approach is assembled by strategically managing the organisation through a holistic comprehensive view of the organisation connections internally and externally. The capacity to connect different networks with each other increases innovative ideas and exposure economic dynamics with both enhances the transformation implementation with the organisational knowledge of best business practice. According to interviewed organisational leaders, the ability to interact between different organisational components or the industry collectively boosts the level of the organisation ability to execute the transformational initiative.

5.5.2.2 Network Leadership Impact & Effect

The effectiveness and impact of network leadership approach is driven from the belief that those change agents or nodes are diversified in their set of skills and traits enabling them to

assume roles when situation is needed (McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Leithwood, 2019; Kupa and Komlosi, 2020). Organisational leaders recognised the fact of having diversified forms of leaders engaged in different transformational events simultaneously constructively effect the transformational initiative implementation. Network leadership was acknowledged by organisational leaders as effective in the process of transformation initiative implementation due to its aim of implementing transformational changes in a timely manner, flexibility of this approach and the diversity of leaders that allows them to be engaged in different transformational activities. The following organisational leaders' quotes confirm the above reflections:

'In my opinion the impact is significant in terms of making sure things happen on time' *(Int 1).*

'Definitely and without any doubt network leadership has significant impact on organisations planning to transform their organisations from a commercial and operational business prospective' (Int 7).

'Regardless of the feasibility of the transformation itself, the flexibility of the network of leaders concept approach is an advantage to target achievement whether its organisational transformation or any other organisational initiative. It is very effective as it creates and produces future leaders and for those organisations with network leadership type leaders, they are able to execute their roles efficiently' (Int 3).

5.5.3 Summary and Reflections on Research Question 3

The third research question aimed to explore the emergence of network leadership as an outcome of the intersection between distributed leadership with organisational transformation and social network theory. On one hand, leadership literature suggested distributed leadership to be a suitable form of leadership in today's rapid moving economy. On the other hand, organisational transformation literature stated that it is leadership which is an essential element of transformation execution and implementation without describing what type of leadership or at which state of the transformation (Burns, Hughes and By, 2016; MackKillop, 2018). The network leadership was recognised as one of the dimensions of this wide spectrum. This research used social network theory as an underpinning theory to understand and capture the characteristics and intellectual formation of this leadership approach. This

was achieved by overlaying the principles of social network theory which was discussed in research question 2 on the characteristics of distributed leadership theory to understand the ties linking different organisational networks, the mechanism of those ties and the interactions between different organisational components.

This intersection was recognised by interviewed organisational leaders and this research as wide in its dimensional spectrum. Although a wide spectrum of this intersection was recognised by organisational leaders, this research focused on exploring the emergence of network leadership. Network leadership is perceived as "a distributed practice of network actors" (Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020, p. 12). The communication, social skills, cultural values and knowledge sharing were the main elements assembling this intersection dimension and instrumental in testing the network leadership approach. The utilisation of social network theory was instrumental in exploring the extent upon which this leadership approach existed in reality. Network leadership was recognised by interviewed organisational leaders as an extended form or an upgraded practice of distributed leadership. This was based on the belief that organisational structures as known in their classical form are tending to transform to more functional type of smaller structures avoiding growing organisational complexity issues (Haug, 2018; Leithwood, 2019). This is based on effective communication, social traits, human skills, organisational and industrial knowledge (Ballaro, Mazzi and Holland, 2020; Bernnan, 2020; Zhao *et al.,* 2020).

As this research discussed and explored network leadership in the views of organisational leaders who have been acknowledged as an outcome of the identified intersection. The need for this form of team relational based leadership approach is due to structural changes to the way organisations are managed in today's world (Pratono, 2018). As discussed, the increasing organisational complexity in structures and surrounding environment requires a shift in compositional configurations of those organisations (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Endres and Weibler, 2020). Therefore, a shift from classical organisational structures to functional network-based structure by disassembling those hierarchical structures to smaller clusters linked through network of nodes connecting them together (Stricker *et al.,* 2018). This facilitates the methods which organisations utilise to achieve their goals by expediting the process of the execution and implementation of their planned organisational changes. This leads to the execution of organisational initiatives in a timely manner with the best business practice due to the knowledge exchange element which an essential part of network leadership mindset (Bullington and Alford, 2019; Kupa and Komlosi, 2020). The process of flattening organisational structure into clusters and networks does not mean managing without governance. This process of disassembling heavy organisational structures and converting it

from leadership bureaucracy to leadership functionality approach is instrumental in overcoming vibrant economic complexity of today's world (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Haug, 2018; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020).

Establishing strong ties with the flow of information based on strong communication abilities of network leadership to create the required knowledge exchange and information flow process which expedites the implementation of organisational transformation initiatives (Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2019). In their discussions organisational leaders recognised network leadership as formal/informal approach which aims to connect scattered organisational element internally as much as connecting externally. Network leadership transforms leaders to effective functional connecting organisational elements, exchanging knowledge, and keeping up with global business trends. Unlike distributed leadership, network leadership practitioners assume their leadership roles rather than being assigned to those roles and efficiently utilise their social skills maintaining strong ties between networks and clusters (Prantono, 2018; Pino-Yancovic and Ahumada, 2020). Network leadership as recognised by participants is all about assembling networks of individual based on their capabilities, leadership capacities, social traits, communication skills, knowledge, and their desire to assume leadership roles. Network leaders assume leadership roles, regardless of their hierarchal status and determined by the situational need of their sets of traits and desire to perform their assumed managerial roles. Network leadership is a leadership approach which oversees the organisation from a macro level holistic view connecting various organisational cluster and links the organisation itself to the sector it operates in (Leithwood, 2019; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020). This makes the transformation initiative a collective process which is implemented internally and linked to the sector externally (Waddell *et al.,* 2019).

Network leadership is effective due to its flexible nature which is based on functionality of leaders when assembling networks rather than their organisational position which in views of organisational leaders' results in better performance (Chiu, Balkundi and Weinberg, 2017; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020). The intellectual formation of this leadership approach carries out an in-depth sight of the holistic view of the organisation strategically allowing leaders to identify how to enhance their organisational transformation execution level. This holistic view character of network leaders allows leaders to connect organisational clusters and the organisation itself within its operating sector enhancing the knowledge exchange flow, which in turn facilitates the transformation implementation process.

5.6 Network leadership Dimensional Spectrum

During the course of discussions participants has discussed the constructs that assembles the dimensions on network leadership expanding the scope of this research. It is worth mentioning those discussed dimensions as stated by scholars and recognised by interviewed organisational leaders. Network leadership is more of relational based leadership approach that combines social abilities, communication, traits and knowledge. There is a wide dimension on constructs assembling the spectrum of network leadership amongst which number of those constructs has been recognised and reflected by participants as the pillar constructs of this leadership approach. However, those elements are interconnected and dependent on each other.

5.6.1 Dimensional constructs of Network Leadership

As organisational mindset shifted from classical large scale hierarchal structures towards leaner network-based structures, the emergence of network leadership became essential. This due to the need of a more flexible leadership approach to organisational leadership that is able to tie, and liaison scattered organisational elements with each other. Such theoretical and practical thinking of this flexible leadership theory is associated with a wide spectrum of elements assembling the dimensions of this leadership theory.

As network leadership is recognised by organisational leaders as an extended form of distributed leadership which is more functional and facilitative in executing organisational transformation initiatives. Many of those constructs are similar of those of distributed leadership such as being collaborative, collective, distributive, coordinative and situational in allocating leadership roles to potential leaders (Hulpia *et al.,* 2012; Feng *et al.,* 2017). However, network leadership as a team-based leadership theory shares those same constructs (Liethwood, 2019). As what differentiates network leadership from distributed leadership is its holistic view of the organisational position and the vision linking organisational initiatives to other organisations within the sector it operates in (Pratono, 2018; Wu *et al.,* 2020). Not only that, but effective communication is also an essential element of network leadership dimension, and it is efficient in the execution of planned transformational initiatives (Ballaro, Mazzi and Holland, 2020). Effective communication is also the means of knowledge exchange between different organisational actors and elements. Social skills and personal traits are essential elements that are instrumental in strengthening ties between network, clusters and organisations (Busch and Barkema, 2018; Zhao *et al.,* 2020).

However, communication is one of the social skills and traits required in network actors that facilitates the knowledge exchange alongside flow of information throughout different

organisation clusters (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Al-Kurdi, El-Haddadeh and Eldabi, 2020). In its core principles network leadership is a flexible approach to leadership that is more focused on the achievement of organisational goals in a timely manner and this one of the pillars of this leadership approach (Peckham and Whitehead, 2019). Influence and power are other identified element of network leadership dimension, which is driven from knowledge, social skills, traits, communication and the domination of the flow of organisational message and information (Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020; Pino-Yancovic and Ahumada, 2020).

