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Exploring Antecedents to Work Engagement and Psychological Well-Being within a Canadian Provincial Ministry

Kris Ellis
Walden University

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Kris Ellis

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Review Committee
Dr. Lilburn Hoehn, Committee Chairperson, Management Faculty
Dr. Stephanie Hoon, Committee Member, Management Faculty
Dr. Patricia Fusch, University Reviewer, Management Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
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Abstract

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MAIS, Athabasca University, 2007

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Abstract

A gap exists in organizational development strategies on why some individuals remain disengaged with their work. This study addressed whether a combination of specific contextual factors could support individuals, teams, and leaders to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. The theoretical frameworks of social constructivism, the conceptual framework of symbolic interactionism, and a hermeneutic inquiry approach were used to address how individual psychological traits/abilities of employees support work engagement. Nineteen employees of a Canadian provincial government ministry completed an engagement survey, MSCEIT, MBTI, and SDI assessments. They also participated in focus groups. Survey results showed high engagement scores. Focus group themes, derived from the Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method centered on perceptions of personal choice, passive resignation, and trust. Spearman's correlation results indicated a moderate, nonsignificant association between the MSCEIT, MBTI, SDI scores, and work engagement. Study results suggested 5 factors necessary for individuals to sustain engagement: the ability to balance a focus on others and impressions with a focus on ideas and concrete data, the ability to perceive and manage emotions, motivational values consistent with a concern for others, and leader and organizational support. Results from this study are expected to increase possible social change efforts focused on developing highly engaged teams that demonstrate a positive, fulfilling work-related state characterized by high energy levels, mental resilience, dedication, and involvement in work.

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Dedication

Individuals who choose to complete a Ph.D. never take the journey alone. First and foremost, you must have individuals willing to participate in your study. These individuals, who may not know you, dedicate time, effort, and passion so that you can complete your goal. I am forever in debt to the nineteen incredible, amazing people who gave their time, energy, and commitment to this study. You taught me a great deal about personal engagement and the commitment you have to ensuring others succeed.

A PhD journey also entails long days and nights at the computer. This requires, for the most part, that all other interests are set aside. The sacrifice is not just made by the person completing the PhD. I am profoundly grateful that twenty-four years ago, I married someone who has never lost faith in me. Bruce, we have been on our own journey together, and while it has certainly had its challenges, it has never been boring. You kept our lives together when I was so lost in the research I wasn't even aware that entire days had passed. I promise, next summer we'll actually get out of the house.

Finally, in the twenty-five years that I've been involved in organizational development, I have never been part of a team like the one I am fortunate to belong to now. You are the best thing that has ever happened to me (other than Bruce, of course). Your passion, dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment to helping individuals and teams identify how and when they do their best work is a bar I continue to strive to meet. Your interest and support in my study, and your belief in me kept me going.

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There is an incredible amount of academic rigor and support that goes into the completion of a PhD. The work of a dissertation chair and methodologist is significant, and often without the appreciation and recognition of the work the roles entail. I would like to thank Dr. Lil Hoehn and Dr. Stephanie Hoon for all of their support, encouragement, and feedback. I am a better scholar-practitioner because I was fortunate enough to have you. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Jesperson, my University Research Reviewer, for her insights and suggestions for improvement. I would like to express my deepest thanks and appreciation for Dr. Patricia Fusch's review, insights, and feedback on my dissertation. I was lucky enough to have two University Research Reviewers on my dissertation journey. The experience, knowledge, and patience of Dr. Jesperson and Dr. Fusch enabled this dissertation to be a product I could be proud of. Finally, I would like to thank Timothy Q. McIndoo for his form & style review. Your skill of reviewing a dissertation and offering suggestions in a way that is respectful and inclusive was valued by me. I don't envy the role of a University Research Reviewer or a Form & Style Editor. I imagine a great deal of patience and humor is required to fulfil these roles.

It is always wonderful to have a group of people traveling the same journey as you. I have been fortunate to meet passionate, dedicated people within my cohort at Walden University. Having people who share your interests, your frustrations, and your successes is priceless.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Organizational interventions are a key strategy for developing engagement within leaders, employees, and teams. Interventions incorporate a broad range of practices targeted at increasing leader, individual, and team effectiveness, along with psychological well-being (Gruman & Saks, 2011). While researchers have studied leader competencies and team dynamics since the 1920s, there is increasing recognition of the link between organizational engagement and work performance (Shuffler, DiazGranados, & Salas, 2011). Since the early 1990s, organizational interventions have been at the forefront of planned change addressing organizational health; leader, individual, and team engagement; and psychological well-being (Gruman & Saks, 2011; Shuffler et al., 2011).

Despite this increased application of interventional strategies, efforts to improve employee health, psychological well-being, and engagement by changing leader, individual, and team characteristics have often been unsuccessful (Mahon, Taylor, & Boyatzis, 2014; Nielsen, Taris, & Cox, 2010). The reasons for this lack of measurable success—defined as lack of sustained behavioral change—are now a focus of research (Biron, Karanika-Murray, & Cooper, 2012). Questions about the complexity of intervention models and lack of alignment between intervention models are aspects of this new concentration (Biron et al., 2012). Desired change—the role that various individual factors play in inhibiting behavioral change—as well as the social systems that

cling to established behavioral patterns—are additional aspects of this new research concentration (Biron et al., 2012).

Leaders focus interventional efforts primarily on developing or improving social and emotional intelligence, production results, goal identification and completion, and task efficiency (Shuffler et al., 2011). While existing interventional strategies have achieved moderate success, it has been primarily identified within the categories of (a) goal identification and completion and (b) task efficiency (Klein et al., 2009). Biron et al. (2012) found that study results are inconsistent, and that outcomes focused on developing the social and emotional intelligence that lead to engagement suggest only modest behavioral change. Focusing on understanding why behavioral change is modest, my aim in this research study was to identify specific leader, individual, and team antecedents for sustained behavioral change (Augusto-Landa, Pulido-Martos, & Lopez-Zafra, 2011; Barbuto & Story, 2010; Lincoln, 2009). Study findings will be valuable in determining when individuals, teams, and leaders are ready, willing, and able to engage in sustained behavioral change (Keating, Rosch, & Burgoon, 2014).

Keating et al. (2014) have noted that organizations that initiate leadership development tend to focus on knowledge acquisition rather than leadership capacity. Focusing on the existing attributes of employees with high potential employees or current leaders are underemphasized. Identifying methodologies to determine individual and team readiness, willingness, and ability to be engaged in the workplace may result in increased interventional success.

There is a body of research on the potential contribution that developing social and emotional intelligence has on leader, individual, and team engagement and psychological well-being (Goleman, 1995; Martins, Ramalho, & Morin, 2010; Salovey, Mayer, & Caruso, 2002; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2012). Nonetheless, Nielsen et al. (2010) have noted that there remains a significant gap in identifying a clear association between the intervention strategy to build these intelligences and subsequent behavior change. This lack of clear association suggests that specific leader, individual, and team conditions need to exist in order for interventional strategies to be successful. Supporting this perspective, Best, Saul, and Willis (2013) have recommended that, to be successful, organizational interventions require an understanding of the complexity of macro-level social forces that support the antecedents of sustainable changes in workplace attitude and behavior.

Chapter 1 includes the following sections: background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions and hypothesis, the conceptual framework, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, scope, and delimitations, and significance.

Background of the Study

A key theme within workplace engagement is the focus on measuring the psychological well-being of leaders and employees. As noted by Avey, Luthans, Smith and Palmer (2010), Robertson and Cooper (2011), and Saks and Gruman (2014), a clear relationship exists between work performance and psychological well-being.

Psychological well-being increases resiliency, positive self-perceptions, and positive organizational behavior (Robertson & Cooper, 2011; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Individuals with higher psychological well-being have the willingness and ability to learn from experience and can relate to others more positively (Robertson & Cooper, 2011). Nonetheless, as noted by Avey et al. (2010), psychological well-being is subjective. These variations in individual perceptions about whether leaders and/or organizations provide the conditions for developing psychological well-being may be a constraining factor in individual motivation to develop the attitudes and behaviors characteristic of work engagement (Avey et al., 2010).

According to Avey et al. (2010), an important way of understanding psychological well-being is to identify the antecedents that support an individual demonstrating the attitudes and behaviors characteristic of psychological well-being. These antecedents can include the degree of social and emotional intelligence, the ability to communicate assertively, and the degree to which a positive social reality exists within the workplace. To improve psychological well-being and leader and employee engagement, individuals may need to develop a cognitive ability to appraise their own internal coping and adaptation skills (Avey et al., 2010; Mache et al., 2014). Furthermore, leaders and employees may need to seek resources to address any gaps in their internal coping and/or adaptation skills (Avey et al., 2010). For organizations, this means providing resources to enable them to develop the antecedents that support the desired attitudes and behaviors (Avey et al., 2010).

To compete in today's work environment, employers must identify strategies to recruit and retain employees who have the desire and ability to apply their full competencies (Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011). In the research on work engagement and psychological well-being, this may translate into an understanding of the importance of psychological capital (Seligman, 2015). Psychological capital is defined as a set of attitudes and behaviors that enable individuals to reach their optimal workplace performance (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, & Peterson, 2010) or as a confidence in one's ability to fulfill job accountabilities, optimism about workplace outcomes, and resiliency in the face of adversity (Luthans et al., 2010). Correspondingly, an absence of psychological capital has been associated with decreased psychological well-being, increased employee workplace nonconformity, and lower levels of both job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Mathieu, Neumann, Hare, & Babiak, 2014).

While there may be agreement about the role of psychological capital in developing and sustaining work engagement and psychological well-being, there is little research on the antecedents of psychological capital (Bakker, Demerouti, & ten Brummelhuis, 2011). In other words, key traits, attitudes, and behaviors exist that result in work engagement and psychological well-being (Bakker et al., 2011; Bledow, Frese, Schmitt, & Kűhnel, 2011). What is relatively unknown is why these traits, attitudes, and behaviors exist in some individuals and not in others (Bledow et al., 2011).

Contextual factors such as a lack of clarity about (a) how and when engagement should be measured by leaders and (b) whether the organization supports a climate of

engagement, have been the primary focus of examining engagement and psychological well-being in the workplace (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011). Additional factors that have been a primary focus include the degree of leader influence in creating and sustaining engagement and why organizational interventions are ineffective at creating and sustaining work engagement (Neilsen and Abilgaard, 2013; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011). Expanding the focus of context regarding work engagement, other individual factors such as the social construction of reality, a predisposition for accountability, and an ability to cognitively shift negative attitudes and behaviors have become a focus within this research area (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011; Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesvaran, 2010).

According to Best et al. (2013), developing and sustaining work engagement and psychological well-being requires individuals to understand how behavior changes, rather than simply identifying what behavior needs to change. Identifying and examining the leader, individual, and team antecedents and experiences of a highly engaged team may provide relevant information about the personal and group conditions necessary to sustain behavioral change. This information may then help increase the alignment between the interventional strategy and expected outcomes. Greater alignment and sustained behavioral change is critical in light of the American Society of Training and Development State of the Industry report (2012), which indicated that U.S. organizations spent in excess of $156 billion on leader, individual, and team development in 2012 (Miller, 2012).

Problem Statement

The problem in this study was whether a combination of specific contextual factors supports individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. A key to understanding why and how engagement and psychological well-being are created and sustained (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011) may be the idea that a large part of how people interpret reality is shaped by their interactions with others (Peterson & Peterson, 2013). Consider the following example. During the Korean War, the death rate of U.S. soldiers in certain North Korean POW camps was 38%—the highest ever experienced in U.S. military history (Rath & Clifton, 2009). This death rate occurred despite the lack of armed guards, barb wire, or the physical torture tactics that were considered common at this time (Wilson, 2006). Ultimately, POWs died due to the North Korean tactics that emotionally and psychologically isolated POW's, resulting in the deliberate erosion of trust, respect, and social acceptance from their peers within the camps (Mayer, 2004).

While organizational environments are not as extreme as a POW camp, the moment-by-moment choices individuals make concerning interpreting work experiences affect psychological well-being and engagement (Rath & Clifton, 2009). There continues to be a need for an in-depth, qualitative and quantitative understanding of the differences in the lived experiences of a highly engaged organizational team and a team with low engagement (Mache et al., 2014). Despite an increasing interest in improving work engagement, a gap remains with regard to understanding why some individuals remain

resistant to developing the attitudes and behaviors characteristic of psychological well-being (Mache et al., 2014; Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013). This study was unique for two reasons: There are very few empirical studies that (a) combine psychometric assessment with the lived experience of individuals in order to identify antecedents of their awareness and desire for change (Dalal, Baysinger, Brummel, & LeBreton, 2012; Mahon et al., 2014) and (b) focus not only on how individuals begin to understand why change is needed, but whether individuals have the ability to change (Keating et al., 2014).

Furthermore, a paradox exists between the cost and effort to improve work engagement, and the rising organizational disengagement resulting in the current health and well-being financial gap (Bakker et al., 2011; Miller, 2012; Saks, 2006). The cost of the health and well-being gap has been valued at $300 billion ($US) per year in lost productivity (Saks, 2006) which converts to $350 billion dollars in 2015. The Mental Health Commission of Canada has indicated that the health and well-being gap accountd for approximately 30% of short- and long-term disability claims and costs the Canadian economy approximately $20 billion (CDN) per year (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2013).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this convergent, parallel case study was to identify whether a combination of specific contextual factors support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. It can be broken down into five objectives:

1. To examine whether there is a correlation between social and emotional intelligence, personality style, communication and conflict resolution style, and high work engagement within an organizational work team. Employees in a Canadian provincial government ministry represented the independent variable identifier within this study. The first dependent variable consisted of the individual scores from the Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) assessment (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2012). The second dependent variable consisted of the individual scores from the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator (MBTI) assessment (Briggs-Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 2003). The third dependent variable consisted of the individual results from the Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI) assessment (Porter & Maloney, 1977).
2. To explore, through qualitative hermeneutic inquiry, the individual experiences and feelings of employees in this provincial government ministry about how and why they are highly engaged or disengaged.
3. To explore each employee's experiences and feelings about team interactions and the social construction of reality within their teams, and whether these factors were critical in sustaining high engagement.
4. To make a contribution to the literature that examines engagement and psychological well-being; that adds understanding of the critical role of motivational antecedents in organizational interventions.

5. To engender positive social change by expanding the knowledge of organizational development scholar-practitioners who currently do or wish to develop interventions that result in highly engaged teams and decreased workplace stress, toxicity, and absenteeism.

Research Questions

Within hermeneutic inquiry, research questions are determined by an intense and personal experience and interest in a specific phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). They are framed to establish context regarding the perceptions and actions of the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002). The main objective of this form of inquiry is to interpret the meaning of the phenomenon, both from one's own perspective and that of the participants (Patton, 2002).

The foundational question guiding this study was: How do the individual psychological traits/abilities of employees within a provincial government ministry support high work engagement? In addition to this foundational question, two additional research questions guided this case study:

1. How does a team's social construction of reality sustain the team's high engagement?
2. How do personality traits, social and emotional intelligence, and collaboration and conflict skills support a team's social construction of high engagement?

For the quantitative portion of the study, the following research question guided this study:

What is the relationship between MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, SDI scores, and work engagement?

Based on this research question, the following hypotheses were derived:

H_0: There is no relationship between an individual's MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, and SDI scores and work engagement as defined by the individual's results in the study engagement survey.

H_A: There is a relationship between an individual's MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, and SDI scores and work engagement as defined by the individual's results in the study engagement survey.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Social constructivism provided the theoretical framework for this study. Symbolic interationism provided the conceptual framework. Both frameworks were appropriate within the hermeneutic inquiry approach.

Social Constructivism

A social constructivist approach was an appropriate theoretical framework for this research as a key premise of this approach is the recognition that the social context or situation and the subjective understanding of that context impacts behavior (Kassin, Fein, & Markus, 2011). As noted by Patton (2002), social groups construct their realities and these realities determine the attitudes and behaviors of the group. A social-psychological constructivist approach made it possible to examine the influence contextual factors have

on antecedents that result in sustained attitude and behavioral changes that result in work engagement and psychological well-being.

Symbolic Interactionism

Brenner, Serpe and Stryker (2014) define symbolic interactionism reflects a social process that suggests that society impacts the individual, which, in turn, impacts social behavior. Society is reflected as a multiplicity of social structures, with individual and group meaning and interpretation of experiences. Interpersonal behavior results in boundaries separating individuals within and outside of social relationships. Consistent with this definition, Nilsson (2014) has argued that individuals are not born with a specific set of beliefs, but acquire them from the interpretation of our experiences and the mental models we create as an outcome of that interpretation. This perspective suggests that individuals can only describe reality, rather than state categorically what reality is. Reality, within this perspective, constitutes strongly held beliefs. Therefore, nothing is an absolute truth (Nilsson, 2014). Consistent with this perspective, symbolic interactionism proponents, within a qualitative conceptual framework, have suggested that qualitative research does not result in absolute truths (Daniels, 2012). Phenomena studied within a symbolic interactionism perspective are considered within social and cultural contexts (Daniels, 2012). Furthermore, Daniels (2012) has suggested that individuals experiencing any phenomena have multiple, complex perspectives based on individual experiences and interpretations. These multiple perspectives from individuals can result in multiple interpretations by both participant and researcher (Daniels, 2012).