Interviewed organisational leaders identified the discussed network leadership elements highlighted above. However, they agreed on number of elements which were acknowledged as the main pillars of the dimension of network leadership. In their discussion organisational leaders identified elements constructing the network leadership dimension amongst which they acknowledged as being connected and even interdependent. They have identified elements by which network leadership dimension is assembled which will be discussed below.

5.7 Critical Analysis of Network Leadership Concept

Network leadership was acknowledged by scholars, however published papers has defined network leadership by either network leaders' attributes, practices or both (McGuire and Bevir, 2011; Popp *et al.,* 2014; ; Peckham and Whitehead, 2019 Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020; Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020). The concept of network leadership was described based on those attributes and practices that shaped their perception of this new network-based leadership approach without clearly defining its concept (Silvia and McGuire, 2008; McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Stiver, 2017). As network leadership is referred to as "the behaviour of public managers that facilitate productive interaction and move participants in the network towards effective resolution of a problem" (McGuire and Silvia, 2009, p. 3), this research is exploring network leadership from a broader perspective. This research perceives network leadership as a leadership approach that is assembled by three main pillars that constructs its theoretical configuration and intellectual formation. Network leadership was assumed to exist in collaborative based organisational structures, however network leadership concept was rarely defined in a way that composes actors' competencies, traits and practices (McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Popp *et al.,* 2014).

Organisational leaders have described network leadership through network leaders' practice, attributes and concepts. Network leaders' practice and attributes were acknowledged by those leaders and perceived as the definition of network leadership. This was clear when

organisational leaders attempt to explain their perception of this emerging leadership approach. Gathered data representing organisational leaders' reflection were interrogated to analyse the leader's perception of network leadership. As those leaders described network leadership, when what they were really describing was a combination of network leadership concept, network leaders' attributes and practices.

Scholars defined network leadership concept either by the practices or attributes of network leaders and in some cases a combination of both (Silvia and McGuire, 2009; Silvia, 2010; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Popp *et al.,* 2014; Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020). Scholars attempts to examine and explore network leadership concept and quantum has not been expanded to other research domains (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; McGuire, 2003; Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Popp *et al.,* 2014). Expanding this emerging leadership approach to other domains of literature could help researchers understand its conceptual dimensions and applications. Exploring network leadership during organisational transformation led to the identification of newer form of network leadership which this research referred to as Transformation Network Leadership.

5.8 Research Findings

The research findings were extracted from three different levels which will be discussed to highlight the essentiality of these findings in addressing the research problem. Firstly, at organisational level where the oil and gas industry in its nature operates in the highest safety standards to preserve the safety of human and assets. Organisational leaders recognised team-based approaches with its different types as their favourable leadership practice in today's vibrant economy and growing organisational complexity. Even leaders who have either described their leadership style as authoritarian or non-team-based leadership still recognised this approach as a preferable leadership approach in transformation initiatives implementation. Obstacles to organisational transformation implementation and elements required for the execution of those transformation initiatives were found to be similar to each other. Distributed leadership was recognised as a suitable leadership approach in organisations going through their transformational phase due to its traits and principles. The roots of distributed leadership emerged from the phenomenon of a leadership approach based on the principles of sharing leadership roles, responsibilities in a collective attempt to achieve organisational goals. It is important to note here that distributed leadership is assigned based on the situational needs of the potential candidate traits and characteristics in a specific transformational stage.

Secondly, the social distribution of task enactment was an essential finding as confirmed by organisational leaders and literature. The task enactment was based on the capabilities and abilities of leaders to effectively communicate organisational messages and exchange knowledge. Communication and social skills are continuously identified in this research as an effective organisational transformation element, obstacle to transformation implementation and a required leaders' trait. The capacity of leaders to effectively interact with their networks strengthens the links between teams and encourages constructive actors' interaction. Although distributed leadership was perceived by scholars as a suitable team-based leadership approach, network leadership emerged as a notion of leadership to address an organisational mindset shift. This organisational mindset was based on the growing sentiment of shifting from hierarchical organisational classical structure to more effective function-based network structure. Leadership is practiced based on functionality rather than an individual's position within the organisational hierarchy. Therefore, network leadership concept evolved as response to the demand of suitable leadership approach to manage this new shift in organisational mindset.

Finally, the emergence of network leadership was recognised as a result of the intersection between organisational transformation with distributed leadership and social network theory. However, it is worth mentioning that the need for such leadership approach was a response to organisational mindset shifting from traditional hierarchal structured form to leaner and flatter network-based structure. This is constructed on the foundation of dismantling rigid organisational structures to smaller networks and clusters which are connected through nodes. Those nodes represent organisational connecters which link those dispersed network and clusters through strong ties interacting constructively together in a process which facilitates knowledge exchange between those clusters. This does not mean that organisations are not governed or has no top leadership, but it is a shift from a bundle of different leadership approaches to a functional leadership approach (Argranoff and McGuire, 2001; Gronn, 2002; McGuire and Silvia, 2010). This promotes knowledge exchange across organisational boundaries and layers expediting the transformation process through effective communication based on quality ties connecting organisational elements. The interconnection process is not limited to the organisation itself, as this leadership approach has a collective holistic view of the organisation which allows network leaders to map the organisation from a macro level. Many participants acknowledged network leadership as an effective leadership approach during the execution of organisational change. Network leadership was perceived by those participants as a management approach that facilitates the implementation of organisational transformation plans. It is worth mentioning that network leadership literature

was limited to the attempts of defining its concept, quantum and not expanded to other literature domains.

The overreaching findings of the thesis was a key factor in the conceptualisation of Transformation Network Leadership as an outcome of expanding network leadership research to the organisational transformation domain. Transformation Network Leadership is conceptualised and constructed by the practices, attributes of network leaders and the concept of network leadership approach. Transformation Network Leadership is recognised as a formal/informal leadership approach which interconnects scattered organisational element and connects organisations themselves to their surrounding environments.

This research explored network leadership during organisational transformation domain. This led to the identification of Transformation Network Leadership when network leadership is practiced during organisational change. Transformation Network Leadership is an extension of the study of network leadership concept on organisations going through change. Transformation Network Leadership is assembled by network leadership concept, practices and attributes of network leaders. Network leadership is differentiated from other team oriented based on its principle of assuming leadership rather than being assigned leadership role. In addition, it is a formal as much as it is informal in its attempt to achieve large scale transformational goals. Figure 13 below illustrates the constructs upon which this research has based Transformation Network Leadership on.

Figure 13 Transformation Network Leadership
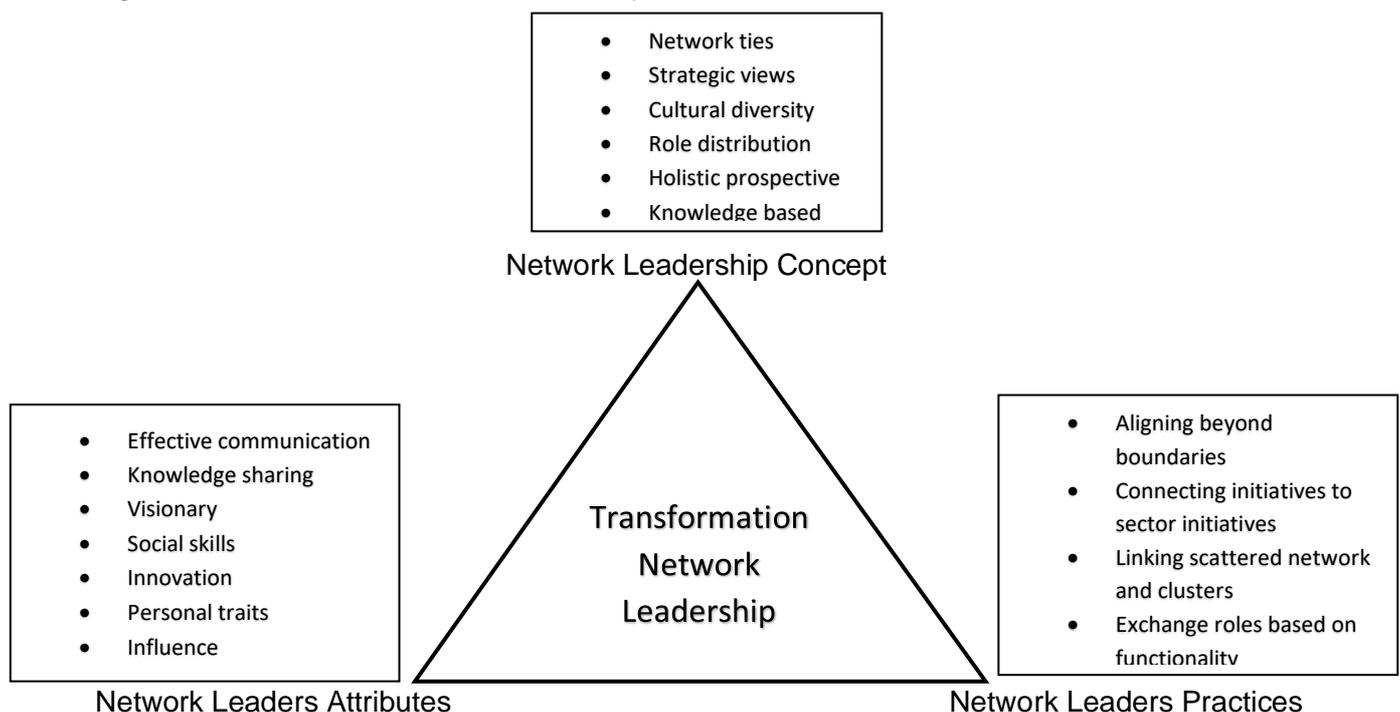
The identified elements of Network Leadership Concept, Network Leaders Attributes and Network Leaders Practices are thematised in tables 24, 25, 26 below in accordance with network leadership literature or research findings.

Table 24 Network Leadership Concept in accordance with literature or research findings

Findings	Literature	Research
Network ties	X	
Strategic view		X
Cultural diversity		X
Role distribution		X
Holistic approach		X
Knowledge based	X	

Table 25 Network Leaders Attributes in accordance with literature or research findings

Findings	Literature	Research
Effective communication		X
Knowledge sharing		X
Visionary		X
Social skills	X	
Innovative		
Personal traits	X	
Influencing	X	

Table 26 Network Practices in accordance with literature or research findings

Findings	Literature	Research
Aligning beyond organisational boundaries	X	
Connecting initiatives to sector initiatives	X	
Liking scattered organisation network & clusters		X
Exchanging roles-based on functionality		X

Tables 27, 28, 29 below illustrates set of network leadership principles, network leaders' characters and practices identified by interested scholars in the area of network-based leadership approach. These table highlights the research findings in each construct of Transformation Network Leadership. Those tables highlight the research insight on the three constructs of Transformation Network Leadership. This research differentiated between practices, attributes of network leaders and the concept of network leadership.

Table 27 Network Leadership Concept Contribution

Concept	(McGuire and Bevir, 2011)	(Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013)	(Stiver, 2017)	(Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020)	(Cristofoli et al., 2020)	Research Contribution
Coordination	X			X		
Collaboration	X		X	X		
Facilitative/ Collective	X	X	X		X	
Power/ Influence	X	X	X		X	
Connectivity		X	X		X	
Relational/ Trust	X	X	X			
Structure	X	X		X	X	
Knowledge	X		X			
Network ties						X
Strategic view						X
Cultural diversity						X
Role distribution						X
Holistic approach						X
Knowledge based						X

Table 28 Network Leader attributes Contribution

Attributes	(McGuire and Bevir, 2011)	(Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013)	(Stiver, 2017)	(Peckham and Whitehead, 2019)	(Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020)	Research Contribution
Power/Influence	X			X	X	
Trust	X	X			X	
Personal Skills			X	X	X	
Social Skills			X	X	X	
Collaborative	X	X	X		X	
Effective communication						X
Knowledge sharing						X
Visionary						X
Social skills						X
Innovative						X
Personal traits						X
Influencing						X

Table 29 Network Leader Practices Contribution

Practices	*(McGuire and Bevir, 2011)*	*(Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013)*	*(Stiver, 2017)*	*(Peckham and Whitehead, 2019)*	*(Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020)*	*(Cristofoli et al., 2020)*	*Research Contribution*
Sharing		X	X		X	X	
Improve Performance		X	X	X	X	X	
Assemble Networks	X		X		X		
Leadership Activities	X		X	X	X	X	
Connecting	X			X			
Aligning beyond organisational boundaries							X
Connecting initiatives to sector initiatives							X
Liking scattered organisation network & clusters							X
Exchanging roles-based on functionality							X

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Research Contribution

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was a discussion of the data analysis findings and the development of the conceptual model findings from data discussions. This chapter starts with summarising the thesis by bringing together the research questions and key findings into an inclusive conclusion. The theoretical contribution will address the Whitten (1989) theoretical contribution criteria. Overall, this chapter is an overview of the thesis presenting the contribution to existing knowledge, limitations, future research recommendation and closing remarks.

6.2 Research Contribution

This research contributes to existing knowledge through making significant theoretical contribution and insights. The research highlighted some distinctive features of leadership practice during organisational change in times when organisational mindset is shifting from traditional towards more flexible network- based leadership. Furthermore, this research contributed to existing knowledge through exploring the emergence of network leadership and expanding network leadership to organisational transformation domain. This research explored network leadership during organisational transformation through the lens of social network theory identifying Transformation Network Leadership. The emergence of transformation network leadership significantly adds to the continuous efforts to identify forms of suitable leadership approaches to network-based structure organisations during planned large scale organisational changes. There were limited literature and research that explores network leadership beyond its concept and definition (Silvia and McGuire, 2010). Network leadership is yet to be examined and expanded to other research areas. This research conceptualised network leadership and expanded it to the organisational transformation domain. Expanding network leadership to the organisational change domain drove to the identification of Transformation Network Leadership. Therefore, Transformation Network Leadership is the main contribution of this research.

6.2.1 Theoretical Contribution

This research explores network leadership in the organisational transformation domain. This research contributes to existing knowledge by identifying Transformation Network Leadership. Transformation Network Leadership was based on capturing the concept of network leadership and expanding it to the domain of organisational transformation. This research defines Transformation Network Leadership approach by network leaders' practices and attributes.

Transformation Network Leadership emerged as a natural evolvement of exploring network leadership in the organisational transformation domain. This evolvement in network-based leadership theories is stimulated by many aetiologies such as organisational complexity, organisational mindset shifts and economic fundamental changes. This calls for a theoretical leadership concept which identifies and captures the leadership approach that interconnect as well as manage networks interactions together. This new approach to organisational management is based on a leadership approach which contradicts classical organisational beliefs with regards to leadership. Transformation network leadership is a knowledge exchange, effective communication, social skills and diversified cultural approach, where leadership leverages on the ties linking actors to implement transformational changes. Transformation Network Leadership is assembled by a group of individuals from different organisational layers based on their capabilities, social traits, communication skills, leadership capacity, organisational knowledge and craving for leadership roles. The leadership role is assumed by transformation network leaders as the situation calls for the set of expertise with the capacity to execute the organisational transformation at a certain stage of the change process. This concept is an approach to leadership which views the organisation from a macro level having a holistic view of the organisation itself and even the sector it is operating in. It views the organisation through a wider lens which helps identifying potential areas of enhancement within the organisation to achieve the desired goal. Not only that but it views the organisation position with other organisations and functionally aligns the transformational change internally to other organisations externally. This is due to the nature of this leadership approach which implement an in-depth organisational analysis that identifies the potential areas of enhancement promoting organisational creativity to achieve those transformational changes in a timely manner. Transformation Network Leadership is constructed by network leadership concept, network leaders' practices and attributes.

This research has presented insights on network leadership concept, network leaders' practices and attributes which are identified as the elements constructing Transformation Network Leadership. Network leadership in this research is conceptualised by network ties, strategic views, cultural diversity, role distribution, holistic prospective and organisational knowledge. This research stated that effective communication, knowledge sharing, vision, social skills, innovation, personal traits and influence are attributes of network leaders. Those attributes assist leaders to perform network leaders required practices. This research identified four practices of network leaders. Firstly, aligning the organisation beyond organisational boundaries. Secondly, connecting the organisation initiatives to sector initiatives. Thirdly, linking scattered network and clusters. Finally, exchange roles based on functionality rather than organisational status. Network based approach to leadership is a concept which looks at individuals as actors who bring with them passion, desire, capabilities, creativity, and knowledge. This research conceptualised network leadership alongside identifying network leaders' attributes and practices.

6.2.2 Theoretical Contribution Criteria

Large scale planned organisational change affects multiple functions and levels in organisations. Transformation Network Leadership shifts the reliance of planned organisational change initiatives away from an individual leader, change agent or change implementor. Instead, it proposes the creation of a network of transformation leaders. The network can be formed of individuals drawn from different functions and levels of the organisation to lead planned organisational change (Silvia, 2010). Organisations often create change implementation teams, led by a Change Director or Project Sponsor, to work together to bring about planned changes. Yet, the extant research overlooks providing any theoretical underpinning for individuals in the change teams or change leaders to form transformational change networks across the organisation. The notion of network leadership is further expanded in the organisational transformation domain identifying Transformation Network Leadership. Figure 14 below highlights the emergence of Transformation Network Leadership

Figure 14 Transformation Network Leadership conceptual model
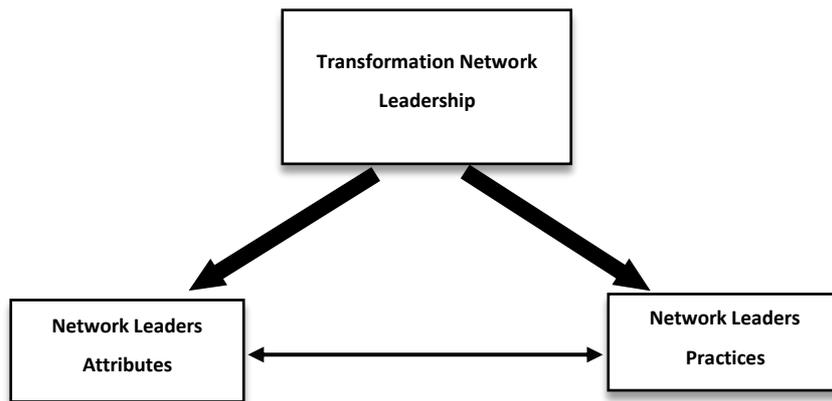
Transformation Network Leadership is defined by network leadership concept, network leaders' attributes and network leaders' practices during planned large scale transformational initiatives. This research has utilised Whetten (1989) theory building and contribution criteria in acknowledging Transformation Network Leadership as a theoretical contribution. Those criteria are illustrated in figure 15 below.