There are seven key assumptions within the symbolic interactionism perspective (Willis, 2007). The first assumption is the observation that human beings act based on the contextual meaning that they derive from their actions and their perspectives. The second assumption is that this contextual meaning is created by human beings through social interaction. The third assumption is that social interaction and subsequent self-reflection based on that interaction modifies the contextual meaning. The fourth, fifth and sixth assumptions focus on observations that social interaction and self-reflection ultimately construct the social reality that generates the contextual meaning. The final assumption is that the social construction of reality results in the social society that ultimately validates the contextual meaning of actions and perspectives (Willis, 2007).

Using a symbolic interactionist approach, I provided a foundational perspective on interpretive hermeneutic inquiry as identified by Oliver (2012). Symbolic interactionism, referencing the school of behaviorism, focuses on individual interpretation of a phenomenon or the world (Oliver, 2012). Symbolic interactionism requires that an iterative process of meaning making occur (Oliver, 2012). This process is similar to interpretive hermeneutic inquiry in that both theories focus on how individuals interpret circumstances and how those interpretations shift through continuous discourse (Oliver, 2012; Parker, 2014).

Nature of the Study

This study was conducted using a convergent, parallel case study to address the research questions. Inductive analysis was used to explore the construction of the reality

experienced by the participants (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling provided in-depth knowledge of the structure, meaning, and the essence of the team member's lived experience (Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013). In addition, case studies are unique among qualitative research methodologies in that quantitative research methods can be incorporated (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Baxter and Jack (2008) have indicated that incorporating quantitative analysis provides additional context and breadth to the phenomenon being studied and offers a unique opportunity to explore the effect psychological traits or abilities have on the experience of the participants.

The quantitative portion of this study was conducted using a correlational study approach. This was appropriate for this study in order to identify whether a relationship exists between personality traits, social and emotional intelligence, and collaboration and conflict skills, and high work engagement. Not seeking to show causes for observed patterns, correlational research can be considered a type of descriptive research that studies variables within a natural setting (Palys, 2003).

I used Spearman's rank-order correlation as the selected analysis method for the quantitative data. This method is appropriate given the type of data being collected. Spearman's correlation is applicable to use for both ordinal and continuous variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). I validated assumptions to include the presence of relationship monotonic relationship between the variables.

I conducted the qualitative portion of this study within a hermeneutic inquiry perspective. Reflective inquiry grounds hermeneutic inquiry—a process focused on

questioning what is taken for granted (Freeman, 2011). Multiple sources of perspectives were acknowledged, recognized, and incorporated (Freeman, 2011). Freeman (2011) and Patton (2002) have suggested that only a perspective, standpoint, and/or a situational context can be used to interpret the meaning of a phenomenon.

Hermeneutic inquiry was appropriate for this study as this approach is used to go beyond phenomena descriptions to discover meanings that are not immediately obvious (Freeman, 2011). Gergen, Josselson and Freeman (2015) have suggested that, within hermeneutic inquiry, individual preconceptions represent a critical part of understanding the phenomena. While each experience is considered unique, the generalizations that each individual draws from experiences can provide insights concerning the human condition (Freeman, 2011).

As the qualitative portion of this study was conducted using hermeneutic inquiry, individual interpretations of each experience and perceptions of the team dynamic were an integral part of the focus. Using a reflexive approach to personal experience—as discussed by Etherington (2004)—enabled me to acknowledge how my perceptions, culture, biases, and experiences inform and influence the research process. Moreover, the incorporation of a reflective journal documented my personal experience of observing the study participants.

Definition of Terms

The following operational definitions provide the intended meaning of key terms used throughout the study:

Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive and express emotion and assimilate emotion in thought. In addition, emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and reason with emotion and regulate emotion in the self and others (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000).

Learning agility: Learning agility represents the willingness and ability to learn from experience, and subsequently apply that learning to perform successfully under new or first-time conditions (De Meuse, Dai, & Hallenbeck, 2010).

Mental model: A mental model has a structure that corresponds to the known structure of what it represents. Individual mental models capture the commonality present in a variety of situations. Within this context, the commonality is only included when the individual constructing the mental model perceives it to be true (Johnson-Laird, 2012).

Organizational development: Organizational development is a system-wide application and transfer of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organization effectiveness (Biron et al., 2012).

Positive Organizational Behavior: This concept represents the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace (Luthans, et al., 2012).

Psychological well-being: Psychological well being is a theoretical model that encompasses 6 distinct dimensions of wellness: autonomy, environmental mastery,

personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, self-acceptance (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

Team mental models: Team mental models (TMMs) represent the shared and organized understanding and knowledge concerning the significant elements of a team's psychosocial environment and cultural norms (Mancuso et al., 2011).

Work engagement: Work engagement is an active, positive work-related state that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Bakker et al., 2011).

Assumptions

This study was subject to five assumptions:

1. Participants would provide honest and reflective answers to all questions.
2. The individual motivation to participate in this study was not dependent on a perceived requirement to participate due to my employment in the provincial ministry being studied.
3. A general pattern of understanding of the participant perceptions of readiness, willingness, and ability to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement would emerge based on the data collection methodologies.
4. The final assumption was that I would be sensitive to my personal biography as it related to the research focus. This sensitivity required me to be ready, willing, and able to acknowledge and manage my biases, values, and beliefs.

Scope and Delimitations

I conducted this research using a case study methodology incorporating hermeneutic inquiry to examine contextual factors that need to be present for individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. The scope of the study consisted of employees within a Canadian provincial government ministry. This organization was chosen because of the labor mixture of employees: Bargaining Unit, Non-Bargaining, Management, Administrative, and Technical/Professional.

The theoretical framework of social constructivism was an appropriate delimitation. The theoretical framework was an effective and suitable foundation for this study based on the research questions and study focus. While other theoretical frameworks may have somewhat aligned with the purpose of this study, social constructivism has been a consistent theoretical foundation in leadership and interventional research.

Limitations

This study was subject to five limitations:

1. Based on the purpose of the study, I used a probability sampling method. Therefore, the participants constituted a random sample of individuals. The main limitation associated with this sampling technique was that the participant perspectives and experiences may not have been representative of all employees. My goal for this study was to understand the team members'

lived experiences and conditions that resulted in high engagement or disengagement. Therefore, external validity was limited due to the sampling design and small sample size. To address this limitation, I ensured that participants represented a broad spectrum of employment categories.

2. My employment within this provincial ministry may have resulted in perceived undue pressure to participate in this study. My role in this provincial ministry is to act as a resource for Human Resources Operational Consultants and organizational leaders. To address this limitation, for the length of the study, my direct engagement with the divisions within this provincial government ministry continued to be limited to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Executive Directors and Directors. As my involvement with individual contributors within these business lines was non-existent, this limitation did not affect the results or create any bias not already identified.
3. The process used to identify potential participants may have resulted in a perception of undue pressure to participate due to the Expression of Interest emails sent to employees by the ministry Assistant Deputy Ministers and Executive Directors. In all but one circumstance, approval to send the Expression of Interest emails to employees was provided by the ADM's and Executive Directors. I then used my Walden University email account to personally email the Expression of Interest emails to potential participants. This process limited the risk of undue pressure to participate.

4. Differences in the skills, knowledge, and abilities of individuals within various teams may have indirectly affected the degree of individual awareness and understanding of the team's social construction of reality. An external review of the focus group statements and the participant assessments by an analyst employed in the ministry and a research Executive Director employed in a different ministry confirmed that each participant possessed an acceptable level of awareness and understanding concerning the social construction of reality. This external review limited the risk.
5. The use of focus groups resulted in a limitation to the study. Participants may not have felt comfortable expressing their individual view. The lack of individual confidentiality and anonymity may have discouraged participants from disclosing perspectives contrary to those expressed by the majority. I addressed this limitation through emailing each participant a transcript of the focus group comments. Study participants were then asked to confidentially provide any additional comments or revisions to the transcript, and return the transcript to me by email.
6. A final limitation focused on the self-reporting nature of the data collection. I used no objective measures to verify participant perspectives and experiences and identification of antecedent criteria. Given the nature of this study, this limitation could not be mitigated.

Significance of the Study

Neilsen and Abilgaard (2013) and Biron, Gatrell and Cooper (2010) criticized the results of organizational interventions targeted at creating and sustaining work engagement as inconsistent. As an outcome of this criticism, organizational development practitioners have identified a need for targeted research focused on the causative factors that result in individuals being able to engage in the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement (Biggs, Brough, & Barbour, 2014a). This need requires a shift from evaluating interventional overall results to conducting a close examination of what removes or constructs barriers to work engagement (Biron et al., 2010; Neilsen & Abilgaard, 2013). Examining how the social reality of the participants affects behavioral expectations may provide organizational leaders a degree of clarity concerning how and why individuals become ready and willing to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement (Neilson & Abilgaard, 2013).

This study was a unique approach to the problem of identifying contextual factors that need to be present for individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. The use of focus groups, surveys, and assessments provided an opportunity to examine the role discourse plays in the social construction of reality. According to Cameron and Green (2012), evaluating the role of discourse in the social construction of reality provides an opportunity to understand what causes the variations in individual experiences and perceptions of the same team dynamics (Cameron & Green, 2012). Understanding how

the accepted social paradigm is reinforced and sustained by the lived experience of individuals has highlighted contextual factors necessary for the development and sustainment of work engagement and psychological well-being.

Implications for Organizational Impact

Employers who use effective strategies to increase employee engagement and psychological wellbeing can experience decreased absentee rates and stable financial baselines (Munir, Nielsen, Garde, Albertsen, & Carneiro, 2011). As suggested by Nielsen and Abilgaard (2013) and Munir et al. (2011), identifying the antecedents needed to motivate employees to sustain attitudinal and behavioral changes is important in determining what strategies are effective. Finally, employers who understand how highly engaged or disengaged teams create and sustain social reality may be able to mitigate the effects of resistance to change and the effect of negative sub-group organizational culture and mores on transformative change initiatives (Munir et al., 2011; Nielsen & Abilgaard, 2013).

Implications for Social Change

Humans have long believed in our uniqueness concerning our social life (Sapolsky, 2006). Contrary to this belief, many primates, including the human version, engage in intense and rich social lives, murder, collaboration, and war (Sapolsky, 2006). Kummer's (1971) research initiated the challenge to the established perspective that primate aggression is genetically programmed. Within this research, Kummer (1971)

argued that, similar to the social construction of reality, patterned forms of behavior can result in shifts in situational and social environments.

Sapolsky's (2006) research into the social behavior of a baboon troop subsequent to the decimation of its adult males further supported Kummer's contention that the social construction of reality and determination of expected and accepted behaviors results from purposeful actions of group and sub-group members. Sapolsky's (2006) baboon troop, subsequent to the decimation of its adult males, began to engage in attitudes and behaviors consistent with social engagement, collaboration and lack of competitiveness. Young baboon males joining this new social construction quickly adapted to the new group norms and expectations. This adaptation, Sapolsky (2006) argued, was due to the consistent demonstration of expected attitudes and behaviors by the troop majority. This consistent demonstration of expected attitudes and behaviors completely changed the social construction of reality for this baboon troop relative to the standard troop behaviors of domination by young male baboons. Fiske's (2010) research further supported these perspectives through the study of prescriptive norms and belief heterogeneity.

Similar to the baboon troop's experience, understanding the preconditions for individuals' sustained attitudinal and behavioral change can help transform how contemporary human networks cooperate and create social realities consistent with work engagement (Fiske, 2010). Sapolsky's (2006) baboon tribe had to experience a tragic decimation of adult males to undergo a complete revision of their expected attitudes and

behaviors. While not advocating for this drastic a measure, understanding how individuals become ready, willing, and able to change their attitudes and behaviors to be consistent with work engagement may result in the identification of strategies targeted at individual readiness, willingness and ability. The identification of targeted strategies may result in solving why interventions targeted at developing work engagement fail. Increased work engagement will then enable individuals, leaders, and organizations to collaborate on solving the complex organizational cultural challenges that result in disengagement and negative organizational behaviors.

Summary

Organizational intervention strategists tend to fail to consider how intervention strategies targeted at developing and sustaining work engagement may or may not align with organizational culture (Nielson & Abildgaard, 2013). Those who suggest these intervention research strategies fail to realize that broad and overarching recommendations are unachievable in today's complex environment (Nielsen, 2013). Furthermore, there exists little evidence that supports sustainable behavioral change as a direct outcome of these organizational interventions (Nielsen et al., 2010). What remains unclear is why these interventions fail to deliver desired results (Biron et al., 2010; DeJoy, Wilson, Vandenberg, McGrath, & Griffin-Blake, 2010; Nielsen et al., 2010).

Furthermore, a gap remains with regard to understanding why some individuals remain resistant to developing the attitudes and behaviors characteristic of psychological wellbeing (Mache et al., 2014; Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013). One possible reason is that

sustained reinforcement of the accepted social paradigm will supersede any individual efforts to shift attitudes and behaviors within the group (Sapolsky, 2006). Nielsen and Abilgaard (2013) suggested that interventional success, at the individual level is, in part, predicated on understanding that despite the intervention being bound in time and space, continuous adaptation within the individual, team, and organization occurs before, during, and after the intervention.

This study was unique for two reasons: There are very few empirical studies that (a) combine psychometric assessment with the lived experience of individuals in order to identify antecedents of their awareness and desire for change (Dalal et al., 2012; Mahon et al., 2014) and (b) focus not only on how individuals begin to understand why change is needed, but whether individuals have the ability to change (Keating et al., 2014).

I began this chapter with an overview of the challenges facing organization intervention success at changing organizational characteristics. I provided the context for the purpose of this study, which is to explore what antecedents are necessary to encourage attitudinal and behavioral change, and the affect social reality has in sustaining these changes. As observed by Nielsen et al. (2010), research gaps exist in identifying a clear association between the intervention and positive behavior change.

In the background of the study, I included a discussion focused on the characteristics and antecedents of psychological well-being. I then segued into recognition that research is limited concerning the antecedents of psychological capital and by extension psychological well-being and work engagement. Further, I examined

contextual factors that support work engagement and psychological well-being. In addition, I presented the theoretical framework of social constructivism followed by the conceptual framework of symbolic interaction. I outlined the assumptions, limitations, scope and delimitations and identified the study significance in light of the organizational and social relevance of sustained behavioral change.

In the literature review in Chapter 2, I examine social constructivism theory as well as mental models, psychological well-being, discourse theory, social and emotional intelligence, neuroplasticity, learning agility, and assertive communication. Chapter 3 is a description of the study design, methodology, population, survey characteristics, and focus group parameters. Chapter 4 is a description of my research study findings. I conclude this dissertation with a discussion of my research findings, my conclusions and recommendations for further study in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify contextual factors that need to be present for individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. The study had five objectives. These objectives were identified in Chapter 1. The purpose of this chapter was to provide my research study's theoretical and conceptual framework. This chapter also illustrates the gap in the literature, an overview of social and emotional intelligence, and specific contextual factors that contribute to a readiness, willingness, and ability to be engaged in the workplace.

Despite the plethora of research, consultants, tools, policies, and processes that exist that suggest the performance of highly engaged employees is significantly higher, organizational interventions that focus on creating and sustaining work engagement continue to fail to achieve desired outcomes (Alvesson, 2012; Ames & Flynn, 2007; Bakker et al., 2011; Gordon, 2013; Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013; Kärreman, 2014; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Fugate, Prussia, and Kinicki (2012) suggested that leaders and organizations assume that there are unwavering, individual traits in existing models and processes, and ignore contextual factors that are generally beyond the control or influence of the immediate leader or individual. Contextual factors—which are critical to understanding failure to achieve desired outcomes—can include the quality of team collaboration, the degree of assertive communication, social and emotional intelligence,

and learning agility by individuals, teams, and leaders, (Barczak, Lassk & Mulki, 2010). Organizational leaders can view these contextual factors as antecedents to high engagement and psychological well-being (Mahon et al., 2014).

Despite the identification of these situational and contextual factors, there remains a gap in understanding whether a specific combination is critical to creating the conditions for individuals to be ready, willing, or able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement (Barbuto & Story, 2010; Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Furthermore, there is a gap in understanding whether or how a team's social construction of reality is foundational to creating these conditions. Thus, there is a need for an in-depth, qualitative and quantitative understanding of what causes some individuals to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement and others not (Biggs et al., 2014a).