Figure 15 Constituent Elements of a Theory

Whetten (1989) sets out four criteria that circumscribe a theoretical contribution. He argues that the *constructs* that explain the phenomena, which in the case of this study, is Transformation Network Leadership, should be identified. The findings of this study are that Transformation Network Leadership is explained by the constructs of Network Leader Attributes and Network Leader Practices, details of which are specified in Tables 23 and 24 respectively.

The second criterion is to set out *relationships* between constructs and the phenomena. Transformation Network Leadership creates networks of change leaders to implement large scale, planned organisational changes. There are three ways in which the relationships are manifested. One, developing change agents with the Network Leader Attributes leads to a stronger network of change leaders. Two, encouraging change agents to carry out Network Leader Practices creates a more resilient network of change leaders. Lastly, fostering an environment for change leaders to develop and deploy their Network Leader Attributes and Practices leads to transformational network continuity. Transformation Network Leadership links actors to implement transformational initiatives, as a network of leaders is better positioned to execute organisational changes (McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Silvia, 2010). Transformation Network Leadership posits that a stronger and more capable network of transformation leaders leads to the implementation of the planned organisational change. Social network theory supports this argument as it acknowledges that higher frequency of interactions between network actors leads to a stronger network (D'Innocenzo *et al.,* 2014; Benton, 2015), as the attributes and practices of network determines the actor status within the network (Cristofoli *et al.,* 2020; Strasser, de Kraker and Kemp, 2020).

Whetten's (1989) third criterion is to lay out the *assumptions* of the theoretical contribution. One assumption that Transformation Network Leadership makes is that organisations are more likely to implement planned organisational changes through network of change leaders rather than assigning a single leader or change agent to execute the planned changes (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Silvia and McGuire, 2010; Day *et al.,* 2014; Leithood and Azah, 2016). This assumption stems from large scale change affecting wide swathes of the organisation, which are beyond the purview of one person or even a single transformation project team. A network of transformation leaders, drawn from different levels and silos of an organisation can gather a wide range of responses and make sense of their meaning. Another assumption is that attributes and practices can be developed and learnt, over time, by network members across different organisational layers (Kickert *et al.,* 1997; Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Popp *et al.,* 2014). A third assumption is that attributes and practices are dynamic, inasmuch as they vary for different transformational initiatives and adapt to internal and external environmental changes. The fourth assumption is that the development of Network Leader Attributes and Practices can be incorporated as activities in project plans of large-scale change initiatives. Those requirements set parameters for assembling networks of leaders with suitable attributes and practices (McGuire and Silvia, 2009; Wei-Skillern and Silver, 2013; Stiver, 2017). The final assumption is that most large scale, planned change initiatives are unlikely to have networks of change leaders in place at the outset.

Transformation Network Leadership argues that the network can be fostered and developed as the change initiative is rolled out.

Whetten's fourth criteria are the *boundaries* of the phenomena. Transformation Network Leadership is less effective in emergent or unplanned change initiatives. The need for and the time required to assemble a network of transformation leaders may be disproportionate to the change initiative. Moreover, Transformation Network Leadership calls for senior management commitment to the planned change initiative. Lack of commitment from senior managers can either disrupt networks of transformational leaders from being formed or lead to destabilisation of the network after it is formed. Weak commitment takes many forms, including but not limited to, withholding resources and creating an environment that is hostile for the network to survive. Senior management's intentional or unintentional failure to fulfil their roles places a limitation on the contribution Transformation Network Leadership can make to the field of change management. Transformation Network Leadership theory argues that leaders in the network have to cooperate during the implementation of change initiatives. This may not be possible when individual leaders feel under pressure or that their position is under threat. Thus, where leaders in the network withhold their support and cooperation, the efficacy of Transformation Network Leadership is compromised.

The above discussion operationalises Whetten's (1989) framework for 'what constitutes a theoretical contribution'. Notwithstanding the limitations of the research itself, which are detailed in the next section, Transformation Network Leadership developed in this study addresses each of Whetten's four criteria for a theoretical contribution Table 30 below summarises this research responses to Whetten (1989) criteria.

Table 30 Summary of research addressing Whetten's (1989) criteria

Whetten's theory criteria	Applied to Transformation Network Leadership
Constructs	• Network Leader Attributes • Network Leader Practices
Relationships	• Developing Network Leader Attributes leads to a stronger network of change leaders. • Encouraging Network Leader Practices creates a more resilient network of change leaders. • Fostering an environment for change leaders to develop and deploy their Network Leader Attributes and Practices leads to transformational network continuity.
Assumptions	• Planned organisational changes should be implemented through a network of change leaders rather than a single change agent • Network Leader Attributes and Practices can be developed and learnt over time • Network Leader Attributes and Practices are dynamic • Network Leader Attributes and Practices can be incorporated in project plans • The network of leaders can be developed as the change initiative is implemented
Boundaries	• Networks of change leaders are less effective for minor, unplanned change initiatives • Transformation Network Leadership will yield fewer benefits where senior management commitment is weak or wanes • Lack of cooperation between leaders in the change network will lead to the implementation of change initiatives being hindered

6.3 Practical Implications

Oil and Gas companies implements planned large scale transformational changes to meet emissions restrictions to achieve net-zero targets by 2050. This requires organisations to undergo multiple transformation initiatives to comply with those restrictions. Transformation Network Leadership is a suitable leadership approach towards the implementation of transformational changes to achieve net-zero. Transformation Network Leadership is more likely to support the implementation of planned change initiatives. This research develops Transformation Network Leadership in the Bahrain Oil and Gas to support planned large scale organisational transformation implementation. The utilisation of Transformation Network Leadership is effective in achieving organisational change goals and contributes towards gas

emissions. This is due to the nature of this leadership approach which implement an in-depth organisational analysis that identifies the potential areas of enhancement promoting organisational creativity to achieve those transformational changes in a timely manner.

6.4 Research Limitations

This research was conducted in Bahrain Oil and Gas which is heavily researched technically but not at managerial or organisational level. There are number of limitations to this research.

First, this research was limited to a qualitative methodology in exploring and addressing the research questions. This methodology approach is justified as this research aim to understand organisational leaders' reflections and views on the emergence of network leadership alongside the impact of network leadership on organisational transformation. Therefore, qualitative methodological approach is suitable to capture participants views on the emergence of network leadership and its impact in the organisational change domain.

The second limitation of this research is the small sample size which was limited to the selection of organisational leaders as a research sample. However, the research sample was selected on the basis of theoretical sampling. Where the researcher was keen on capturing the reflections of participants who has been exposed to the research problem during their leadership roles.

The third limitation was limiting this study to the Oil and Gas industry which is a limitation to the generalisation of the research findings to other sectors and businesses, however participants reflections were more of general reflections which are furthermore to be explored in other business domains.

Another limitation lies in the fact that this research was limited to the Kingdom of Bahrain, a non-western context where social beliefs and cultural values are contrary to western context, this was believed to be a limitation to the generalisation of findings. However, the unit of analysis is diversified in their beliefs, values, ethnicity and social context.

Further limitation was not expanding the context of this research to other GCC Oil and Gas companies. Expanding the scope of the research to other GCC companies was not executed due to current COVID 19 restrictions still this a limitation to this study. Further limitations to

this research are the use of limited secondary data regarding the emergence of network leadership and the impact of team-based leadership approaches during organisational change.

6.5 Future Research Directions

The domains of organisational transformation and leadership has been the centre of interest and attention in the academic literature in the past decades. However, there is still limited empirical studies which have been conducted bridging those studies together in attempt to understand the links and correlation between them. There is a future area where this research efforts could be expended to investigate and examine the elements of the intersection between distributed leadership with organisational transformation.

This research findings contributed to knowledge through developing a conceptual understanding of network leadership, this is further to be examined to understand its impact and effectiveness. This research contributed to exiting knowledge by expending network leadership to the organisational transformation domain. This led to identify Transformation Network Leadership. Transformation Network Leadership is to be further examined and tested on a broader scale to have a comprehensive understanding of this leadership theory. Network Leaders Attributes and Practices is to be further explored to examine their impact on successful planned large scale organisational transformation.

The potential of expanding this research to the context of regional or even western countries rather than narrowing it to the Kingdom of Bahrain should be considered. This could be even expanded within the of the Kingdom of Bahrain and conducted across different business sectors.

This research has chosen an interpretivism qualitative methodological philosophical approach to capture organisational leaders' perception of network leadership. However, it would be appropriate to carry out quantitative methodological approach research to test the level of effectiveness of implementing Transformation Network Leadership. Furthermore, future research should expand their sample size by including bigger number of participants as this research was conducted for the purpose of exploring network leadership in the organisational change domain. Future network leadership research should be extended beyond the scope of this research to other areas. At the same time, this research is recommended to be extended across GCC countries due to the similarities in social believes, cultural value.

6.6 Summary

This research was conducted to explore the emergence of network leadership in Bahrain Oil and Gas. This was to explore the emergence of this leadership approach in real organisational leadership environment. This study was conducted in response to the desire to explore new dimensions of organisational leadership during organisational change. The shift from large hierarchal structured organisations towards more flexible, functional, smaller network-based structure is a post bureaucracy approach, where leadership is flexible, functional, formal/informal, and facilitative. This swayed many scholars to explore leadership theories which promote change focusing on the concept of efficient execution. The organisational mindset shift of dismantling organisations to flatter, flexible, agile structures is becoming more popular and attracts innovative initiatives to achieve the collective organisational goal. This called for identifying suitable leadership approach to manage organisation operating in a network environment. Network leadership was identified as suitable leadership approach in network-based organisations. Network leadership was conceptualised by network the practices and attributes of network leaders. Literature suggested network leadership to be further examined and explored in other research domains. This contributed to the conceptualisation of Transformation Network Leadership as an outcome exploring network leadership during planned organisational change in Bahrain Oil and Gas. Transformation Network Leadership is a useful leadership approach to implement large scale planned transformational changes by assembling a network of change leaders. Transformation Network leadership connect various organisational elements to implement transformational changes and link those changes to other organisations transformation initiatives within the Oil and Gas industry.

This research contributed to existing knowledge by identifying Transformation Network Leadership as an outcome of exploring network leadership in the organisational transformation domain. The emergence of network leadership is a response to the shift in organisational management mindset and the need for a suitable leadership approach to manage network-based structure organisations. This shift in organisational structural assembly from hierarchal towards more flexible network-based structure was addressed by organisations in various ways. Some organisations set up cross functional task forces, executive initiatives with executive responsibilities and manage the rest of the existing structure to execute transformational initiative which is sustainable to a certain point. Keeping up with the growing complexity of organisations would require more than the creation of task forces and executive initiatives. Therefore, maintaining hierarchal organisational structures

and executing organisational initiatives through a semi- horizontal network structure creates a parallel organisational structure that creates conflict between the two structures. Transformation Network Leadership is a theoretical approach that formally/informally overlooks and executes transformational initiatives. This leadership approach views the organisation from a holistic view with the intension to execute transformational initiatives across organisational and sector boundaries.

6.7 Closing Remarks

This research reviewed network leadership literature seeking not only exploring its emergence but simultaneously conducting deep analysis of the rational of its emergence, definition, network leaders' attributes and practices to capture the conceptual dimension of network leadership. It is worthy to state that existing literature defined and conceptualised network leadership by network leaders' practices or attributes rather than its conceptual dimension. This research has conceptualised network leadership by its concept rather than attributes and practices of network leaders. This research aimed to explore the emergence of Network Leadership as an outcome of the intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation through the theoretical lens of social network theory. This research defined Transformation Network Leadership by network leadership concept, network leaders' attributes and network leaders' practices during planned large scale transformational initiatives. This research evolved around exploring network leadership in the organisational change domain. This was an expansion of limited network leadership research to other research domains. Expanding network leadership to the organisational change domain led to conceptualise Transformation Network Leadership.

This research findings would greatly contribute towards adding to existing knowledge and developing of a more precise conceptual understanding of Transformation Network Leadership. This research provided in-depth analysis of network leadership during the process of organisational change. This research contributed to existing knowledge by defining Transformation Network Leadership. Unlike previous research and studies, this study explored the Transformation Network Leadership approach in a holistic view that combines network leadership concept, network leaders' practices and attributes. This represents the research contribution to existing knowledge. In conclusion, Transformation Network Leadership is an outcome of exploring Network Leadership in the organisational change domain and it is to be further tested and examined in future studies. This research is looked upon as an addition and reliable reference in the national library of the Kingdom of Bahrain identifying a new form of network-based leadership during large scale organisational transformation initiatives referred to in this research as Transformation Network Leadership.

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APPENDIX 1
Transactional and Transformational Leadership

1.Transactional Leadership Theory

Weber (1947) and Burns (1978) described three types of leaders and leadership styles in their theories which are transactional, charismatic and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership has many descriptions all related to the nature of transactional leaders' mindset. Transactional leadership is also known as bureaucratic leadership (Max Weber, 1947) due to its nature as transactional leaders operate in structured bureaucratic environments. Managerial leadership is another name for transactional leadership (Bass, 1999; Bass and Riggio, 2006), as transactional leaders pay much attention to the supervising role of leaders, group performance, organisational structures, and demands follower's compliance to changes through incentivising their followers to carry out their expected duties by a strict reward/punishment system. This reward/punishment exchange system incentivises employees to execute their tasks at their upmost performance level by meeting organisational goals and targets. On the other hand, employees who fail to meet leaders' expectation and are insufficient in their performance levels get punished by lower merits and cuts in their incentives until improvement to their performance and outcomes are noticed (Dai *et al*., 2013; Meuser *et al.,* 2016). The reward/punishment systems are strictly structured platform based on mutual agreement and understanding between followers and leaders (House and Shamir, 1993; Xenikou, 2017). The advantages and disadvantages of transactional leadership are summarised in table 1 below.

Table 1 Advantages and disadvantages of Transactional Leadership Summary.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Team member motivation to productivity maximisation	Strict in rules and regulation
Achievable creation to individuals at different levels	Illumination of innovation due to rigidness and unwieldiness
Clear chain of command and hierarchy	Doesn't create leaders as much as followers
Focused on maximisation of productivity and cost reduction	Focuses on consequences rather than creativity
Simple implementation	Doesn't take into factor humanitarian factors
Clear punishment/reward system	Reward based motivation only limiting motivation.

Transactional leadership was looked at as the most efficient and accurate way of management and organisational change implementation instrument to ensure organisational goals and

targets are met in the appropriate means in the last two decades (Bass *et al.*, 2003). This leadership style manages organisations in a conventional way by defining followers' duties and responsibilities as per their job descriptions and by rewarding them for achieving the agreed-on targets or punishing them in the case of individual inability to achieve those agreed goals (Bass, 1999). Transactional leaders pursue high performance and goal achievement of their followers through this strict reward/punishment system (Prasad and Junni, 2016; Howell and Hall-Merenda, 1999). One of the main issues which makes transactional leadership a negative perception in today's world of inter-organisational environment is its lack of ability and approach into creativity as they are interested to maintain the status quo (Bass, 1985). Such leadership is very effective during emergencies and in environment where strict rules and regulations are essential to carry out individual responsibilities safely and professionally (Dai *et al.*, 2013; Ma and Jiang, 2018). Figure 1 below exhibits transactional leadership dimension.

Figure 1 Transactional Leadership Dimensions
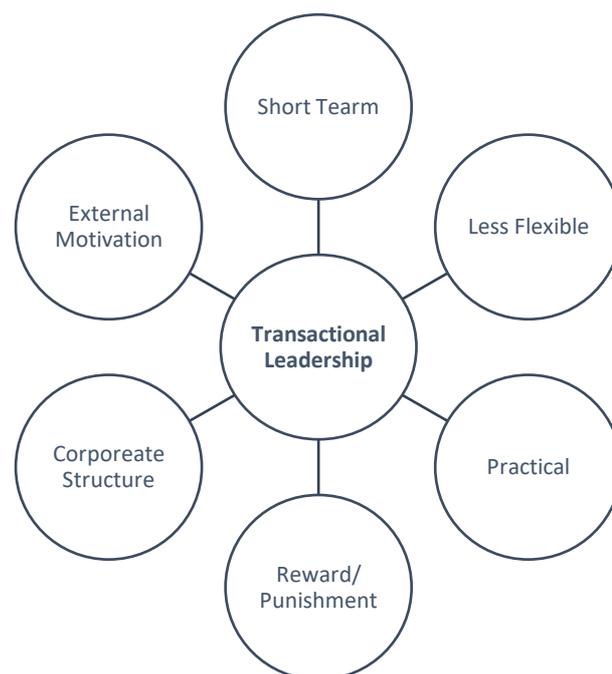
2. Transformational Leadership Theory