To support this study, this literature review is a summary of the current body of research investigating the antecedents necessary for organizational engagement and psychological well-being. Specifically, this review focuses on individual and social factors that support motivation to engage in sustained attitudinal and behavioral change. These factors include, but are not limited to social and emotional intelligence, social construction of reality, and learning agility.

Thematic Structure of Literature Review

In examining the situational and contextual factors that support the antecedents of sustained attitudinal and behavioral change, three areas of focus became evident. Consistent with Keating et al.'s (2014) model, the first area focuses on how individuals and teams identify their readiness for change (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Elder-Vass, 2012). The second area focuses on an individual or team's willingness to change (Cherniss, 2010; Druskat, Sala, & Mount, 2013; Ellis, Margalit, & Segev, 2012; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Johnson-Laird, 2012; Petrides, 2010). The third area focuses on whether individuals or teams have an ability to change (Ames & Flynn, 2007; Davidson & McEwen, 2012, DeRue, Ashford, & Myers, 2012; Eggert, 2011; Kreamer, 2011; Peterson, 2012; Sagi et al., 2012; Wolf-Branigin, 2013).

Chapter 2 contains a literature review of the study's theoretical framework. This chapter contains information about the gap in existing literature as well as specific situational and contextual factors that support the motivation for sustained attitudinal and behavioral change. In addition, this chapter is a review of current qualitative and quantitative research results focused on developing and sustaining employee engagement and psychological well-being. Finally, this chapter includes current research approaches to the problem and why these approaches have been unsuccessful in enabling sustained organizational change.

Literature Search Strategy

Searches were regularly conducted between January 2014 and February 2015. The databases searched were as follows, in descending order of usage: ABI/INFORM Complete, Emerald Management, SAGE Premier, Springer, PSYINFO, PsycARTICLES, ERIC, SocINDEX, EBSCO, ERIC, and PubMed. A variety of research documents and journal articles were used to identify the research included in this review.

Of the 259 documents obtained and reviewed through the search parameters, 179 were included in this literature review. This total excludes all journal articles and books pertaining to research methodology. Due to misalignment with the dissertation topic, the remaining documents were excluded. Search parameters were then expanded to include seminal research, of which fifteen documents or books were identified and included.

The theoretical framework section of the literature review includes title searches such as *social constructivism, social complexity, and the social construction of reality*. Sixty-five peer-reviewed journal articles and books, spanning from 1971 to 2015, comprise this section. The articles and books were located using all the identified key search terms in each of the identified databases.

The first section of the review is focused on how individuals are made aware of and develop the desire for the need for change. I have included title searches such as *discourse theory, engagement, positive psychological capital, mental models, emotional regulation, team interventions, threat appraisal, corporate psychopathy, and positive psychology*. Forty-three peer-reviewed journal articles and books, from 1994 to 2015,

comprise this section. The articles and books were located using all the identified key search terms in each of the identified databases.

The second section of the literature review is where I have focused on an individual's willingness to change. I have included title searches such as *mental models, social and emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, antecedents of psychological well-being and self-awareness.* Thirty-five peer-reviewed journal articles and books, from 2004 to 2015, comprise this section. The articles and books were located using all the identified key search terms in each of the identified databases.

The final section of the literature review reflects my focus on whether the individual has an ability to change. I have included title searches such as *learning agility, assertiveness, mirror neurons, neuroplasticity, work performance, and organizational intervention effectiveness.* Thirty-six peer-reviewed journal articles and books, from 2000 to 2014, comprise this section. The articles and books were located using all the identified key search terms in each of the identified databases.

Seminal research that I have included in this literature review spans the years 1990 to 2014. This research focuses on *change management* (Bridges, 2009), *Social intelligence*, and *emotional intelligence* (Bar-On, 2010; Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Salovey et al., 2002), *social constructivism* (Efran, McNamee, Warren, & Raskin, 2014), *discourse theory* (Souto-Manning, 2014), and *psychological well-being* (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The contribution the research has made is seminal within the context of the identified topic.

Literature Review: Theoretical Foundation

Social Constructivism

A central, contemporary theory in the social sciences, social constructivism theory is predicated on the suggestion that human minds project and reconstruct experience (Keaton & Bodie, 2011; Werhane et al., 2011). Knowledge is constructed based on how the human mind organizes and perceives its experiences (Liu & Chen, 2010; Werhane et al., 2011). These perceptions may or may not exist or be validated beyond our experiences (Efran et al., 2014; Werhane et al., 2011). Language, an individual's sensory perception, and intra-and- interpersonal communicative skill define and generate meaning for individuals (Keaton & Bodie, 2011; Tajfel, 2010).

Hujala and Rissanen (2012) noted that recent research in social constructivism has shifted from examining the individual to the interaction that occurs between individuals (Hujala & Rissanen, 2012). This shift has drawn attention to how individuals construct reality through team and social discourse (Hujala & Rissanen, 2012). Thus, more attention is needed to ensure that diverse points of view are heard and incorporated in creating or redesigning organizational reality. Hujala and Rissanen (2012) observed that strategies that include non-verbal support, a lack of dialogue domination, and constructive feedback and coaching result in an environment critical to diverse opinion being voiced and a social construction of reality that is accepted by all team members. Hujala and Rissanen (2012) also identified neutral hierarchy and participative decision-making as additional strategies.

Through the social construction of reality (SCR), human beings actively create a collective reality (Barrett, 2012; Bless, Fiedler, & Strack, 2004; Tajfel, 2010). SCR processes exist not only at the nation-state, educational, and economic level, but also at the organizational and sub-organizational level (Bless et al., 2004). Theoretically, the social construction of reality at the organizational and team level remains largely untested (Hujala & Rissanen, 2012). Nonetheless, Elder-Vass (2012) identified that artificial cognition, neuroscience, and social complexity have empirically confirmed the main principles underlying the SCR model. Findings from this research expand the SCR paradigm to a generalized affinity within organizational culture and sub-culture (Hujala & Rissanen, 2012).

Critics of social constructivism have focused on the iterative nature of the theory, which suggests that social constructivism is a social construction (Cheu-Jey, 2012). Social constructivists use the language of social constructivism to describe how humans socially construct reality (Cheu-Jey, 2012). This language, argue critics, is alien to the humans being studied (Cheu-Jey, 2012). Use of this language then becomes a socially constructed imposition on individuals who are unaware that they are socially constructing their reality (Cheu-Jey, 2012).

As noted by Elder-Vass (2012), a key tenant of SCR is that collective reality is designed and sustained through formal and informal social organizations. Expanding social organizations to include corporations has created new sociological research into change resistance, organizational conflict, and processes by which leaders and employees

perpetuate and validate social norms (Barrett, 2012; Bless et al., 2004; Tajfel, 2010). Based on this expansion, social constructionism theorists suggest the ways that leaders and employees think and communicate about the organization defines and affects the organizational culture and acceptance or resistance to initiatives that seek to change that culture (Elder-Vass, 2012).

These theorists further suggest that institutions create, maintain, and disseminate the collective reality that defines the society (Alvesson, 2012; Peterson, 2012; Ashkanasy, Wilderom, & Peterson, 2000; Bless et al., 2004; Schein, 2006). This conceptualization has led to new research into conflict, social order validation, and organizational change (Ashkanasy et al., 2000). Furthermore, ongoing research into SCR has helped emphasize the link between social phenomena and the dynamic interrelationship between organizational culture, communication, and attribution theory (Bless et al., 2004).

Social constructionists have posited that changing the way individuals and groups within an organization collectively consider and converse about the organization in itself results in a significant social change (Alvesson, 2012; Ashkanasy et al., 2000; Bless et al., 2004; Schein, 2006). The implication of this is that anything that individuals and groups socially construct may be constructed differently than what currently exists (Alvesson, 2012). What remains unclear is what motivates individuals and teams to select specific experiences, feelings, and information to construct their social reality, (Keaton & Bodie, 2011). What also remains unclear is the effect of this construction consensus on

work engagement and psychological well-being (Keaton & Bodie, 2011). Werhane et al. (2011) has suggested that the social composition of perception of the activities of humans forms the primary construct under this theory. Mental models generate the perceptual conclusions that either encourage or constrain individual motivation to engage in attitudinal and behavioral change (Halevy, Cohen, Chou, Katz, & Panter, 2014; Johnson-Laird, 2012; Shuck, Zigarmi, & Owen, 2015). The role of social and emotional intelligence in the social construction of reality remains an ongoing focus for scholar and practitioners engaged in improving organizational engagement and psychological well-being (Johnson-Laird, 2012).

Social and Emotional Intelligence

While the term emotional intelligence was initially defined by theorists in 1920, aspects of the construct were studied as early as 1837 (Bar-On, Handley, & Fund, 2006). Anecdotal evidence that suggested that mental ability alone did not guarantee life success generated the initial focus on social and emotional intelligence (Cherniss, 2010). The concepts of emotional intelligence and social and emotional competencies continue to generate confusion and controversy (Cherniss, 2010). Multiple models, definitions, and measurements of emotional intelligence exist (Cherniss, 2010). Definitions of emotional intelligence and social and emotional competencies tend to include references to personality traits, behaviors, competencies, capabilities, and skills (Cherniss, 2010; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008). Definitions of emotional intelligence also tend to identify which specific traits, behaviors, competencies, capabilities, and skills to include

(Cherniss, 2010; Mayer et al., 2008). Each emotional intelligence and social and emotional intelligence competency model also incorporates a measurement that reflects some level of reliability and validity, but also limitations and shortcomings (Cherniss, 2010).

Ability-based vs. mixed emotional intelligence models. An ability-based model approach to social and emotional intelligence conceptualizes social and emotional intelligence as a type of intelligence or aptitude (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Emotional intelligence as a type of intelligence or aptitude would, therefore, overlap with cognitive ability (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Ability-based models of emotional intelligence were designed from the perspective that individuals can learn from thinking about the emotions they experienced within a given situation (Cherniss, 2010). Thinking about emotions enables individuals to understand why they experienced those emotions and how to make purposeful choices concerning their emotional reactions in new, similar situations (Mayer et al., 2008).

Developing learning agility may also enable individuals to utilize past experience and increased self and social awareness and self-management to think about and respond emotionally and socially intelligently to new and complex situations (De Meuse et al., 2010; Garavan, Carbery, & Rock, 2011). Developing these skills can then enable different choices concerning the experiences, feelings, and information selected to form their socially constructed reality (De Meuse et al., 2010). Nonetheless, strategies that conceptualize and communicate social and emotional intelligence as ability or

intelligence assume individuals or teams have the ability to develop this intelligence (Nafukho, 2009). Challenges to that ability may result in decreased motivation to develop this ability or intelligence should that assumption prove incorrect (Nafukho 2009).

A mixed model approach to social and emotional intelligence conceptualizes social and emotional intelligence as a combination of emotional competencies and personality traits (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Bar-On's (2010) and Goleman et al.'s (2002) models are considered representative of a mixed model (Cherniss, 2010). As posited by Bar-On (2010) and Goleman et al., (2002), through structuring social and emotional intelligence within a competency framework, individuals can be taught these competencies. Social and emotional intelligence competency frameworks allow for organizations, teams, and individuals to identify strategies to develop and enhance these competencies (Bar-On, 2010; Goleman et al., 2002). The use of psychometrics may enable individuals to explore and understand the effect specific personality traits have on the selection of experiences, feelings, and knowledge that form social reality (Bar-On, 2010; Goleman et al., 2002; Cherniss, 2010). Furthermore, strategies that conceptualize and communicate social and emotional intelligence as a competency enable individuals or teams to be provided clear descriptions of attitudes and behaviors that model this competency (Jordan & Troth, 2004; Chien Farh, Seo & Tesluk, 2012; O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2011; Schlaerth, Ensari, & Christian, 2013). The use of psychometrics and competency-based learning facilitates awareness of existing

mental models and enables strategies targeted at discourse, mirror neurons, and neuroplasticity to offer alternatives to the current social reality (Schlaerth et al., 2013).

Petrides trait emotional intelligence theory. Petrides (2010) defined Trait EI as a grouping of emotional self-perceptions. These self-perceptions characterize the personality facets that fall within the domain of emotional intelligence (Petrides, 2010). Petrides (2010) characterized his model as the only one that identifies the integral subjectivity of emotional experience. In contradiction to the other three dominant models, Petrides (2010) recognized that emotions are capable of distorting judgment and decision-making processes and that not all individuals can or will develop emotional intelligence. In addition, Petride (2010) has suggested that profiles of emotional intelligence traits can shift based on individuals, their job descriptions, and organizational culture expectations. Given Petrides' (2010) contention that emotional intelligence traits can be modified based on situational and contextual factors, this model is aligned most closely with the social construction of reality and how and why individuals incorporate specific experiences, feelings or knowledge of existing reality.

Ultimately, changing socially constructed reality depends on how information and knowledge is provided to individuals and teams to create a readiness for change (Keating et al., 2014). For this aspect of my research study, the literature focusing on discourse, assertive communication, and norm circles was reviewed. Readiness alone may not result in sustained behavioral change (Keating et al., 2014). Individuals must be willing to change (Keating et al., 2014). A willingness to change enables individuals and teams to

identify not only what specific experiences, feelings, and information to include in their socially constructed reality, but why (Keaton & Bodie, 2011). I focused this section of the literature review on the construction of mental models, the development of social and emotional intelligence, and the link between social and emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

Finally, despite readiness, willingness to change, leadership support, and interventions targeted at sustained attitudinal and behavioral change, the reality that has been constructed may be so entrenched to inhibit the ability to effect sustained attitudinal and behavioral change (Van den Bossche, Gijselaers, Segers, Woltjer, & Kirschner, 2011). As noted by Van den Bossche et al. (2011), this entrenchment occurs through the verbal and non-verbal interactions within a team or organization that reinforce accepted understandings and interpretations of events. A team or organization might view this accepted understanding and interpretation as interference with productive team behaviors (Van den Bossche et al., 2011). Shifting disagreement from being perceived as interference to constructive clarification may require members to understand learning agility as well as the influence of mirror neurons and neuroplasticity (Van den Bossche et al., 2011).

Literature Review: Readiness, Willingness and Ability

As previously noted, this literature review was an examination of three areas of focus concerning the antecedents necessary for sustained attitude and behavioral change. The first area of this literature review focused on how an individual becomes aware of the

need to change and understands why change is necessary. Developing a readiness for change identifies why specific experiences, feelings, and information are selected to form the mental models that result in a socially constructed reality. Concepts such as discourse theory, assertive communication, and norm circles provided information concerning how individuals develop awareness for the need to engage in behavioral change.

The Use of Discourse, Assertive Communication and Norm Circles in Awareness of Behavioral Change

Organizational discourse. Organizations evolve and are capable of sophisticated forms of action because of the ongoing patterns of communication that occur between individuals (Gilpin & Miller, 2013; Taylor & Kent, 2014). These patterns of communication reflect themes that organize co-created, largely unconscious interpretations of experiences (Gilpin & Miller, 2013). Consistent with social constructivism, organizational discourse theory proposes the communication patterns that exist within an organization represent the identities of the individuals within the organization (Moufahim, Reedy, & Humphreys, 2015).

Discursive constructionism draws on the work of Michel Foucault (Elder-Vass, 2012). Discursive constructionists approach discourse based on what is said in the world of descriptions, claims, allegations, and assertions, and the resulting actions (Potter & Hepburn, 2008). Through this approach, versions of events are constructed, reworked, trivialized, and ultimately accepted (Potter & Hepburn, 2008).

Discourse analysts study human interaction through communication and the specific tools individuals utilize to engage in the act of communication (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011). In this sense, research in discourse concentrates on the social character of communication, making it possible to focus on conversations rather than intentionality, mental models, and other non-observable phenomena (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012). Critics of discourse theory suggest that the critiques themselves represent discourse and, as such, are a part of the discourse being critiqued (Fairclough, 2013). This loop of interpretations and explanations is significant when examining how reality is socially constructed and reconstructed and how specific discourse becomes dominant (Fairclough, 2013).

Researchers have suggested that micro-discourse approaches to discourse analysis assume that the individual upwards constructs the social (Souto-Manning, 2014). These approaches include three stages in the discourse process (Potter & Wetherall, 1994). In the first stage, existing linguistic resources are used to form relationships between individuals (Potter & Wetherell, 1994). In the second stage, individuals begin selecting the language that will define their social construction (Potter & Wetherell, 1994). The final stage involves shaping attitudes, ideas, and behaviors based on the selected social construction (Potter & Wetherell, 1994). Critics of this theory center on the lack of complexity within micro-discourse approaches concerning the myriad ways individuals interpret and respond to communication (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011).

Mega-discourse approaches to discourse analysis theory focus on communication as expressions of power and knowledge (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011). This perspective addresses the complex systems of ideas that result in culture standardization (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011). Consistent with the research conducted by Grant and Marshak (2011) and Gilpin and Miller (2013), this approach is used to research how discourse shapes our ways of talking and how it forms our understanding of what is normal (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011). As suggested by this approach, the ability to communicate assertively, rather than confrontationally or passively, can affect how organizational groups and sub-groups engage in discourse to determine acceptable norms (Moufahim et al., 2015). In addition, mega-discourse theory can be used by scholar-practitioners to examine the role of learning agility and resistance within the psychosocial language construct and how that agility or resistance further shapes what constitutes cultural norms (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012).