The concept of transformational leadership was described by Bass 1978 as a relational based leadership style which focuses on the ties between leaders and followers. In his work,

transformational leadership was studied as a political leadership potential for political parties and government sector. The transformational leadership theory was expanded later to a broader area of implementation and applicability in organisational leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Scholars and researchers have shown great interest in studying the connection between organisational transformation and its influence on organisational performance during organisational transformation (Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Unlike transactional leadership theory, transformational leaders do not depend on a structured rewards exchange system. Transformational leaders depend on the understanding of their followers needs. Transformational leaders lead by example as they position themselves as role models for their followers in order to achieve mutual trust and gain their confidence. Transformational leaders seek to motivate followers by understanding their needs, requirement and align their personal interest, values to the collective organisational interest (Bass *et al.,* 2003). Leaders are able to influence and convince their followers by stressing the importance of change to the organisational growth and future vision of the company which leads to prosperity and personal employees' benefit (Hamstra *et al.,* 2011). Followers are encouraged by leaders to look at organisations for potential opportunities where followers learn and become more competent (Hetland *et al.,* 2011). Followers are treated as independent individuals (Bass 1985) and are aware of the importance of improving their capabilities raising their competencies, and skills (Hamstra *et al.*, 2014). Transformational leaders are those who inspire followers to perform outstandingly and achieve upmost performance levels (Robbins and Coulter, 2007). Warrilow (2012) has identified that charisma, influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and attention are the six transformational styles. The advantages and disadvantages of transformational leadership are summarised in table 2 below.

Table 2 Advantages and disadvantages of transformational leadership.

	Advantage	Disadvantage
1	Retain employees	Can develop negative outcomes.
2	Higher productivity by satisfying followers demands	Depend on continuous communication which might be unachievable sometimes.
3	Influence others to adopt to organisational changes	Get constant feedback to maintain the enthusiasm within the group or team.
4	Transformative in their vision	Focus on individuals needs instead of the group or team
5	Create enthusiasm in work environment	Are not always detail oriented.
6	Excellent communicators and listeners	Ignore protocols

Transformational leaders are inspiring and charismatic leaders who motivate employees by achieving organisational collective goals (Burns, 1978). This motivational effort inspires

followers to share the organisational vision encouraging other individuals. Burns (1978) identified the main four characteristics of transactional leaders. First, they are instrumental in their abilities to attract individuals who value their charisma and are inspired by them. Second, they inspire individuals and motivate them to share their vision taking a participating role in the organisational goal achievement. Third, creativity is encouraged by them to resolve issues and challenges with out of the box solutions. Fourth, support individuals by helping them grow and mature in their positions, and role to assume leadership role once they are competent. Scholars agree that transformational leaders achieve impressive outcomes (Anderson *et al.*, 2017). Transformational leadership is differentiated from transactional leadership as shown in figure 2 below. Each one of those leadership different approach in reaction towards different categories and situation.

Figure 2 Transactional vs Transformational Leadership

Categories	Transactional	Transformational
Source of power	Position	Character, competence
Followers reaction	Compliance	Commitment
Time frame	Short term	Long term
Reward	Incintives, bonus..etc	Pride, self esteem..etc
Supervision	Important	Less important
Follower focus	Evaluation	Development
Change	Follower behaviour	Followers values, attitude
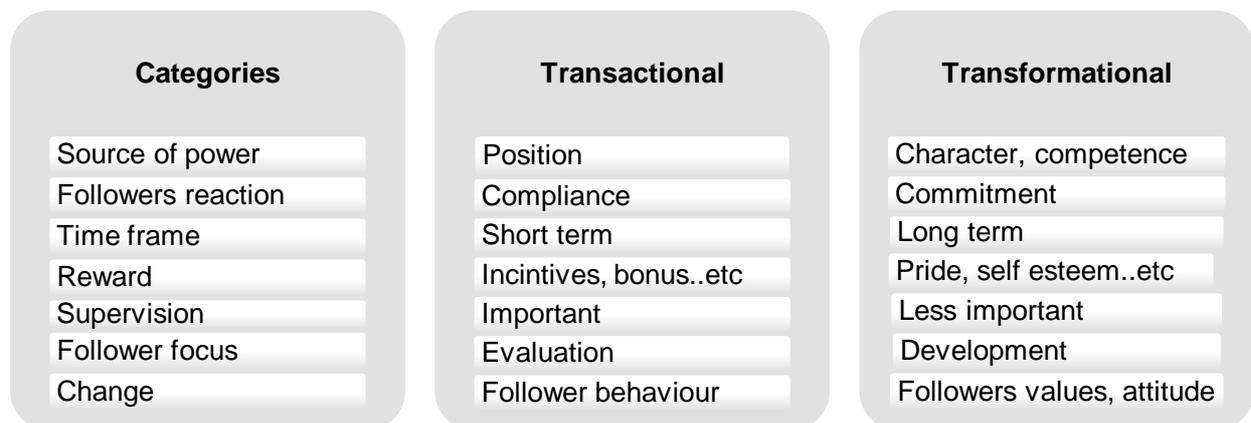
Transformational leaders main features are highlighted in figure 3 below.

Figure 3 Transformation Leader features.

Influence	role model and purpose driven
Inspirational motivation	inspiring followers
Idividualised consideration	sincere concern to followers needs
Intellectual stimulation	stimulate followers inovation and creativity
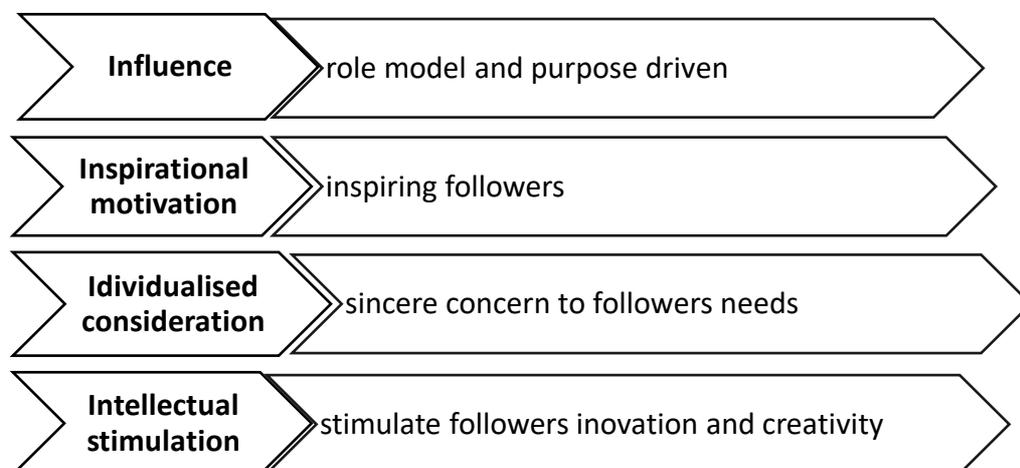
Collective/Team Leadership Constructs

1. Shared Leadership

Shared leadership is the most common and known construct/element of team/collective leadership which is defined 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" (Pearce and Conger, 2003, p.1). Shared leadership has emerged due to the shifts in the global and local business environment alongside the organisations increasing complexity and ambiguity (Gronn 2003; Zhu *et al.,* 2018). In such complex situations it is assumed that leaders are not provided with sufficient or accurate information to take decisions (Pearce and Conger 2003; Turner and Baker, 2018). Therefore, shared leadership emerged indicate people with different set of skills, traits and knowledge taking up leadership roles (Meuser *et al.,* 2016; White *et al.,* 2016; Sweeney, Clarke and Higgs, 2019). Shared leadership definitions are summarised in table 1.

Table 1 Shared leadership definitions

Author	Definition
Gerstner (1998)	"A dynamic working relationship between work group members" (P. 39)
Sivasubramanium et al. (2002)	"Collective influence of members in a team on each other and how members of a group evaluate the influence of the group as opposed to one individual within or external to the group" (P. 68)
Erez et al. (2002)	"Leadership can be shared over time whereby team members share in responsibilities involved in the leadership role by clarifying who is to perform specific role behaviours" (P. 933)
Pearce and Coger (2003)	"Adynamic, 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" (P. 1)
Pearce et al. (2004)	"Simultaneous, ongoing, mutual influence process within a team that is characterised by serial emergence of official as well as unofficial leaders" (P. 48)
Ensley et al. (2006)	"A team process where leadership is carried out by the team as a whole, rather than solely by a single designated individual" (P. 220)
Mehra et al. (2006)	"Shared, distributed phenomena in which there can be several (formally appointed and/or emergent) leaders" (P. 233)
Hiller et al. (2006)	"The epicentre of collective leadership is not the role of a formal leader but the interaction of team members to lead the team by sharing in leadership responsibilities" (P. 388)

Carson et al. (2007)	"An emergent team property that results from the distribution of leadership influence across the multiple members" (P. 1218)
Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber (2009)	"Shared leadership is an emergent state where team members collectively lead each other" (P. 431)
Mendez 2009	"A dynamic property that is not owned by any particular team member but flows among multiple people and adapts to the characteristics of the situation" (P. 8)
Pearce et al., (2010)	"Shared leadership occurs when group members actively and intentionally shift the role of leader to one another and necessitated by environment or circumstances in which the operates" (P. 151)
Gupta, Haung and Yayla 2011	"Team's capability for collectively engaging in transformational leadership behaviours; leadership as a collective process, such the team influences, inspires, and motivates team members" (P. 32)
M. A. Drescher et al. (2014)	"An emergent property of a group where leadership functions are distributed among group members" (P. 722)
Nicolaides et al., (2014)	"A set of interactive influence processes in which team leadership functions are voluntarily shared among internal team members in the pursuit of team goals" (P. 924)
D'Innocenzo et al., (2016)	"An emergent and dynamic team phenomenon whereby leadership roles and influence are distributed among team members" (P. 5)
Meuser et al., (2016)	"A form of leadership that is distributed and shared among multiple participating individual" (P. 1390)
Lord et al., (2017)	"Shared leadership can be viewed in terms of different individuals enact leader and follower roles at different points in time" (P. 444)

Source Zhu et al. (2018)

The process of shared leadership occurs when team members exchange the leadership role frequently and intentionally between each other according to skills, capacity and qualifications needed in an individual to be able lead through precise environment circumstance or certain operational need such as organisational transformation initiatives. As Pearce and Munz (2005, p.132) stated it is "ever more difficult for any leader from above to have all of the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to lead all aspects of knowledge work". Many studies have highlighted the positive impact and influence of shared leadership and argued that it leads to more efficient and higher performance levels when compared with traditional complicated organisational hierarchical leadership structures (Avolio *et al.,* 1996; Carson *et al.,* 2007; Binci, Cerruti and Braganza, 2016). However, few other scholars argued that the extent to which shared leadership is related to positive team performance is not clear (Bowers and Seashore, 1966).

Scholars highlight the limits of shared leadership by defining the complex adaptive process that occurs between leaders and followers in teams (DeRue, 2011; Sweeney, Clarke and Higgs, 2018). Studies on shared leadership have found positive relationship between shared/multiple leadership and team performance with more efficiency and sustainability

(Avolio *et al.*, 1996; Hoch and Kozlowski, 2014; Kukenberger and D'Innocenzo, 2020) and a more accurate predictor of performance than vertical leadership (Binci, Cerruti and Braganza, 2016; Ensley, Hmieleski, & Pearce, 2006; Pearce and Sims, 2002). This type of leadership is a total deviation from the traditional concept of hierarchical leadership where decision making is directed flows downwards from leaders to subordinates (Day and O'Connor, 2003; Zhu *et al.,* 2018). Shared leadership is a fundamental diversion from the idea of unified command in teams/groups (Wern, Bedeian and Breeze, 2002) towards an emergent and a dynamic process (Denis, Langley and Sergi, 2012; Turner and Baker, 2018).

2. Complexity Leadership

Complexity leadership is a situationally caused by inflated organisational size and organisation becomes unable to handle or manage this complexity. The organisation becomes unmanageable by a single leader when organisational complexity exceeds individual complexity (Tourish, 2019; Wilkinson and Young, 2005).

Complexity leadership has arisen from the assumption that organisations are complex and too sophisticated to be led and its goals to be achieved by a single individual (Tourish, 2019; Uhl-Bien and Marson, 2009; Lichtenstien *et al.,* 2006; Marson and Uhl-Bein, 2002). Knowledge-based economy era creates new set of challenges and obstacles for organisations and their leadership which requires them to be more adaptive to changing operational environment, interactive in terms of different organisational components and have an increasing learning curve (Binci, Cerruti and Braganza, 2016). As organisations grow and transform from an era to another newer era organisations becomes more complex not only in their structures and operation, but they become more complex in their context and culture (Cilliers, 1998; Snowden and Boone, 2007; Hovik and Hanseen, 2015). As its mistakenly understood that complexity is referring to an organisation being complicated as stated by contingency theorists in the twentieth century (Buckley, 1967; Perrow, 1972), but complexity is an outcome of the interaction of simplified elements in response to limited information and communications given to them (Cillers, 1998). As complexity leadership originated from complexity science (Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Snowden & Boone, 2007). This leadership theory is a study of a complex system with interactive dynamics built in contexts of a greater organising system.

3. Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership is another construct of team/collective leadership dimension which has been an area of interest in the past few years. This leadership model is common in the educational field as many studies have been conducted in the educational context (Choi, 2007). The fundamental of this construct evolves around the concepts of traditional democratic participative and inclusiveness (Beerbohm, 2015; Gastil, 1994; Fishkin, 1991). Unlike others team/collective approach to leadership constructs democratic leadership does not fully share leadership and responsibility and is formal in its leadership and power execution (Kılıçoğlu, 2018; Spillane, 2005). Democratic leaders distribute responsibilities amongst team member, assist the group in dissection taking process and empowering group members (Beerbohm, 2015). Table 2 below summarises advantages and disadvantages of democratic leadership.

Table 2 Democratic leadership advantages and disadvantages

	Advantage	Disadvantage
1	Empower leaders to work with their teams	Delays in consensus
2	Macro leadership instead of micro	Can create a sense of ambiguity
3	Enhances team collaboration and bonds	Might not take the best decision
4	Encourages transparency	Leaders are not accountable
5	Boost self-stem and job satisfaction	Communication issues
6	Increases collective knowledge	
7	Innovative in complex issues solutions	

4. Intergroup Leadership

Intergroup leadership is another network construct a one which is less famous construct of team/collective leadership spectrum. This leadership style is a new team/collective leadership construct which hasn't received much interest from scholars and researchers unlike other constructs mentioned earlier. Intergroup leadership is built around the idea of context inter-organisational importance and the collaboration of each component of the organisation (Halevy, 2020; Hoggs *et al.,* 2012). Intergroup leadership is a collaboration cooperation of several formal organisational group (Rast,Hogg and van Knippenberg, 2018; Van Dick and Dawson, 2006).

5. Collaborative Leadership

Collaborative leadership is another new and under research team/collective leadership construct which is embraced with shared leadership. Researchers and scholars admit that participation and leading the organisation in full or partial is expected from all organisation members (Lawrence, 2017; Morse, 2008; Raelin, 2006). The concept of collaborative leadership style is sharing leadership and responsibility amongst a group of members that are ready and competent to take over leadership responsibilities (Zander and Zander, 2002) where a designated focal leader is willing and ready to share authority and power of leadership. This area of team/collective leadership remains a new area and still needs to research and tested both quantitively and qualitatively (Walo and Ringen, 2018; Krame and Crespy, 2011).

6. Collective Leadership

The origin of collective leadership is traced back to Gibb 1954 but has become of more importance to scholars in the past 20 years (Pearce and Conger, 2003). Collective leadership is defined as "a dynamic process in which a defined leader, or set of leaders, selectively utilises the skills and expertise within a network as the need arises" (Friedrich *et al.,* 2009). Collective leadership is one of the collectivistic approaches to leadership theories, an area of growing appetite for scholars and researchers to study (Raelin, 2018; Denis *et al.*, 2012). When viewing the collective leadership literature, it was noted that there were two different views and schools of thought for such approach. The first, believes and supports the collectivistic approach main concept of a designated focal leader shares, empowers authority and distributes leadership roles within a team or a network of teams (Scott *et al.,* 2018; Yammarino *et al.*, 2012; Friedrich *et al.,* 2009). The other, doesn't accept and rejects the whole concept of having a designated focal leader who is willing and is ready to share leadership and supports the idea of full fledge sharing of responsibility and leadership between team or network members (Leithwood, 2019; Contractor *et al.*, 2012; Hiller *et al.*, 2006). This research supports both schools of thoughts as collective leadership and collectivistic approach to leadership praise a very broad-spectrum leadership from team to networks and operate in different sectors, which leads to conclusion that the amount of power delegation and leadership sharing is circumstantial.

7. Participative Leadership

Participative leadership concept is roots back to Platt 1947. It has recently become an area of interest to scholars and researchers. Participative leadership is an approach to leadership encouraging and empowering the participation in leadership and decision making by involving group, teams and individuals in problem solving process alongside full participation in day-to-day organisational management (Bass and Stohdill, 1990; Li, Liu and Luo, 2018). The presence of a designated focal leader is critical in this leadership approach to coordinate the participation of individuals, teams and groups in organisational management activities (Lam et al., 2015).

APPENDIX 3
Ethical Approval Letter

Brunel University London

Kingston Lane Uxbridge UB8 3PH United Kingdom

www.brunel.ac.uk

AND 20/05/2020

Ethical approval to start the data collecting process required to continue with my PhD research related to leadership and organizational Reference: 20972-LR-Apr/2020- 25318-3

Dear Mr Nawaf Alghanem
The Research Ethics Committee has considered the above application recently submitted by you.