The effect of discourse on mental models. A discursive approach to understanding how individuals construct mental models highlights how language constructs organizational reality (Grant & Marshak, 2011). Discourse between organizational stakeholders can result in a socially constructed negotiation of meaning and interpretation (Grant & Marshak, 2011; Halevy et al., 2014). These negotiations result in the dominant meaning that become the accepted norms and culture (Grant & Marshak, 2011). The critical perspective of organizational discourse demonstrates how individual stakeholders shape organizational social reality and psychological well-being

through their ability to influence team member perceptions and actions (Kärreman, 2014).

Individuals who dominate the discourse enforce psychosocial norm expectations that either support or inhibit particular phenomenon (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011). Individuals or teams engaged in ongoing struggles among competing discourses can lead to either reproduction of established norms or transformation of cultural expectations (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Grant & Marshak, 2011). Scholar-practitioners in organizational discourse offer significant potential in understanding the conditions under which an individual accepts or resists organizational interventions targeted at developing employee engagement (Grant & Marshak, 2011).

Professional organizations, such as government ministries, experience significant difficulty when the professionals who manage the core processes fail to agree to internalize the skills and knowledge fundamental to developing the attitudes and behaviors that result in work engagement (Zell, 2003). Individuals within these organizations invest significant time and energy in the development of their professional skills (Zell, 2003). Recognition of these professional skills leads to a degree of autonomy and control, resulting in these individuals becoming habituated to a high degree of collaboration and influence concerning change efforts focused on developing work engagement (Gilley, Thompson Heames, & Gilley, 2012; Zell, 2003). Entrenched beliefs and values, established through cultural and role indoctrination and professional

development can be a significant factor in the social construction of organizational and team reality (Gerstrøm, 2015; Zell, 2003).

Studying 40 professors in the physics department at a large, public research university, Zell (2003) found resistance to organizational interventions targeted at developing work engagement increased when participants lacked a means to mourn the loss of the previously entrenched beliefs and values. Furthermore, Zell (2003) found that collaboration, learning agility, self-reflection, and discourse increased acceptance of the newly identified expectations concerning attitudes, behaviors, and values at the group level. Finally, at both the individual and group level, open discourse only occurred subsequent to targeted assertive communication coaching and participation in workshops focused on developing social and emotional competencies (Zell, 2003).

Criticisms of discourse theory. Discourse theory criticism focuses on the wide-ranging application that this theory includes (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011). Their perceived broadness of this research has resulted in confusion and ambiguity regarding what identifies organizational discourse (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011). While some researchers applaud the healthy pluralism of organizational discourse, others fear this will lead to theoretical and methodological compromise (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011). Further critics of discourse theory focus on the assertions that discourse research methodologies overreach vis-à-vis research outcomes transforming into empirical evidence regarding the social construction of reality (Mumby, 2011). Despite these criticisms, Mumby (2011) has

suggested that incorporating organizational discourse awareness within interventions targeted at developing work engagement can assist individuals in understanding the complex, adaptive nature of organizations and the myriad ways that individuals socially construct reality.

Communicating assertively. In addressing assertiveness, Ames and Flynn (2007) have examined the role assertiveness has in interpersonal intelligence and formal or informal leadership effectiveness. Assertiveness, in this aspect, is characterized by a person's ability to defend actively for their interests while balancing the needs of others (Eggert, 2011). Individuals perceive whether leadership is effective within contexts of assertiveness depending on what the organization focuses on as goals (Ames & Flynn, 2007). People using high levels of assertiveness can result in effective completion of short-term goals at the cost of relationships due to behaviors such as dominance and non-deference (Ames & Flynn, 2007; Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2013). Low levels of assertiveness can result in social cohesion at the cost of goal completion (Ames & Flynn, 2007). Ames & Flynn (2007) have suggested that individual differences in assertiveness within a team environment may result in team members perceiving the environment to be unsafe. A consequence of these individual differences may be the inhibition of antecedents necessary for the open discourse, coaching, and mentoring that develops social and emotional intelligence and psychological well-being (Ames & Flynn, 2007; Dasgupta et al., 2013). Gender may also affect individual differences in assertiveness levels (Herrera, Duncan, Green, & Skaggs, 2012; Kreamer, 2011).

The perception that someone has conviction relative to someone who is aggressive is a precarious line for women (Herrera et al., 2012; Kreamer, 2011). Expectations of empathy, collaboration, and the cultural reinforcement of non-confrontational behavior for women in organizations tend to produce passive forms of sabotage (Diefendorff, Erickson, & Grandey, 2011; Kreamer, 2011). Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2011), McEwen and Morrison (2013), and Ragins and Winkel (2011), studying behavioral stress, which affects the prefrontal cortex, have correlated behavioral stress to conflict avoidance, an inability to assertively express emotions, feelings of powerlessness, and low status. Social conditioning and the oxytocin hormone motivate women who are unable to assertively express their negative emotions to seek individuals who are likely to support and reinforce the emotional interpretations resulting from the situation (Eagly, 2013; Horney, 2013). McEwen and Morrison (2013), studying the prefrontal cortex, have recently determined that strategies that reduce behavioral stress enable neuronal resilience. This research may have significant impact regarding the use of behavior-based therapies that utilize neuroplasticity strategies in the development of social and emotional intelligence as well as sub-group acceptance of interventional strategies (McEwen & Morrison, 2013).

Norm circles. Elder-Vass (2012), studying social constructionism, has observed that people in norm circles regulate what is said and what is thought. Within organizations, norm circles are defined as the individuals who have influenced any given individual regarding that individual's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. These influences

can be a significant factor in change resistance or acceptance when the perspectives are in concert. Organizationally, norm circle beliefs regarding appropriate attitudes and behaviors can be modified or influenced by specific strategies leveraging mirror neurons, neuroplasticity, and discourse.

The Use of Mental Models and Social and emotional Intelligence in Willingness to Change Behaviors

I focused this second area on an individual's willingness to change. Within this area, literature concerning mental models, the development of social and emotional intelligence, and the link between social and emotional intelligence and psychological well-being was reviewed. A readiness to change that identifies why specific experiences, feelings, and information are selected to form the mental models that result in a socially constructed reality predicates an individual's willingness to change.

Mental models. Understanding how humans construct their social reality can illuminate when, why and what motivates individuals to engage in the behaviors indicative of work engagement (Johnson-Laird, 2012). This, in turn, can help organizational leaders understand how the mental models individuals construct based on perceptions determines the actions chosen by employees (Johnson-Laird, 2012; Shuck et al., 2015). When individuals construct a mental model, individual conclusions concerning a given situation are determined to be true or false (Shuck et al., 2015). These conclusions include observations of individuals' actions, attitudes, and behaviors, as well

as inferences and perceptions concerning those individuals and their actions, and others' role and relationship to them or to a situation (Johnson-Laird, 2012).

An individual identifies assumptions concerning the probability of an event, attitude, or behavior occurring based on commonalities found within that individual's mental models (Johnson-Laird, 2010). These commonalities, known as pattern recognition, include past experience and perception of events similar in context and structure to the event being observed (Efran et al., 2014; Ellis et al., 2012; Lock & Strong, 2010; Werhane et al., 2011). In addition, pattern recognition focused on the attitudes or behaviors of others being observed assist in the formation of the mental model (Ellis et al., 2012). Boundaries and biases are then constructed by individuals as a result of the omissions in information integration into existing mental schemas (Werhane et al., 2011).

The mental models that are held at the organizational team level, rather than the individual level, are a product of the social construction of reality through team sharing of cause-effect relationships and the collaboration and agreement regarding how the team interprets the environment (Ellis et al., 2012). Identifying how a team socially constructs an organizational reality may suggest opportunities to effect changes in how the team collaborates and agrees regarding interpretation of reality (Ellis et al., 2012). This, in turn, may result in the identification of strategies that will enable individuals and teams to select experiences, feelings, and information that form alternative mental models (Ellis et al., 2012). These alternative mental models may then enable increased awareness and

desire to engage in attitudes and behaviors consistent with organizational engagement and psychological well-being (Ellis et al., 2012).

Shared mental models. Mental models are used to decide which information is internalized by an individual and why (Ellis et al., 2012). Inconsistent or incongruent information is discarded in order to create and sustain meaning within the social environment (Ellis et al., 2012). Within a team construct, shared mental models represent common frames of reference, negotiation of the collection action process, coordination of individual perspectives concerning situations, and joint understanding of psycho-social cultural norms (Van den Bossche et al., 2011). Understanding how groups create meaning and act upon that collectively developed meaning can provide information concerning how individuals adjust their mental models to gain team acceptance (Van den Bossche et al., 2011). This adjustment can provide context regarding how antecedents result in individual and team attitudinal and behavioral changes that result in work engagement and high levels of social and emotional intelligence (Van den Bossche et al., 2011).

Van den Bossche et al. (2011), examining how discourse affects shared cognition, found that team learning behaviors influenced the development of a shared mental model. Eighty-one Business Economics students engaged in a skill training program focused on a business simulation game. Teams were required to make complex management decisions, interpret data and integrate difference perspectives in decision-making and data interpretation. In that study, individuals within a team developed a shared psycho-

social construct regarding task expectations and accountabilities, as well as how conflict would be resolved within the team.

Van den Bossche et al. (2011) also found that, secondary to the primary outcomes, the team social construction of reality resulted in high perceptions of equity and goodwill for team members. Furthermore, how significantly team members accepted and internalized the shared reality showed variances in the concrete team performance measures. Teams who reported high acceptance and internalization of the shared mental model scored higher in game results. Despite their perceptions of high performance, those teams whose members did not report or demonstrate behavioral acceptance of the shared mental model performed poorly in comparison. These results may indicate a correlation between individual accountability for attitudes and behaviors and perceptions of safety within the team experience. Team members who perceive safety and acceptance within a team may be more likely to engage in coaching and self-reflection concerning attitudes and behaviors not supported by the team's social construct.

Demirtas (2015), studying ethical leadership's influence on work engagement, suggested that employee attributions and mental models regarding leader and peer unethical behavior affect individual behavioral outcomes. Studying one thousand employees in a public firm, Demirtas (2015) found that individual attitudinal and behavioral choices directly and indirectly affected individual, team, and organizational work engagement. Leaders and peers who chose attitudes and behaviors perceived as

ethical increased perceptions of organizational justice. Increased perceptions of organizational justice led to decreased organizational misbehavior.

These findings are consistent with those of Strom, Sears, and Kelly (2014). Using an internet survey completed by 348 internet users, Strom et al. (2014) demonstrated a relationship between work engagement and perceptions of organizational justice when employees reported to leaders who demonstrated transformative leadership styles (Strom et al., 2014). These researchers further suggested that individual uncertainty concerning being valued within the organization, an outcome of transactional leadership, may be associated with heightened perceptions of organizational injustice and decreased work engagement (Strom et al., 2014).

As noted by Van den Bossche et al. (2011), the relationship between how team members learn behaviors relative to the shared construction of reality is complex and requires the demonstration of constructive conflict behaviors. Furthermore, the final social reality construction requires mutual understanding and mutual agreement by team members regarding the parameters of the shared reality (Van den Bossche et al., 2011). These results correspond to those observed by DeChurch and Mesmer-Magnus (2010) in their meta-analysis of shared mental model measurements. DeChurch and Mesmer-Magnus (2010) noted that team effectiveness improves when team members share similar mental models. This may indicate that similar antecedent skills and competencies are necessary to enable team members to engage in the discourse necessary to construct a

sustainable social reality that promotes psychological well-being and work engagement (DeChurch &Mesmer-Magnus, 2010).

Developing social and emotional intelligence. Regardless of the social and emotional intelligence model, understanding how individuals and teams develop social and emotional intelligence and competencies can provide a strategy for shifting social construction of reality. Understanding the role social and emotional intelligence has within team development and cohesion may be a factor in understanding what antecedents are necessary for individuals to be motivated to internalize attitudes and behaviors characteristic of work engagement (McEnrue, Groves & Shen, 2010). McEnrue et al. (2010) found that it was possible to enhance social and emotional intelligence through a concentrated training program. McEnrue et al. (2010) have suggested that deliberate training concentrated on social and emotional intelligence, rather than social and emotional intelligence concepts being a part of other organizational development training, can result in individuals being more aware of the role their emotions have within their performance as well as the team performance.

McEnrue et al. (2010) have posited that purposeful selection should occur regarding participation in this type of training. An examination of individual goals and expectations, a commitment to an in-depth training program, and a curriculum design that incorporates coaching, feedback, and action learning are all identified as essential design factors. In addition, they have indicated that the experience of the participants, as they undergo training and how and whether they are motivated to continue in the training,

should be incorporated into the curriculum design. The effect of the absence of these factors may assist scholar-practitioners and organizations in understanding why many organizational development initiatives targeted at developing work engagement through a variety of topics including social and emotional intelligence have not led to sustained behavioral change.

Kerr, Garvin, Heaton, and Boyle (2006) have found positive correlations between individual levels of social and emotional intelligence and the ability to deal with the emotions of other team members. Teams with higher social and emotional intelligence performed more effectively than teams with lower social and emotional intelligence. Teams with high social and emotional intelligence used collaboration tactics for conflict resolution (Kerr et al., 2006; Yan Jiang, Zhang & Tjosvold, 2012). Constructive conflict behaviors can lead to increased team effectiveness, high engagement, and a cohesive social reality that promotes psychological well-being (DeChurch & Mesmer-Magnus, 2010; Van den Bossche et al., 2011).

Research into the development of social and emotional intelligence through team-based learning appears to be a new focus within social and emotional intelligence research (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2013; Clarke, 2010). Team-based learning opportunities appear to generate more positive effects than individual participation within a learning experience (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2013; Clarke, 2010). Clarke (2010) observed that the social situations that teams experience have opportunities to generate an abundance of

emotional experiences, which enables team members to gain greater access to team-based coaching and mentoring (Clarke, 2010).

Team-based coaching and mentoring can lead to enhanced learning exchanges and further awareness and development of social and emotional intelligence and competencies (Clarke, 2010). Ultimately, stronger emotional bonds result in open discourse concerning the team's social construction of reality (Chien Farh et al., 2012). Stronger emotional bonds result in a greater awareness of the role emotions have in decision-making and team dynamics (Clarke, 2010). Therefore, if team members are unwilling to engage in coaching and mentoring as well as discussion focused on the social construction of the team's reality, antecedents to the development of motivation to engage in attitudes and behaviors that engage them in work may not develop (Clarke, 2010).

Poor performers fail to recognize their performance deficiencies (Sheldon, Dunning, & Ames (2013), and this lack of recognition extends to perceptions regarding social and emotional intelligence skills. Furthermore, individuals with low social and emotional competency are significantly resistant to feedback and exhibit higher reluctance to engage in developmental activities (Sheldon et al., 2013). Team-based coaching and mentoring may provide opportunities for individuals who demonstrate low social and emotional competency to be more receptive to feedback because of the variety of channels and language that a team-based approach may offer (Ghosh, Shuck, & Petrosko, 2012; Keating et al., 2014). This type of opportunity may lead to clearer

communication concerning the team's expectations of attitudes and behaviors within the reality that the team has socially constructed (Keating et al., 2014). Using multiple communication channels may then provide additional motivation for individuals who demonstrate low social and emotional competency to exhibit attitudes and behaviors more consistent with the expectations articulated by the team (Chien Farh et al., 2012).

Within the multiple communication channel perspective, team-based learning can provide a psychologically safe environment in which to engage in discourse grounded in mutual respect and purpose (Ghosh et al., 2012). During these types of learning opportunities, team members are able to share vulnerabilities and anxieties concerning situations or challenges that the individual team member has experienced or that the team has experienced (Keating et al., 2014; Ghosh et al., 2012). Team members with high social and emotional intelligence and competencies demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that support productive discussions concerning conflict, perspectives and behaviors designed to be self-protective (Ghosh et al., 2012). While research focused on this approach is limited within organizational settings, exposure to social and emotional intelligence concepts coupled with team-based learning focused on discourse and self-reflection may result in the development of social and emotional intelligence ability (Clarke, 2010).

The impact of social and emotional intelligence on conflict resolution within teams has also become a research focus (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015; O'Boyle et al., 2011). The premise of these studies is that team members who have developed social and

emotional intelligence are able to be aware and manage their emotions and the emotions of others (Jordan & Troth, 2004; Kerr et al., 2005; O'Boyle et al., 2011; Schlaerth et al., 2013). Researchers are investigating how social and emotional intelligence helps maintain respectful, productive relationships within teams (Clarke, 2010; Karimi, Leggat, Donohue, Farrell, & Couper, 2013). The ability to demonstrate genuineness, acceptance, and empathy enables individuals to engage in functional conflict resolution, which contributes to increased team performance (Jordan & Troth, 2004; O'Boyle et al.; 2011).

Schlaerth et al. (2013), in their meta-analysis, examined 20 studies involving 5,175 participants. Focusing on whether social and emotional intelligence is constructive in managing conflict, they suggested that employees with high social and emotional intelligence can mitigate and resolve conflict easier. Schlaerth et al. (2013) have also suggested that the relationship between social and emotional intelligence and conflict mitigation is stronger at the individual contributor level than at the leader level. These findings may provide context concerning the antecedents of motivation to change at the individual level and how team social and emotional intelligence facilitates a positive construction of reality that further encourages motivation to change.

Research by Hopkins and Yonker (2015) was consistent with these findings. Using a conflict inventory assessment and the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), Hopkins and Yonker (2015) identified successful conflict management required individuals to have the ability to use a variety of conflict styles. Specific social and emotional intelligence skills that were effective within conflict management focused on

the ability to perceive and manage emotions, and social skills. Learning agility was also identified within conflict management competencies.

Schlaerth et al. (2013) identified that age may not be a moderator in the relationship between social and emotional competency and conflict management. They hypothesized that social and emotional intelligence acts as an equal moderator in conflict management for different ages for different reasons. High social and emotional intelligence in younger individuals facilitates social relationships and team cohesion. High social and emotional intelligence in older individuals facilitates constructive conflict management through the variety of social experiences accumulated. These findings may support the contention that high social and emotional competency facilitates a positive social construction of reality within organizational teams, resulting in high engagement and psychological well-being.

Research on employee engagement and employee well-being first appeared in the 1960s (Augusto-Landa et al., 2011). Initially, researchers concentrated on the concept of happiness based on the subjective assessment individuals make concerning the level of happiness in their life, as well as the concept of psychological well-being based on the personal development, coping mechanisms, and effort needed to reach goals (Augusto-Landa et al., 2011). Low levels of engagement are present in many countries despite psychological well-being and employee engagement's association with high performing organizations (Robertson & Cooper, 2011). Interest in well-being strategies is growing in organizations (Robertson & Cooper, 20110. This growing interest may be due to the

rising costs of poor psychological well-being on the economy (Robertson & Cooper, 2011). What is more difficult to explain is the paradox between the rising incidence of poor psychological well-being within organizations and the $45 billion annually that organizations in the United States spend on employee and leader development targeted at employee engagement and well-being (Storey, 2013).

The lack of a comprehensive definition and consistent measurement strategies concerning the types of factors included in the concept of employee engagement may be assisting this paradoxical state (Robertson & Cooper, 2011). Despite the lack of a comprehensive definition, broad agreement among experts exists that strategies that provide positive social and emotional experiences may be a key factor in developing psychological well-being (McNulty & Fincham, 2012; Robertson & Cooper, 2011). In addition, strategies that encourage employees to identify their purpose and positive meaning within their work environment can enhance the effect of positive social and emotional experiences (Ganster & Rosen, 2013; Mahon, et al., 2014; McNulty & Fincham, 2012; Robertson & Cooper, 2011; Spurgeon, Mazelan, & Barwell, 2012).

The focus on positive psychology has grown exponentially since 1999 (McNulty & Fincham, 2012). While the majority of this research focus is on strategies to promote the psychological characteristics of well-being, a specific criticism of positive psychology is growing (McNulty & Fincham, 2012). Criticism of positive psychology is concentrated on observations by experts that psychological traits and processes affect well-being within the context they operate (McNulty & Fincham, 2012). Arguing that

well-being results from the interplay between an individual's social environment and their psychological characteristics, McNulty and Fincham (2012) have suggested that studies in psychological well-being and work engagement need to focus on when, why, and for whom the factors associated with well-being are effective. Additional research within this area may provide a more robust understanding of the contextual nature of psychological characteristics (McNulty & Fincham, 2012).

Schaufeli and Salanova (2011) indicated that employee engagement research has concentrated on the differences between work engagement and employee engagement. Work engagement, as defined by the employee's relationship with his or her work, has become a preferential operationalized conceptualization of engagement. Schaufeli and Salanova (2011) have suggested that work engagement include habitual work engagement, day-level work engagement, and task engagement. Incorporating these foci would allow a more nuanced examination of the factors that affect engagement and psychological well-being not only within an individual but a team environment.

The link between psychological well-being and social and emotional intelligence or competencies. Individuals with high social and emotional intelligence demonstrate superior social skills and have rich social networks and high resilience (Augusto-Landa et al., 2011). As suggested by Augusto-Landa et al. (2011), these skills are essential to enhance psychological well-being. Studying 217 undergraduate women from a variety of disciplines, Augusto-Landa et al. (2011) determined that emotional attention, clarity, and regulation positively related to psychological well-being

dimensions. High emotional clarity, defined as the ability to interpret and understand emotional states when faced with stressful stimuli, was found to have a direct influence on psychological well-being (Augusto-Landa et al., 2011).

Studying 92 undergraduate students, Nelis et al. (2011) found that increased social and emotional intelligence led to a significant improvement in mental health, happiness, and social functioning. The study used short lectures, role-playing, group discussions, self-directed reading, dyad coaching, participant journaling, and reflection exercises (Nelis et al., 2011). Six months post- intervention, emotional intelligence psychometric scores indicated a sustained increase from baseline and post-intervention testing in emotional regulation and emotional understanding (Nelis et al., 2011).

Nelis et al. (2011) then attempted to replicate these results using improvisation drama techniques. Although the second study group demonstrated significant increases in global social functioning, no significant differences were demonstrated in emotional regulation. The information from this study in useful for providing valuable information concerning which developmental strategies are effective for developing the different aspects of social and emotional intelligence or competencies. The research suggested that the first study group's increase in emotional regulation and emotional understanding were due to the influence of an emotionally and socially intelligent instructor and the support provided by the participant group. Nonetheless, both study groups were able to ultimately demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that resulted in social and emotional intelligence and psychological well-being through team-based strategies that focused on action-based

learning, group feedback, and self-reflective tasks within a positive, supportive environment. Identifying whether teams who engage in the identified behaviors are more engaged and exhibit psychological well-being may enable other teams to build awareness, communicate the need for change, and develop the ability to support each other to a state of engagement.

Robertson and Cooper (2011) indicated that individuals with low levels of psychological well-being tend to engage in interpersonal tactics that are more contentious than collaborative. Furthermore, high levels of psychological well-being result in individuals who demonstrate collaborative problem-solving, more positive social and emotional intelligence, and are more open to change (Robertson & Cooper, 2011). These findings are supported by the research of Bakker et al. (2011) who have further suggested that conscientiousness, a personality dimension within the social and emotional intelligence paradigm, is positively related to work engagement.

Research conducted by Akhtar, Boustani, Tsivrikos, and Chamorrow-Premuzic (2014) further supports these findings. Akhtar et al. (2014) have identified a growing interest in the link between work engagement and personality. In their study, 1,050 adult workers completed an EI Questionnaire based on Petrides and Furnham's (2006) scale. The participants also completed two personality inventories as well as a work engagement survey. Using regression analysis, Akhtar et al. (2014) determined that openness to experience, extraversion, and interpersonal sensitivity are significant predictors of work engagement.

The Use of Learning Agility, Mirror Neurons, Neuroplasticity, and Work-Culture Support in Ability to Change Behaviors

The third area of this literature review is focused on whether an individual or team can change. Developing a readiness for change identifies how and why specific experiences, feelings, and information are selected to form the mental models that result in a socially constructed reality (Keating et al., 2014). Being willing to change requires self-awareness concerning how individuals create mental models and why specific models are created based on the individual and team's degree of social and emotional intelligence (Shuck et al., 2015). A readiness and willingness to change requires an individual or team to be capable of change (Keating et al., 2014). Concepts such as learning agility, mirror neurons, and neuroplasticity contain information concerning how an individual develops the ability to change behaviors (Davidson & McEwen, 2012; DeRue et al., 2012).

Learning agility. Experiential learning has been a concept incorporated in employee and leader development, team learning, and organizational learning since the early 1900's (DeRue et al., 2012). The concepts within learning agility are consistent with the requirement of complex systems to adapt and self-correct through feedback processes (Wolf-Branigin, 2013). Within the social constructivist paradigm, learning agility represents a recent perspective that expands the concept of experiential learning to suggest that individuals differ in how or whether they contextualize beyond the specific experience to broader, novel organizational constructs (Wolf-Branigin, 2013).

Developing and utilizing learning agility competencies through team discourse can result in flexibility and agility in adapting prior experiences and behaviors (De Meuse et al., 2010). Understanding, through coaching and team discourse, the role an individual has in the situational and contextual factors that have resulted in interpersonal conflict may enable that individual to see those situational and contextual factors in another situation and respond differently (De Meuse et al., 2010).

Learning agility is defined as the willingness and ability to successfully apply previous experiential learning in new learning situations (De Meuse, Dai, Swisher, Eichinger, & Lombardo, 2012; De Meuse et al., 2010; Garavan et al., 2011). Learning agile individuals actively seek developmental feedback, embed the core social and emotional intelligence concept of self-reflection into their professional practice, and continuously evaluate their experiences relative to context (De Meuse et al., 2010). In addition, learning agile individuals draw conclusions from their experiences and feedback and leverage these conclusions to made adjustments to new situations (Garavan et al., 2011).

Garavan et al. (2011) have highlighted the criticality of learning agility concerning the development of social and emotional intelligence. Learning agility has also been identified by De Meuse et al. (2010) as an antecedent that results in the motivation to engage in attitudes and behaviors that result in work engagement. Garavan et al. (2011) have theorized that past or current job performance should not be used to determine potential. The success the individual demonstrated in learning from past or

current job performance in order to demonstrate new attitudes and behaviors ultimately measures potential (Garavan et al., 2011). While learning agility can be developed, individuals differ in their aptitude to learn and reflect on their experiences (Lombardo & Eichinger; 2000).

From this research, Lombardo and Eichinger (2000) have speculated that learning agility should be identified as a key competency that enables high-potential employees to succeed. De Meuse et al. (2010) have expanded this speculation to suggest that targeted learning and assessment of learning agility will improve a high potential individual contributor's success in differing situations. This perspective is supported by longitudinal studies focused on predictive success rates (De Meuse et al., 2010).

Contradicting this perspective, DeRue et al. (2012) have argued that the concept of learning agility should remain distinct from performance outcomes. Aligning learning agility to performance success results in the complication of defining a concept in part by an outcome that has not been empirically proven (DeRue et al., 2012). Furthermore, DeRue et al. (2012) questioned outcomes of the longitudinal studies as being based, in part, on common source bias.

Separating the learning agility concept from performance outcomes still enables individuals to apply the concept within a developmental framework (De Meuse et al., 2010). De Meuse et al. (2010) identified 11 different high potential framework models. Within these models, eight included learning agility as a key component within socially and emotionally intelligent individuals (De Meuse et al., 2010). Utilizing these

framework designs, they identified four specific learning agility facets: mental agility, people agility, change agility, and results agility (De Meuse et al., 2010). People and change ability are the two facets of this framework that may be antecedents that result in the motivation to demonstrate the socially and emotionally intelligent attitudes and behaviors that result in work engagement and psychological well-being (De Meuse et al., 2010).

People agility refers to the presence of a high degree of social and emotional intelligence and assertive communication skill (De Meuse et al., 2010; DeRue et al., 2012). Characteristics of people agility include self-awareness, empathy, assertive communication skills, and a comfort with differing opinions (De Meuse et al., 2010). Change agility refers to acceptance of accountability, willingness to be non-conforming and a willingness to leverage experience in novel situations and in novel ways (De Meuse et al., 2010; DeRue et al., 2012). Characteristics of change agility include looking with a new perspective, desire to experiment, accepting of challenges, and desire for accountability (De Meuse et al., 2010). While these characteristics align with the presence of social and emotional intelligence, De Meuse et al. (2010) have also recognized that further research is required to understand the antecedents to learning agility. Similar to the research on social and emotional intelligence, De Meuse et al. (2010) have identified self-awareness as a key antecedent to learning agility.

DeRue et al. (2012) have argued that proponents of learning agility have failed to differentiate the concept from a general learning ability. This failure in differentiation has

resulted in the concept being used to refer to the majority of concepts related to experiential learning (DeRue et al., 2012). DeRue et al.'s (2012) perspective implies that this general application has resulted in learning agility being overlooked as a distinctive element of how individuals learn from experience, rather than the defining measurement of successful experiential learning. The result is the proposition that the concept of learning agility should focus on the flexibility that is exhibited when applying past experience within and across novel situations (DeRue et al., 2012).

Learning agility can be also strengthened through the use of mentors or role models (McKenna, Yost, & Boyd, 2007). In addition, exposure to complex, novel and adverse experiences may provide additional opportunities to engage in discourse and self-reflection concerning these experiences (DeRue et al., 2012; McKenna et al., 2007). Discourse and self-reflection may then enable individuals to deconstruct the situation to understand more optimal responses in the future to similar experiences (McKenna et al., 2007). As individuals continue to engage in these activities and strengthen their learning agility and social and emotional intelligence, they will experience a higher degree of work engagement, resulting in higher levels of psychological well-being (McKenna et al., 2007). Interviewing 100 senior pastors, McKenna et al. (2007) found that the degree of social and emotional intelligence significantly affected individual ability to apply past experience to current situations. Relationship maintenance and assertive listening skills were identified by McKenna et al. (2007) as strategies that enhanced the pastors' learning agility and engagement.

Neuroplasticity. Neuroplasticity refers to the growing literature in neuroscience that suggests the brain is capable of learning new behavior patterns (Davidson & McEwen, 2012). Researchers are beginning to understand, through examination of brain circuitry, that individuals use experience to shape social and emotional behavior (Davidson & McEwen, 2012). Early experience in developing social and emotional intelligence appears to involve governing differences in resiliency and vulnerability (Davidson & McEwen, 2012).

Although researchers are still investigating the precise mechanisms of neuroplasticity, specific strategies that encourage new behavior patterns can promote pro-social behavior and psychological well-being (Mahon et al., 2014; Peterson, 2012). These interventions include contemplative practices, targeted education, behavioral modification, and cognitive-behavioral approaches (Peterson, 2012). Critical to individuals developing neuroplasticity are positive affect strategies that promote creativity, integrated thinking, and learning agility (Davidson & McEwen, 2012; Peterson, 2012).

As Peterson (2012) noted, research focused on the facilitation of neuroplasticity to alter social behavior is in its infancy. Using an MRI-based framework of diffusion tensor imaging (DTI), Sagi et al. (2012) observed significant microstructural changes in the limbic system subsequent to a two-hour training session. Sagi et al.'s (2012) observations have suggested that neuronal execution of a new long-lasting cognitive skill occurs within a short learning timescale.

Herholz (2013) has noted resurgence in understanding individual predisposition for learning through the lens of neuroplasticity. Zatorre, Fields, and Johansen-Berg's (2012) review of experience-dependent structural changes in brain matter have suggested a link between individual brain characteristics with behavior and ability variability. These types of studies may provide key information concerning the antecedents necessary for sustained behavioral change (Zatorre et al., 2012). As noted by Herholz (2013), while learning potential and genetic predisposition may be factors for the successful development of attitudes and behaviors that result in work engagement and psychological well-being, determinism may also be a factor. Motivation, energy, intensity of the learning experience, and learning agility may also be antecedents to sustained behavioral change (Herholz, 2013).

Building on Herholz's (2013) research, Mahon et al. (2014) used the concepts of a shared personal vision and shared positive mood to determine a positive association with these factors and work engagement. Two hundred and eighty-five employees within a public company and an educational institution completed surveys (Mahon et al., 2014). Mahon et al. (2014) concluded that both factors have positive, significant associations with work engagement (Mahon et al., 2014).

The effect of mirror neurons on the social construction of reality. Sigmar, Hynes and Hill (2012), studying mirror neurons, have concentrated on understanding how individuals observe and imitate attitudes and behaviors as a strategy to internalize experiences. These observations and imitations by individuals provide opportunities to

understand and predict actions and intentions. Through this process, individuals develop empathetic emotional responses and social awareness. Empathetic emotional responses and social awareness assist in understanding how individuals develop psychological well-being and what choices individuals have made in the social construction of reality.

Until recently, evidence for mirror neurons in humans has been identified indirectly through research on monkeys (Keysers & Gazzola, 2010). Keysers and Gazzola (201), examining new electrophysiological evidence, have provided direct evidence of human mirror neurons. Furthermore, they have extended the area where researchers thought mirror neurons to exist (Keysers & Gazzola, 2010).

Converging social psychology, cognitive models of imitation and neural functionality regarding imitation and empathy, Iacoboni (2009) has hypothesized that mirror neurons developed as an adaptive strategy within interpersonal intelligence. Within this paradigm, experience results in learning the effect of specific actions. An individual observing another individual performing a specific action that results in a desired outcome then initiates the same motor responses in themselves to obtain the same desired outcome (Iacoboni, 2009).

Expanding the concept of mirror neurons into social behavior, mirror neuron imitation may enable individuals to develop empathy and compassion concerning emotional states (Iacoboni, 2009). These findings may assist in understanding how the creation of antecedents results in the motivation to alter attitudes and behaviors within the group and sub-group social construction of reality (Iacoboni, 2009). Team members'

demonstration of positive attitudes and behaviors within a safe environment and emotional reactions to behaviors that are not positive may ultimately motivate team members to demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that more closely resemble those that are articulated as desired within the team (Iacoboni, 2009). Future research linking mirror neuron theory and discourse theory may provide valuable insight into human neuroplasticity and strategies to shape and reshape organizational behaviors.

Mirror neurons enable individuals to experience the consequences of verbal and nonverbal communication within the groups we choose to belong to (Spaulding, 2013). This experience evokes a need to be relevant to the individuals with these communication patterns, ultimately shaping the attitudes and behaviors of these groups (Spaulding, 2013). From these patterns, universal norms are constructed by group members (Spaulding, 2013). Individuals then construct and reconstruct these norms through daily interaction and the choices that are made concerning the conflicts and changes that result in identity transformation (Batory, 2014).

Crocker at al. (2013) suggested that, through neuroplasticity and mirror neuron research, it has become increasingly clear that cognition, emotion, and motivation are intricately interwoven. Accumulating evidence by researchers has suggested that even non-emotional tasks remain influenced by emotional and motivational perspectives. Understanding this complex relationship may assist in understanding emotion regulation, and the malleability of human neural networks to affect the social construction of reality. They proposed that factors such as anxiety, lack of self-reflection, and team dysfunction

result in abstruse information and situations being construed negatively by team members, resulting in recidivism of habitual behavioral patterns. Understanding how individuals make attitudinal and behavioral choices through the lens of social and emotional competencies may provide insight into how social and emotional competencies support the antecedents that generate the social construction of reality within teams and support or hinder the development of work engagement.

The role of work-culture support. Examining the role of leadership development in work engagement, Biggs et al., (2014b) suggested that leadership development programs influence psychosocial work context. Furthermore, Briggs et al. (2014) have identified that the psychosocial work context affected by leadership development programs in turn positively impacts the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. Developmental content included target leadership styles, assertive communication, and strategic leadership concepts (Briggs et al., 2014). Using an experiential program that included coaching, action learning projects, and 360^0 feedback processes, Briggs et al. (2014) concluded that targeted leadership development interventions are significantly associated with work engagement. They also concluded that the social learning experienced during the developmental program, and the changes in leader attitude and behavior resulted in a positive change in shaping the work context toward high work engagement (Briggs et al., 2014).

Further exploring the affect perceived organizational support has on work engagement, research conducted by Mahon et al. (2014) investigated the relationship

between social and emotional intelligence, perceived leader and peer support and work engagement. Surveys were completed by 285 employees within a public company and an educational institution (Mahon et al., 2014). Mahon et al. (2014) concluded that social and emotional intelligence enables individuals to articulate the type of supported wanted and needed by their leaders and peers. This clarity concerning desired support was significantly associated with work engagement (Mahon et al., 2014).

The role of social learning. The application of social constructivism to investigate and understand individual and group responses to organizational interventions is thriving (Briggs et al., 2014; DeChurch & Mesmer-Magnus, 2010; Holyoak & Morrison, 2013; Jones, Ross, Lynam, Perez, & Leitch, 2011). In addition, Ellis et al. (2012), Van den Bossche et al. (2011) and Werhane et al. (2012) advocate that mental models not only exist within the individual, but are shared culturally. Affiliation in a variety of social constructs develops and alters how we acquire, perceive, and organize experience and information (Werhane et al., 2012). Social learning assists in determining how this information is selected, filtered, and integrated by individuals (Ellis et al., 2012; Hoogenes et al.,2015; Van den Bossche et al., 2011; Werhane et al., 2011).

Within organizations, mental model constructs are validated by individuals relative to organizational members' common orientation toward organizational culture, processes, routines, performance, and expectations (Ellis et al., 2012). Ultimately, individuals choose specific behaviors and responses based on these mental model constructs not only within our individual relationships, but also within the social and

performance constructs within our organizational teams (Jones et al., 2011). Understanding how one develops self-awareness, how others communicate the need to change to one, and whether one can change may assist in developing the motivational antecedents necessary to shift the conclusions that generate the mental models determining our attitudes and behaviors.

Research approaches to the problem. The literature review consists of previous and current research focusing on why interventions targeted at developing organizational engagement and psychological well-being fail to result in sustained behavioral change. Based on the literature review, I determined that researchers primarily focus on situational and contextual factors that assume unwavering traits and characteristics. This means that the examination of understanding why individual and team readiness, willingness, and ability to change rarely occurs (Hujala & Rissanen, 2012; Robertson & Cooper, 2011).

Current qualitative literature on strategies targeted at shifting attitudinal and behavioral change to develop organizational engagement has focused on developing or teaching social and emotional intelligence and learning agility skills (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2013; Clarke, 2010; De Meuse et al., 2010; Ghosh et al., 2012; Nelis et al., 2011; O'Boyle et al., 2011; Sigmar et al., 2012). Additional qualitative researchers have focused on exploring the effects of discourse on engagement and organizational performance (Crocker et al., 2013; Druskat et al., 2013; Fairclough, 2013; Parker, 2014; Storey, 2013). Finally, qualitative researchers have focused on individual experiences

concerning emotional regulation and psychological well-being (Ganster & Rosen, 2013; Schlaerth et al., 2013; Sheldon et al., 2013; Yan Jiang et al., 2013).

In selecting the case study methodology for this research study, I also considered phenomenological, narrative and ethnographic qualitative research methodologies. Phenomenological research is used to describe how individuals experienced and felt about a situation or phenomena (Patton, 2002). Phenomenological research was consistent with my intention to understand a common or shared experience.

Narrative research would have enabled me to document the emergence of the team's developmental story as told by the team members experiencing the journey. This qualitative approach places the experience within a single individual or small number of individual experiences and perceptions (Patton, 2002). Narrative research would have enabled the individual stories to have emerged within the context of the lived experience and perceptions (Patton, 2002).

Ethnographic research would have enabled me to describe and interpret shared configurations of language, behaviors, and values (Adams, Broom, & Jennaway, (2012). Ethnographic research requires the researcher to immerse themselves in the daily experiences of the participants (Adams et al., 2012). This approach could have provided in-depth knowledge of participant daily experiences within the context of the team's social construction of reality.

As noted in this proposal, the intent in this study is to identify the different experiences and perceptions of the team members, and how each unique experience has

affected the development of engagement within the team. The intent of this study is also to understand how a team socially constructs their reality as discussed by Freeman (2011). All of the identified qualitative methodologies would have provided valuable information concerning the lived experience of the participants regarding readiness and willingness to develop attitudes and behaviors consistent with organizational engagement and psychological well-being.

Using a quantitative research approach, I would have been able to study the identified phenomena through the use of statistical or mathematical methodology (Yilmaz, 2013). Causal relationships would have been measured and analyzed within strategies targeted to be representative within a generalized paradigm (Yilmaz, 2013). A significant aspect of quantitative research is the utilization of tools associated with statistical and probability theory (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). Approaching this research study from this perspective would have limited the personal interpretation and perspective necessary to explore how and why a team becomes engaged or disengaged, and how a team constructs and sustains the reality that results in high engagement. Researchers reporting on quantitative literature strategies targeted at shifting organizational change have focused on measuring the relationship between social and emotional intelligence and employee well-being (Augusto-Landa et al., 2011; Barczak et al., 2010; Bar-On, 2010; Bratton, Dodd, & Brown, 2011; Mayer et al., 2012; Petrides, 2010). Additionally, quantitative research has focused on examining individual choice in

mental model construction (Davidson & McEwen, 2012; Herholz, 2013; McNulty & Fincham, 2012; Sagi et al., 2012; Zatorre et al., 2012; Zeidner et al., 2012).

Researching a problem qualitatively enables the researcher to understand an individual's lived experience within a highly engaged or disengaged organizational team. While this approach can provide relevant data, the self-reporting nature of qualitative strategies limits the researcher from understanding all factors that may support or inhibit the antecedents to sustained behavioral change (Schaufeli, 2012). Alternatively, researching a problem quantitatively enables the researcher to measure an individual's ability to engage in sustained behavioral change.

While this approach can also provide relevant data, measuring ability limits the researcher from understanding all factors that may support the antecedents to sustained behavioral change. As suggested in the literature review, qualitative researchers in this area have tended to focus on an individual or team's readiness and willingness to change (DeJoy et al., 2010). Quantitative researchers in this area have tended to focus on an individual or team's ability to change (Ceravolo, Schwartz, Foltz-Ramos, & Castner, 2012). Based on these foci, a clear gap has been revealed regarding using a combination of qualitative and quantitative tools to understand the effect of the combination of being ready, willing, and able on the ability to sustain the attitudinal and behavioral change necessary for organizational engagement and psychological well-being.

Selecting a qualitative or quantitative approach is not dependent on the data that is available (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). The appropriate approach is dependent on the

research goals (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). The purpose of this research study is to identify contextual factors that support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. Therefore, factors may be qualitative or quantitative in nature. Drawing on both methodologies enabled me to use the strengths of both traditions to understand what creates the readiness, willingness and ability antecedents to sustained behavioral change.

A case study approach was appropriate for this research study given that this approach relies on both qualitative and quantitative data sources to understand how individuals and groups construct reality. This approach also relies on both qualitative and quantitative data sources to understand how perceptions, beliefs, and worldviews impact behavior. In order to identify the antecedents necessary for interest in behavioral change, and examine the affect social reality has on sustaining behavioral change, utilizing focus groups and quantitative data ensured methodological triangulation within the research design (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2012).

The case study approach that I used for this research echoes the work of Yin (2013). Yin (2013) suggested that four situations use case study approaches. Researchers use case studies when answering how and why questions. Individuals also use case studies when study participant behavior cannot be manipulated by the researcher. In addition, researchers use case studies when the contextual conditions are relevant to the phenomenon being studied. Finally, case studies are used when the researcher identifies that phenomenon and context boundaries are undefined. The context for this research

included all four situations. How and why foundational questions were asked. The participants were not part of an experimental group and therefore manipulation of behavior did not occur. The organizational and provincial changes were contextual conditions relevant to the organizational intervention being studied. Finally, the intervention is embedded within the context, which results in undefined boundaries.

Case study approaches include rich and extensive exploration of the real-life context within the study phenomena (Yin, 2012). Multiple research strategies were used to triangulate the data, resulting in themes that portray the phenomenon's true nature (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). Unique within qualitative research, case studies incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Incorporating quantitative analysis provides additional context and breadth to the phenomenon studied.

Summary and Conclusion

Identifying the factors that lead to sustained behavioral change is much more convoluted than the simple application of organizational interventions. Failures in sustained behavioral change and developing social and emotional intelligence skills within organizations continues despite the plethora of research, consultants, tools, policies and processes that exist (Gordon, 2013). The social construction of reality within teams and the antecedents that lead to the motivation to change attitudes and behaviors are factors that may provide key information concerning how individuals sustain behavior (Briggs et al., 2014a; Hujala & Rissanen, 2012).

Keller and Aiken (2000) suggested that failure in sustaining behavioral change is the result of disregarding a basic truth concerning human nature. This truth is that subconscious thought processes significantly influence behavior, despite choices desired by the rational mind (Keller & Aiken, 2000). Behavioral change succeeds or fails on the basis of whether all individuals affected by the change, do things differently (Bridges, 2009). Understanding how individuals and teams think and communicate about each other, the team, and the organization may illuminate new strategies for sustained behavioral change. Understanding how that thinking and communication then changes the social reality may also illuminate new strategies for sustained behavioral change.

Ultimately, changing socially constructed reality depends on how information and knowledge is provided to individuals and teams to create a readiness for change. The literature review included how strategies such as discourse theory, assertive communication, and norm circles affect individual and team experiences and feelings concerning organizational engagement and psychological well-being (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Avey et al., 2010; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011; Crocker et al., 2013; DeJoy et al., 2010; Fairclough, 2013; Fugate et al., 2012; Ganster & Rosen, 2013; Gordon, 2013; Grant & Marshak, 2011; Hujala & Rissanen, 2012; Liang & Luo, 2012; Luthans et al., 2012; Mathieu et al., 2014; Munir et al., 2012; Ragins & Winkel, 2011; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011; Storey, 2013; Van den Bossche et al., 2011). Readiness alone may not result in sustained behavioral change (Keating et al., 2014). Researchers have also examined how and why individuals and teams are motivated or resistant to

altering an existing socially constructed reality through the construction of mental models and the development of social and emotional intelligence (Augusto-Landa et al., 2011; Barbuto & Story, 2010; Barczak et al., 2010; Bar-On, 2010; Bratton et al., 2011; Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2013; Clarke, 2010; Diefendorff et al., 2011; Druskat et al., 2013; Ellis et al., 2012; Ghosh et al., 2012; Goleman, 1995; Harrington & Loffredo, 2010; Kreamer, 2011; Mayer et al., 2012; O'Boyle, et al., 2011; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Sheldon et al., 2013; Sigmar et al., 2012; Zeidner et al., 2012). Further, researchers examining learning agility, mirror neurons, neuroplasticity, and work-culture support may assist individuals and teams in developing the ability to engage in sustained attitudinal and behavioral change (Ames & Flynn, 2007; Bakker et al., 2011; Biron et al., 2012; Briggs et al., 2014b; Cameron & Green, 2012; Davidson & McEwen, 2012; De Meuse et al., 2012; DeChurch & Mesmer-Magnus, 2010; DeRue et al., 2012; Edwards, Elliott, Iszatt-White, & Schedlitzki, 2013; Eggert, 2011; Herholz, 2013; Heyes, 2010; Keysers & Gazzola, 2010; Peterson, 2012; Sagi et al., 2012; Zatorre et al., 2012).

From the literature review, I found more qualitative research exists concerning readiness and willingness to develop attitudes and behaviors consistent with organizational engagement, rather than ability. The majority of these researchers present a perspective that reflects an expectation that all individuals within an organization possess consistent traits and perspectives regarding the lived experience within organizational teams. The quantitative research showed a focus on the ability to develop attitudes and behaviors consistent with organizational engagement, rather than readiness

and willingness. While a quantitative researcher recognizes unique traits and abilities regarding sustained attitudinal and behavioral change, the focus of their research fails to address the effect of the shared experience in the construct of the team reality. A notable gap in the academic literature is that there are limited current empirical studies that examine the combined effect of individual readiness, willingness, and ability and the team effect on the social construction of reality on the success of organizational interventions targeted at developing work engagement. Based on the literature review, I clearly supported the rationale for selecting to study the social construction of reality and individual readiness, willingness, and ability together as being timely in adding to the existing literature on this topic.

Chapter 3 consists of a description of the study design, methodology, population and focus group discussion themes. It also covers validity and trustworthiness.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify contextual factors that support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. This chapter covers the following: study purpose, restatement of the research questions, the role of the researcher, the design and methodology, the sample population, the instruments used in the study, and the data analysis procedures.

Setting

The provincial government that participated in this study has 18 ministries. Over 30,000 people are employed in permanent, full-time positions. Approximately 75% of employees are unionized. A deputy minister, who reports to an elected minister, heads each ministry.

In this provincial government ministry, there are 11 divisions with over 50 business units, over 100 teams, and more than 6,000 permanent, full-time employees. Approximately 85% of these employees are employed in a non-management occupational group. Within this non-management occupational group about 50% have a professional occupation. In 2013, the government completed its most recent engagement survey whose results—available in the public domain—indicated that 38% of employees feel highly or somewhat engaged at work. These results indicate a drop of 10% from the 2012

results of 48%. Similarly, the Engagement Index score decreased from 62% in 2012 to 52% in 2013.

Among the employees in this ministry, 42% are male; 53% are within a professional occupational grouping; 78% of employees are less than 55 years old; and 60% have worked at the ministry for 10 years or less. The study participants' variety of divisional engagement scores and diversity in demographics offer depth and breadth to how reality is socially constructed within this ministry. Furthermore, demographic diversity offers variety in the feelings and experiences required by the purpose of this study.

Research Design and Rationale

Within hermeneutic inquiry, research questions are determined by an intense and personal experience and interest in a specific phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Questions are framed to establish context regarding the experience, feelings, and actions within the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002). The objective of this form of inquiry is to interpret the meaning of the phenomenon, both within one's perspective or the perspective of the participants (Patton, 2002).

The foundational question guiding the qualitative section of this study was as follows: How do the individual traits or competencies of members of this team support work engagement? In addition to this foundational question, two research questions guided this study:

1. How does a team's social construction of reality sustain the team's high engagement?
2. How do personality traits, social and emotional intelligence, and collaboration and conflict skills support a team's social construction of high engagement?

These questions were designed to explore how each team member reports their experience within the team.

Within the quantitative portion of the study, the following research question guided this study:

1. What is the relationship between MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, SDI scores, and work engagement?

I derived the following hypotheses from this research question:

H_0: There is no relationship between an individual's MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, and SDI scores and work engagement as defined by the individual's results in the study engagement survey.

H_A: There is a relationship between an individual's MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores and SDI scores and work engagement as defined by the team in the study engagement survey.

I used a convergent, parallel case study approach to address the research questions. This approach was appropriate for this study in order to explore the social construction of reality experienced by the participants (Patton, 2002). In addition, case studies are unique

among qualitative research methodologies in that quantitative research methods can be incorporated (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Incorporating quantitative analysis provides additional context and breadth to the phenomenon being studied (Yin, 2013).

Yin (2013) suggested that convergent, parallel mixed-method approaches enable the merger of quantitative and qualitative data, which result in a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. Focus group questions were developed based on the research questions used in this ministry's 2013 Employee Engagement Survey. I generated qualitative themes to determine any presence of alignment between the lived experience and the survey results. I then analyzed the quantitative data relative to the null and alternative hypothesis. I used this analysis to provide contextual information relative to the participant lived experience within an engaged or disengaged group. Finally, I integrated quantitative scores within the qualitative grouping themes to identify any congruency between test scores, the participant lived experience and the survey results. I also examined contradictions or incongruences through additional review of the data themes.

Using a qualitative approach enables a researcher to provide relevant data (Yin, 2013). Nonetheless, the self-reporting nature of qualitative strategies limits the researcher from understanding the quantitative factors that support the ability to engage in sustained behavioral change. Alternatively, using a quantitative approach limits the researcher from understanding the qualitative factors that support the readiness and willingness to engage in sustained behavioral change. As the quantitative and qualitative research methods

provide equal context regarding the readiness, willingness, and ability to engage in behavioral change, data was collected concurrently.

Case study methodology is a common research method in psychology, education, and organizational development (Yin, 2013). Researchers increasingly use case studies when the boundaries between the contextual factors and the phenomenon are not clearly apparent (Adams et al., 2012). A primary outcome of this research study was to understand what antecedents are necessary for sustained behavioral change, and how the social construction of reality supports or inhibits development of these antecedents. To accomplish this, I relied on multiple sources of data (methodological triangulation) and examined multiple variables of interest. This approach is primarily characteristic of case study methodology.

Case study research methodology is intrinsic and exploratory in nature (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). The researcher uses an intrinsic approach when a genuine interest in the phenomenon exists, and the intent is to better understand what has occurred (Houghton et al., 2013). This exploratory approach is used when the intent of the research is to explore phenomena that lack a single, clear set of outcomes (Yin, 2013).

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative, interpretive research, researchers start from the position that their knowledge of reality and the phenomenon being researched is a social construction, and that the researcher is the primary data collection instrument (Walsham, 2006). In hermeneutic case study research, knowledge can never be correct or true (Patton, 2002).

Knowledge can only represent an interpretation, and meaning can only be based on consensual validation (Patton, 2002). Given this context, the role of the researcher is to select a style of involvement and maintain respectful and collaborative access to participants (Patton, 2002). In addition, the researcher engages in data collection strategies that sustain respect for the researcher, the research process, and participant feelings and experience of the phenomena (Patton, 2002). Finally, the researcher is accountable to ensure an abundance of opportunities for participant validation of findings (Walsham, 2006).

As an involved researcher, I was a participant and observer (Walsham, 2006). I remained cognizant of my own background, biases, perspectives, and how these contextual factors both informed my attitudes and behaviors as an employee with the ministry. I was also aware of and guarded against alignment with a particular team member or members (Walsham, 2006).

A hermeneutical approach to interpretive research required that I engage in self-reflection concerning my role within the phenomenon being observed (Laverty, 2003). To that end, my biases and assumptions were not bracketed. My biases and assumptions were a part of my experience within the team's social construction of reality and, therefore, were entrenched and necessary to the interpretive process. Therefore, I was required to reflect on my experience and explicitly acknowledge how my position and experience related to the study focus (Laverty, 2003). In order to accomplish this, I kept a reflective journal that formed a portion of the data and analysis.

Consistent with interpretive research, my professional relationship with the potential participants was as a member of the provincial government ministry. My membership within this ministry is recent, having joined this ministry in May, 2014. Therefore, while my employment in the same ministry as the participants provided in-depth access to the participants, the data, and the phenomena, I was recent enough to observe the cultural and social mores that have been developed within the ministry. Participant validation of the data and expert validation of the research themes identified assisted in ensuring that I did not lose critical distance regarding my contribution to the social construction of reality for these teams or my ability to reflect on the antecedents that have resulted in team high engagement or disengagement level.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

IRB Approval was granted using the following approval number: 12-22-14-0079699. Employees within a provincial government ministry comprised the potential participant group. Based on the sample size calculation provided by the National Statistical Service of the Government of Australia, I calculated that a maximum participant size of 73 employees, out of the estimated 6,000 employees in the ministry, was required. Within this calculation, the desired margin of error is ± 10%. Assuming a confidence level of 95% and a population representation of 95%, this suggested that the study include a maximum of 73 employees. Utilizing a population representation of 95%

is accurate in this circumstance given the white-collar nature of the ministry and skills and knowledge requirements within the occupational categories.

In order to meet the population size requirements, I utilized a multistage random sampling method. For the quantitative portion of this study, simple random sampling was utilized. In simple random sampling, each member of the accessible population has an equal chance of being chosen (Maxwell, 2012). Simple random sampling minimizes sampling error while enabling the researcher to identify the degree that sampling error exists (Palys, 2003).

Simple random sampling is considered by researchers to be simple to accomplish (Palys, 2003). Researchers also consider this approach easy to explain to others (Maxwell, 2012). Results can be reasonably generalized to the target population through the random selection of participants from the accessible pool (Palys, 2003). Critical to mitigating sampling error within this technique, the randomization must be left purely to chance and every possible participant must have an equal probability of being selected for the study (Maxwell, 2012).

I identified the accessible population through an Expression of Interest e-mail. I sent this email to the assistant deputy ministers (ADM) and executive directors (ED) within the ministry. Once they confirmed that I could contact their employees, I obtained employee e-mail addresses through the ministry e-mail system and sent the employees a separate Expression of Interest e-mail.

A maximum of 73 employees was required to identify contextual factors that support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement within this study. Within this maximum, there needed to be an equitable split between individuals in teams who scored as highly engaged and individuals in teams who scored as disengaged based on the 2013 Employee Engagement Survey results. Subsequent to meeting these requirements, I used purposeful selection to identify the participants.

Qualitative research emphasizes an orientation toward the world that is process driven (Maxwell, 2012). Process driven research means that rather than statistical relationships between dissimilar variables, the focus of the research is on people, specific situations, and descriptions. As noted by Maxwell (2012), purposeful selection enables the inclusion of participants who are uniquely experts in the phenomena or area of study. As the purpose of this research study was to identify contextual factors that support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement, each of the potential participants were considered experts in the topic. This expertise then enabled the qualitative sample size to be reduced from the full 73 possible participants (Mason, 2010).

In addition, results from this provincial government's 2013 Employee Engagement Survey were utilized as part of the selection criteria. These results are available within the public domain. Incorporating the survey results enabled a further reduction in the qualitative sample size. This reduction was due to identification of focus

group participants in teams that score higher or lower than the norm within these quantitative data results.

Although qualitative research sample sizes are typically smaller than quantitative, the selective size must reflect all opportunities for diverse opinion (Mason, 2010). According to Mason (2010), the frequency or repetitiveness of a single opinion is less important. A decreased importance in a single opinion is because the focus in qualitative research is on meaning and the ability to use a single occurrence of data as a way to understand the meaning of the topic (Mason, 2010). Therefore, sampling strategies should be purposive, bounded, and follow the concept of saturation (Mason, 2010; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Using a typical case sampling strategy, which identifies the usual or regular, in conjunction with clearly defined sample parameters enabled the data to reach saturation more quickly (Fugard & Potts, 2015) evidenced by no new information and no new themes. This type of strategy differed from a condition strategy that has broad, multi-foci aspects to the research questions and target population, and, therefore, data may reach saturation less quickly (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Ultimately, being purposeful with the selection strategy enabled representativeness, heterogeneity, and applicability of the research theory. Furthermore, purposeful selection allowed me to identify differences, and productiveness concerning depth and breadth of the data to occur (Maxwell, 2013).

As noted by Mason (2010), the aims of a study drive the research design and sample size. In addition, expertise in the chosen topic enables a researcher to reduce the

sample size (Mason, 2010). Therefore, based on the previously stated parameters, a purposeful sample of 20 employees was appropriate for this research.

A simple random sampling method was used to identify focus group participants. I entered the names of employees who signed the Expression of Interest into an Excel spreadsheet, and I used the RAND() function to number the names randomly. The Sort function in Excel sorted based on the random numbers. I selected the first twenty participants who met the requirement of alignment with an engaged or disengaged team to participate in a focus group.

Instrumentation - Qualitative Components

Focus groups were the qualitative instrument used in this research study. Focus groups offer an additional level of data gathering and perspective that may not be available through interviews or observation (Palys, 2003). Focus groups can also provide perceptive or provoking information crucial to exploratory case study methodology (Coule, 2013). Within this study, focus groups were efficacious in highlighting differences in perspectives and enabled participants to elaborate on positions or perspectives. I created twenty focus group statements that participants then scored based on the degree of agreement with the statements. The focus group statements reflected the engagement questions and themes contained in this provincial government's 2013 Employee Engagement Survey and the research focus identified in the literature review. I then created four questions that I asked of the focus group participants. I created the four questions based on the results of the focus group statement scoring exercise, results from

this provincial government's 2013 Employee Engagement Survey, and the research focus identified in the literature review. The focus group statements and focus group questions were reviewed and approved by my dissertation chair and my methodologist (expert validation). I conducted all focus groups in ministry conference rooms. The following statement was read to participants prior to beginning the focus group session(s):

This focus group is being conducted as part of my dissertation research. My research is focused on understanding what antecedents are necessary to engage in the development of attitudes and behaviors that result in psychological well-being and work engagement. In addition, my research is focused on understanding how the social construction of reality supports the sustainment of attitudes and behaviors that result in psychological well-being and work engagement. The statements discussed will be used to explore participant perceptions regarding how and why teams are highly engaged or disengaged, and what antecedents result in that high engagement or disengagement. Please note that comments and observations will be considered completely confidential. While individual comments may form part of the dissertation analysis, no single person will be identified. Please be aware that all participants are free to decline to respond to any of the statements posed, and that any participant can stop participating in the focus group at any time.

Focus Group Statements

Participants scored the following statements based on the degree of agreement:

1. I am comfortable making suggestions to my team about how to improve the work of my unit/team.
2. My manager acts in my best interests.
3. My team inspires the best performance in me.
4. My team has provided coaching/mentoring for me focused on developing social and emotional intelligence.
5. I understand the impact my attitude/behavior has on the team.
6. I trust the information I receive from my director.
7. I trust the information I receive from my team members.
8. I look forward to coming to work.
9. My team helps me use my past experience & knowledge to resolve new situations.
10. My team resolves work conflicts with mutual respect.
11. I am comfortable going to members of my team concerning interpersonal conflict within the team.
12. My team members are comfortable coming to me concerning interpersonal conflict within the team.
13. The culture in this team supports speaking up, holding each other accountable and asking for help.
14. My team members are accountable for their attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion.

15. I am accountable for my attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion.
16. I take ownership when I do something wrong.
17. My team members take ownership when they do something wrong.
18. I trust the information I receive from my director.
19. My team members provide feedback concerning my attitudes and behaviors that help me be a better team member.
20. I am comfortable providing feedback to my team members concerning their attitudes and behaviors that help them be a better team member.

Focus Group Questions

The participants discussed the following questions during the focus groups:

1. What emotions did the belief statement evoke in you?
2. What do you think causes people to disagree with these belief statements?
3. What do you think happens in a team when people disagree with these statements?
4. Who do you think is mainly accountable for the attitudes and behaviors in your team?

Instrumentation - Quantitative Components

Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). The MSCEIT is based on an ability-based model of emotional intelligence. The MSCEIT produces an index of EI as well as an overall emotional intelligence quotient score. Administered

through paper and pencil or online, there are 141 objective and impersonal test items. Individuals who are 17 years or older and who can read grade eight level English may complete the assessment. Taking approximately 30-45 minutes to complete, a variety of educational, corporate, therapeutic and research settings use the MSCEIT (Mayer et al., 2012).

There are two options for scoring the MSCEIT. The first option is response correctness based on general-consensus criterion. The second option is response correctness based on expert criterion. Experts from the International Society for Research on Emotion were used to develop response correctness (Mayer et al., 2012). Both options produce standardized score results. A base of 5,000 respondents that were representative of the United States general population within gender, age, ethnicity, and educational level parameters comprise the normative data.

MHS provides the option of two MSCEIT reports. The first report, called the Personal Summary Report, is a presentation of graphic and numerical results. In addition, this report provides scale descriptions and response summaries. The second report is called the Resource Report. This report contains a thorough feedback tool for respondent debriefing sessions (MHS). For this study, MHS compiled a final data report. Participants did not receive either of the standard reports.

The intent of this study was to use the expert criterion scoring. The MSCEIT's four abilities are measured using pictures of human faces, landscapes, images, written problems, and scenario-based analysis. Participants chose the best possible answer, which

the assessment methodology then evaluates against the expert criterion scoring. Standardization of participant scores results in a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15. Scatter scores were used to test performance consistency. Scatter scores provide critical information concerning test result validity and participant comprehension concerning the test questions (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003). Scatter score outliers were evaluated regarding response validity, comparison to the rest of the sample and materiality on hypothesis results.

Using Cronbach's equivalent-forms split-half estimates, the MSCEIT scores a .93 for reliability. Test-retest reliability estimates are .86. The MSCEIT correlates meaningfully with the Reading the Mind test, the Situational Test of Emotional Understanding, the Situational Test of Emotional Management, and the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (Mayer et al., 2012).

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). Organizational development consultants continue to use the MBTI in the course of coaching, team interventions, and team development (Harrington & Loffredo, 2010). Operating on the theory that differences in behavior are a result of how individuals use their judgment and perception, the MBTI generates sixteen personality types based on the preferences selected that focus on cognitive and attention preferences (Fairfield, 2012). Taking approximately 20 minutes to complete, a variety of educational, corporate, and research settings use the MBTI (Fairfield, 2012).

The MBTI – Form M measures four dichotomous dimensions (Briggs-Myers et al., 2003). The introversion-extraversion dimension is whether cognition and attention focus is on the outer world or the inner world (Briggs-Myers et al., 2003). The sensing – intuition dimension focus is on how individuals gather the information and how individuals interpret and identify meaning within the data (Briggs-Myers et al., 2003.). Thinking-feeling is focused on the use of logic or emotion when making decisions (Briggs-Myers et al., 2003.). The judging-perceiving dimension is how individuals communicate their decision-making process externally (Briggs-Myers et al., 2003).

The MBTI – Form M consists of 93 questions. The MBTI Profile is a summary of results, explanations of the preferences, and characteristics frequently associated with the type and a preference clarity index. In Canada, CPP provides the MBTI assessment (Briggs-Myers et al., 2013). Both my dissertation chair and I are certified to administer and debrief on MBTI.

MBTI – Form M scores range from .86 to .92 for reliability, based on Cronbach's alpha (Schaubhut, Herk & Thompson, 2009). Test-retest reliability correlations average from .67 to .73 across all intervals, with the highest test-retest reliability reflected at the <= 3-week interval (Schaubhut et al., 2009). The MBTI – Form M correlates meaningfully with the Birkman Method, DiSC, Bar-On EQ-I, CPI 260, and Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (Schaubhut et al., 2009).

Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI). The Strength Deployment Inventory is part of a suite of systems from Personal Strengths Canada. Based on the theory of

Relationship Awareness, the SDI is used to measure work relationships, interpersonal effectiveness, and conflict behaviors. The assessment requires the ranking of 28 behaviors from most to least important. Taking approximately 20 minutes to complete, a variety of corporate and research settings use the SDI assessment (Sucher, Nelson & Brown, 2013).

Test-retest reliability correlations average from .76 to .78 across all scales (Porter & Maloney, 1977). As noted by the company, the SDI is not designed to be a psychometric test. Understanding underlying motivations is the purpose of the SDI assessment (Porter & Maloney, 1977.). Therefore, the SDI assessment does not avoid halo effects or user attempts at manipulation (Porter & Maloney, 1977.). For this study, the SDI was used primarily as a discussion point concerning team member perspectives of their results as it relates to how the team socially constructs reality.

Procedures for Recruitment

Expression of interest. Appendix A contains the Expression of Interest email that I sent to the assistant deputy ministers and executive directors within this provincial government ministry. The intent of this email was to identify which business units were interested in participating in this study. Appendix B contains the Expression of Interest email that I sent to the employees of those business units who expressed interest in participating in this study.

Consent form. Appendix C contains the consent form that I sent to the selected study participants. I contacted the participants through email. I attached the consent form

to the email (Appendix C). Participants were required to reply to me by email, consenting or not consenting to participation.

Data use agreement. Appendix D contains the Data Use Agreement. I and a representative of the Multi-Health Systems Inc. signed the Data Use Agreement. The Data Use Agreement was utilized to enable me to access the team member results of the MSCEIT assessment.

Data Collection Procedures

Structured and unstructured methods refer not only to the overarching methodological strategy used, but also to the facilitation technique used (Maxwell, 2012). Within the overarching qualitative methodological strategy, the approach is dependent on practical and ethical grounds (Maxwell, 2012). Selecting a structured strategy more closely aligns qualitative research with quantitative approaches (Maxwell, 2012). Structured approaches enable the data to be compared across participants, settings, dates, and time as well as researcher documentation (Maxwell, 2012). Essentially, structured approaches allow for analyzing data that focuses on differences (Maxwell, 2012).

For the qualitative portion of this study, I utilized focus groups as the primary research instrument. The focus groups lasted one hour in length. I was the sole facilitator and note taker. Therefore, to ensure that all comments were recorded and all participants had opportunity to share their perspectives, I limited participation within each focus group to no more than five participants. I conducted the focus groups in a meeting room

on a floor or in a building different than where the participants work. I recorded the focus group comments through my notes and the notes provided by the participants.

One week prior to participating in the focus group, I emailed the focus group participants with a series of statements concerning work engagement and team dynamics. The participants scored these statements based on their degree of agreement with the statements. Degree of agreement categorizations were strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The participants returned the results to me via email and I compiled the results based on focus group attendance. All participants returned their survey scores within 2 days of receiving the email containing the work engagement and team dynamics statements. I then facilitated a discussion based on the sorting results and the perspectives attached to their agreement or disagreement of the statements. I recorded key issues and observations on a flip chart. Participants also provided additional commentary regarding the focus group questions. I then analyzed the results to identify themes and common perspectives.

The focus group statements were designed to focus on team member perceptions concerning the team's social construction of reality and the antecedents of the team's engagement attitudes and behaviors. Participant responses to the documentation outlining the statements and questions can be just as important as what they have said during the focus group. Therefore, I sent, via email, the transcripts to participants for validation purposes (Gordon, 2011). Enabling the participants to review, comment, and clarify

regarding the focus group transcript provides additional understanding of the participant situation and culture (Packer-Muti, 2010).

I collected the data for the quantitative portion of this study electronically. For the MSCEIT and MBTI results, I offered each study participant an opportunity to discuss their assessment results with me. For the SDI results, I offered each study participant an opportunity to discuss their assessment results with Judy Hemmingsen, the Managing Partner for Personal Strengths Canada Incorporated. For the MSCEIT assessment, participants were provided access, via MultiHealth Systems Inc. (MHS), to a website that enabled them to complete the assessment. Participants completed an MHS standard consent form in addition to the research study's consent form. MHS provided me with an excel dataset file that I stored on my password protected thumb drive as well as on a personal external drive. I removed participant names and email addresses from the dataset file and replaced participant names and email addresses with a unique identifier. I imported the dataset into SPSS to analyze study results. I maintained a second dataset on my personal thumb drive. Only I had access to this original dataset file. I provided a summary of the test results to the participants via email.

For the MBTI assessment, I provided the participants access, via CPP, to a website that enabled them to complete the assessment. Participants completed a CPP standard consent form in addition to the research study's consent form. I then used my administrator access on the CPP website to access and print the completed assessments. I then provided a paper copy of the test results to the participants at the end of their focus

group. For those participants who were unable to attend a focus group, I sent their assessment results via email. In addition, I stored a summary of the test results on my password protected thumb drive. I removed participant names from the dataset file and replaced the names with the same unique identifier assigned through the MSCEIT process. I imported the dataset into SPSS to analyze study results. I maintained a second dataset on my personal thumb drive and my personal external drive. Only I had access to this original dataset file. I then provided a paper copy of the test summary to the participants at the end of their focus group. For those participants who were unable to attend a focus group, I sent their assessment summary via email.

For the SDI results, I provided participants access, via SDI, to a website that enabled them to complete the assessment. Participants completed an SDI standard consent form in addition to the research study's consent form. I then used my administrator access on the SDI website to access and print the SDI results. I then provided a paper copy of the test results to the participants at the end of their focus group. For those participants who were unable to attend a focus group, I sent their assessment results via email. All participants were offered an opportunity to have the assessment results explained. In addition, I stored a summary of the test results on my password protected thumb drive as well as on my personal external drive. I removed participant names from the dataset file, and I replaced the names with the same unique identifier assigned through the MSCEIT and MBTI process. I imported the dataset into SPSS to

analyze study results. I maintained a second dataset on my personal thumb drive and my personal external drive. Only I had access to this original dataset file.

Subsequent to the participants completing their review of their focus group comments and observations, I provided a letter of recognition thanking them for their participation in this research study. I sent a copy of the final dissertation to each participant and provided my contact information to participants wishing a final debriefing as a result of their focus group experience or the final dissertation.

Data Analysis Plan

Determining how data will be organized and stored prior to beginning the data collection process is critical to saving time during data management (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In addition, developing a robust data framework enabled me to easily find and use the data collected. It will also be easier for other researchers to understand and use the data collected. Ultimately, following proper data management techniques ensures that others can share and easily understand the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Within the context of the qualitative portion of this research design, I used NVivo as the data repository and relational database. NVivo 10 is the latest release from QSR. NVivo's original design, NUD*IST, was developed in 1981 as one of the first qualitative research software programs. NVivo10's functionality has expanded the original range of data collection into social media data, YouTube videos, and web pages. NVivo 10 also has interchange capability between Word, Excel, SPSS, Survey Monkey, EndNote, and

Evernote. QRS recommends a 2.0 GHz Pentium 4-compatible processor, 2 GB RAM and 2GB of disk space.

Coding is the process a researcher undertakes to organize and sort data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The specific codes used are a strategy to label, compile, and organize that data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Coding enables the researcher to link the data into the story told (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

I used the Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method to bracket and organize the data (Moustakas, 1994). Initial categorizations allowed me to organize the data in a timely manner while enabling the important intuitive trends to emerge. I derived *a priori* codes from the foci of the focus group comments and observations. I used summative content analysis to identify common words and phrases in participant responses (Moustakas, 1994). Through this analysis, a collective description of the group experience emerged (Moustakas, 1994).

I developed a pre-coding structure using my own experience, the conceptual framework, the focus group statements, and the research questions. I analyzed it iteratively to ensure efficacy concerning the information gathered and organized. A pre-coding structure can be useful to minimize data coding time (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I continued to revise the pre-codes based on the data gathered through the focus group experience. My ongoing review and analysis assisted in managing non-conforming data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

I input the identified codes into NVivo as nodes, which enabled the software to identify common themes. I used data from the first focus group to validate the codes and themes, and examined each successive focus group to determine pattern matches and discrepancies (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Once the data reached saturation, I clustered the codes and themes into dimensions that aligned with the frameworks used in this study as well as the research foci. I then reviewed these dimensions to ensure pattern accuracy and clarity. An analyst within the ministry participating in this study and a clinical Executive Director within another ministry in this provincial government independently reviewed the data coding and themes.

Within the quantitative portion of this research design, I used descriptive statistics to calculate demographic variables by group. I used univariate analysis to illustrate the distribution of participant age and length of service. Further, I used central tendency calculations to calculate mean and standard deviation for participant assessment scores.

To address the null hypothesis, I used Spearman's rank-order correlation. Spearman's correlation is a key regression test used to measure associations between independent and dependent variables. The null hypothesis states there is no relationship between an individual's MSCEIT, MBTI, and SDI scores and work engagement as defined by team results in the 2013 Corporate Engagement Survey,

The purpose of this convergent, parallel case study was to examine whether social and emotional intelligence, personality style, communication and conflict resolution style, and the lived experience within a team combine to support a sociality constructed

reality characteristic of organizational engagement. To integrate the research data, I separated the qualitative data and themes based on whether the research participant works in an engaged or disengaged team and then separated participant test scores into these two groups to determine if there were any score combinations that are more prevalent than others to support the emergent qualitative themes. Finally, I compared the correlation coefficient results with the qualitative themes in each grouping to determine if the lived experience of the participants correlates with the quantitative outcomes.

Threats to Validity

The participants constitute a purposive sample of individuals employed by a provincial government ministry. As such, the participant perspectives and experiences within the teams may not be representative of all teams. Within hermeneutic inquiry, the goal of this study was to understand the team members' lived experiences and conditions that resulted in high engagement or disengagement. Therefore, external validity was limited due to the sampling design and small sample size.

I anticipated that I could conduct the focus groups and assessments over no more than a three-month period. Maturation may present a threat due to the constant change inherent in being employed by a governmental organization. A main purpose of this study was to examine the nature of the lived experience of participants within the social construction of reality within a team. Therefore, the effect of time on the participant's lived experience fell within the social construction of reality being studied. The purpose of the quantitative portion of this case study was to examine a causal relationship.

Therefore, threats to validity within a descriptive, experimental, or quasi-experimental design did not apply. I controlled selection bias through the random sampling.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Credibility refers to the processes that a researcher engages in to make sure that the findings are authentic (Coast & Horrocks, 2010). Within the context of this study, the following steps describe how I maintained credibility:

1. I transcribed focus groups verbatim, and participants had the opportunity to review and comment or amend the transcripts. Verbatim transcripts ensured that interpretation of the focus group comments and observations did not form the basis of the conclusions.
2. I utilized concrete and descriptive note taking to mitigate the effect of bias in the focus group process.
3. I examined discrepant data to determine any themes or trends that countered expectations and conclusions. Further opportunity to examine this data was provided to any participants generating this data, which enabled validation of the data interpretation.

Transferability

Transferability represents how widespread research outcomes are relative to environments, individuals, and outcomes (Borrego, Douglas, & Amelink, 2011). For the outcomes of this research study to be transferable, the sampling strategy, participant

selection, and organization studied needed to be representational of other organizational structures, populations, and levels of engagement. Participants within this study represented professional, clerical, union, non-union, individual contributor, and leader populations within a hierarchical structure. Therefore, outcomes may not be transferable to organizations that thrive on flat structures and a high degree of empowerment at all levels within the organization. In addition, each reader may decide which outcomes are transferable (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Nonetheless, the expectation that participants provided honest and detailed responses regarding their personal feelings and experiences will enable most organizations to find value from this study.

Dependability

I ensured dependability within this study through a rigorous audit trail. I documented clear information concerning the specific research steps taken through to reporting the study outcomes. The information tracked by my audit trail included focus group and assessment documentation, data analysis procedures, and the analysis process to identify data themes. This audit trail resulted in a clear depiction of the specific research path I chose, the decisions I made, and the process taken to evaluate and manage the data.

Confirmability

I maintained qualitative objectivity within this research study through my entries in my reflexive journal. Journal entries consisted of the rationales for my decisions concerning methodology and data theming. Entries also reflected a systematic analysis of

the processes used to ensure continued validity. Finally, I documented my reflections concerning my personal experience, acknowledging how my perceptions, culture, biases, and experiences informed and influenced the research process (Etherington, 2004).

Ethical Procedures

Tilley and Woodthorpe (2011) argued that any research generates ethical issues. The responsibility within social research is to balance the research need to support social change with the privacy of participants. Protecting participant rights is paramount. Participants were made aware of their right to participate without being forced and their right to refuse or withdraw at any time without penalty through the Expression of Interest form and the Informed Consent document. In addition, I provided each study participant with a Confidentiality Agreement. The Data Collection Procedures section of this proposal outlined privacy and confidentiality.

It was also important to remember that I involved the participation of individuals in their daily environment. In the course of the study, information could have been divulged that violated existing employment legislation and occupational health and safety legislation. Examples disclosed within the focus groups could have caused violations of this organization's internal Code of Conduct. Prior to participation in the focus group, I made participants aware of my professional, legal, and ethical obligation to report any disclosed violations to the appropriate authorities. I ensured they were aware of my obligation to report any participant where I believed their level of stress or depression would have resulted in them becoming a threat to themselves or others.

Given the nature of the research topic, a researcher must also be aware of the potential for participants to feel distress while participating in focus groups or the focus group (George, 2012). I provided participants with the contact information for this provincial government ministry's employee assistance program and advised them that I would have followed-up with a call or visit if I believed such action applicable.

Finally, to ensure full support of organizational and research Code of Ethics parameters, I provided information on full disclosure concerning the purpose of the study as well as confidentiality parameters. Within this disclosure, details concerning methodology, use of outcomes, participant selection processes, informed consent protocols, and access and storage of data were provided. All participants were aware of their rights of participation, including the right to withdraw at any time.

Summary

This chapter covered the description of the case study research design. In addition, I described the qualitative and quantitative methods employed in this study. The purpose of this study was to identify contextual factors that support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. The research design outlined in this chapter was chosen based on the ability to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data to understand the effect of the combination of being ready, willing, and able on the ability to sustain the attitudinal and behavioral change necessary for organizational engagement. Employees within a provincial government ministry constituted the study population.

Three quantitative survey instruments, MSCEIT, MBTI, and SDI were used to collect data concerning social and emotional intelligence, personality traits, and collaboration and conflict competencies. Qualitative data was collected using focus groups.

Chapter 4 covers participant information, results, and findings concerning the study data.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to identify whether a specific combination of factors needs to be present for individuals, teams, and leaders to demonstrate and sustain high work engagement and psychological well-being. The purpose of this chapter was to present the results of the study. The chapter covers the study setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, results, and evidence of trustworthiness. I used the qualitative data gathered to answer the first research question:

1. How does a team's social construction of reality sustain the team's high engagement?

Within the quantitative portion of the study, I used the data gathered to answer the second research question:

2. What is the relationship between MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, SDI scores, and work engagement?

The following hypotheses resulted from this research question:

H_0: There is no relationship between an individual's MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, and SDI scores and work engagement as defined by the individual's results in the study engagement survey.

H_A: There is a relationship between an individual's MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores and SDI scores and work engagement as defined by the individual's results in the study engagement survey.

Finally, I used the qualitative and quantitative data to answer the final research question:

3. How do personality traits, social and emotional intelligence, and collaboration and conflict skills support a team's social construction of high engagement?

Setting

The study setting remained consistent during the data collection process. I drew participants from five branches of this provincial government ministry. I conducted the focus groups based on the identified protocol. Participants did not experience any changes in their employment status that could have influenced the study results.

Demographics

This ministry employs over 6,000 permanent, full-time employees. Approximately 85% of employees within this ministry are employed in a non-management occupational group. Approximately 50% of these employees are functioning within a non-managerial professional occupation. I recruited participants over a 1-month period. I sent "Expressions of Interest" emails to the ministry's Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADM) and Executive Directors (ED). Once this organizational level granted approval, I sent "Expressions of Interest" to the individuals who reported to these ADM's and ED's. I identified the email addresses through the ministry's email system. In total, 34 employees expressed interest in participating in the study. Using the Excel Rand () function, I identified a total of 20 potential participants. All 20 participants signed the consent form. One participant ultimately withdrew.

Participants did not disclose any changes to their organizational reporting structure or any changes to their occupational accountabilities that might have influenced the results of the study. Participants did articulate concerns regarding the ongoing changes that the provincial government as a whole is experiencing. Participants did acknowledge the possibility that the attitudes and perceptions they disclosed during this study could change based on unintended consequences of the changes being experienced within the governmental paradigm.

Table 1 shows the participant demographics. I was successful in recruiting the target sample size of 20 participants. One participant decided to withdraw during the assessment phase of the study. Therefore, a total of 19 participants contributed to my research study. The organizational alignment, occupation, age, gender, and length of service of these participants are reflective of the ministry demographics with the exception of two branches of the ministry. I attempted, with no success, to contact one branch several times to recruit participants. The second branch of this ministry, Human Resource Services, was excluded from the potential participant pool to mitigate conflict of interest. As the study participant final sample has representation from the majority of the potential population, I believe that the final sample size met the minimum participant requirements based on expertise in the chosen topic. I also believe that the final study sample was appropriate to answer the research question. I labeled the five branches as Branch A, B, C, D, and E. There were three participants from Branch A, six participants

from Branches B and C, three participants from Branch D, and one participant from Branch E.

Table 1

Demographic Overview (*N* = 19)

	Branch A	Branch B	Branch C	Branch D	Branch E
Male	1	2	1	1	1
Female	2	4	5	2	0
Bargaining unit	2	4	5	0	1
Non-bargaining	1	2	1	3	0
Management	0	2	1	3	0
Administrative	0	3