The Chair, acting under delegated authority has agreed that there is no objection on ethical grounds to the proposed study. Approval is given on the understanding that the conditions of approval set out below are followed:

Please ensure that you monitor and adhere to all up-to-date Government health advice for the duration of your project.

The agreed protocol must be followed. Any changes to the protocol will require prior approval from the Committee by way of an application for an amendment.

Please note that:

Research Participant Information Sheets and (where relevant) flyers, posters, and consent forms should include a clear statement that research ethics approval has been obtained from the relevant Research Ethics Committee.
The Research Participant Information Sheets should include a clear statement that queries should be directed, in the first instance, to the Supervisor (where relevant), or the researcher. Complaints, on the other hand, should be directed, in the first instance, to the Chair of the relevant Research Ethics Committee.

Approval to proceed with the study is granted subject to receipt by the Committee of satisfactory responses to any conditions that may appear above, in addition to any subsequent changes to the protocol.
The Research Ethics Committee reserves the right to sample and review documentation, including raw data, relevant to the study.
You may not undertake any research activity if you are not a registered student of Brunel University or if you cease to become registered, including abeyance or temporary withdrawal. As a deregistered student you would not be insured to undertake research activity. Research activity includes the recruitment of participants, undertaking consent procedures and collection of data. Breach of this requirement constitutes research misconduct and is a disciplinary offence.

Professor David Gallear
Chair of the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee Brunel University London

15 April 2020

Applicant (s):

LETTER OF APPROVAL

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 15/04/2020

Mr Nawaf Alghanem

College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee Brunel University London

Project Title:
transformation through semi-structured questions.

APPENDIX 4

Interview Protocol

Participation Invitation Letter

16th January 2020

Subject: PHD Questionnaire Participant

Dear Sir/Madam

This is Nawaf Al Ghanim, a PHD researcher in the Brunel University London. My PHD research mainly aims to examine the notion of network leadership by overlaying social network theory upon the principles of distributed leadership on organisations going through transformation initiatives to.

I sincerely look forward to your kind participation in the questionnaire I have prepared. The questionnaire is composed of several questions which require response in a way helping complete my thesis.

Since confidentiality and anonymity are ethical practices designed to protect the privacy of human subjects while collecting, analyzing, and reporting data, I can assure you that your answers will be kept confidential, and your name and personal data will NOT appear in any format during and after the survey.

The questionnaire will take around ------- minutes to complete. Please don't hesitate to call me if you have any queries regarding this questionnaire.

Once again, I warmly thank you for your kind response and valued participation.

Utmost Regards

Nawaf Al-Ghanim
PhD Researcher
Nawaf.alghanem@brunel.ac.uk
+97336666999

APPENDIX 5

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Distributed Leadership in Transformation Initiatives: The Emergence of Network Leadership

You are invited to participate in the above-mentioned research study. It's essential for you to clearly understand why and what this research is conducted and its involvement. Read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish to. Please don't hesitate to contact me for clarification or further information. Thank you for reading this.

This research has reviewed and studied both organisational transformation, leadership literature and the bridging of these two important topics related to organisational change. As stated by leadership literature that distributed leadership is looked at as an initiator of change, by creating a network of different leaders with different skills and traits that assumes leadership during different times depending on the situation and the status of the transformation stage. Distributed leaders make sure those organisational transformational initiatives flow within the organisational boundaries and vertically top-down and down-top by the most suitable leaders.

The organisational transformation literature highlights the importance of leadership in the implementation of organisational change it still doesn't specify which type of leaders and at what time and situation. This research focuses on the identified intersection between the two reviewed literature to boost and kickstart efficient implementation of transformational initiatives.

This research will examine the intersection of distributed leadership and organisational transformation literature by overlaying social network theory upon the principles of distributed leadership.

You have been invited to take place in this research because you meet the selection criteria for this research which is being one of the top executives in your organisation and have been involved in organisational transformation in National Bahraini Oil & Gas sector in past 10 years. This research is including an approximately 37 executives and chairmen which were or are part of transformation initiatives to benefit and capture their views alongside their cumulative professional experience.

As participation is entirely voluntary, it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and you may be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part still free to withdraw at any time up until the 30th of May 2020 and without having to give a reason. Participant has the right to withdraw his/her data after the end of the participant's engagement in the research

You will be requested as participant to meet the researcher in a one on one meeting where you will be answering the researchers semi structured questions. The meeting or interview will last for no longer than 45min. The participant is supposed to present accurate and transparent answers addressing the interview questions. The participant is expected to fully cooperate with the researcher providing him will all required and necessary data.

As the research is of low risk nature there isn't any lifestyle restrictions on participants.

There are no anticipated disadvantages of risks associated with taking part in this research.

There are no intended benefits to participants participating in this research other than contributing to knowledge throw their participating in the research.

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you which leaves the university will have all your identifying information removed. With your permission, anonymised data will be stored and may be used in future research- you can indicate whether or not you give permission for this by way of Consent Form.

If during the course of the research evidence of harm misconduct come to light, then it may be necessary to break confidentiality. We will tell you at the time if we think we need to do this, and let you know what will happen next.

An external audio recording and storing device will be used in the course of the interview. The content analysis of the interview's techniques will be decided and set in advance to the analysis process could be executed effectively and efficiently.
A recording unit will be used for recording the interviews after taking the verbal consents of the participants. The participant will be notified when the recording unit is starts or stops recording.

The research results will be included as an essential part of the study and will be potentially published as seen appropriate by the authors of the research in the targeted journals. In the case of getting the results published each participant will receive a copy of that publication. Participants will not be identified by any means unless specifically requested by them.

The research is organised by Nawaf Husain Sultan AlGhanem in conjunction with Brunel University London.

Brunel University London provides appropriate insurance cover for research which has received ethical approval.

This research has to be reviewed by the by the Brunel University London Research Ethics Committee for the College of Business, Art and Social Science chaired by Professor David Gallear (David.Gallear@brunel.ac.uk).

Research Integrity

Brunel University London is committed to compliance with the Universities UK [Research Integrity Concordat](). You are entitled to expect the highest level of integrity from the researchers during the course of this research

Contact for further information and complaints

Nawaf AlGhanem

(Nawaf.Alghanem@brunel.ac.uk)

+97336666999

Professor Ashley Braganza

(Ashley.Braganza@brunel.ac.uk)

For complaints,

Professor David Gallear

(David.Gallear@brunel.ac.uk)

APPENDIX 6

Research Questions & Sub-Questions

Question 1: **A. What are the outcomes of the intersection of distributed leadership with   organisational transformation and social network theory?**
B. Is network leadership a result of this intersection?

Sub Questions:

- How would you describe your leadership style?
- Please elaborate on the type of leadership style that you think is needed in organisations going through their transformation phase?
- What is your perception of distributed leadership in organisations going through large scale transformation initiatives?
- From your experience can you elaborate on the situational distribution of leadership?
- In your opinion what is the biggest obstacle in the implementation of transformation initiatives and organisational change?
- As someone who has been a part of organisational transformation initiatives in your organisation what is your perception of suitable management style during such initiatives?
- In your opinion what is the effectiveness of distributed leadership in organisations going through transformational phase?
- How do you evaluate the impact of distributed leadership on organisational transformation initiatives?

Question 2: **How does social network theory enhance distributed leadership practice?**

Sub-Questions:

- Do you believe that social studies and human aspects can influence effective leadership?

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- What are your views on the social distribution of task enactment on organisations going through transformational phase?
- What is your perception of social network theory on organisations going through transformation initiatives?
- From your experience how is distributed leadership impacted by social network theory?

Question 3: _What are the conceptual dimensions of network leadership?_

Sub-Questions:

- From your experience what are the most important elements in organisational transformation initiatives implementation?
- How do you interpret the intersection between distributed leadership and organisational transformation initiatives?
- What are the dimensions of this intersection?
- Can you elaborate on the network of leaders' concept which this research refers to as network leadership?

CONSENT FORM

Distributed Leadership in Transformation Initiatives: The Emergence of Network Leadership

Nawaf AlGhanem PHD Researcher

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 20/04/2020 AND 20/05/2020

The participant (or their legal representative) should complete the whole of this sheet.		
	YES	NO
Have you read the Participant Information Sheet?	☐	☐
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	☐	☐
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	☐	☐
Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning this study?	☐	☐
Do you understand that:		
• You are free to withdraw from this study at any time	☐	☐
• You don't have to give any reason for withdrawing	☐	☐
• Choosing not to participate or withdrawing will not affect you	☐	☐
• You can withdraw your data any time up to 20/05/2020	☐	☐
I agree to the use of non-attributable quotes when the study is written up or published	☐	☐
The procedures regarding confidentiality have been explained to me	☐	☐
I agree that my anonymised data can be stored and shared with other researchers for use in future projects.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in this study.	☐	☐

Signature of research participant:	
Print name:	Date: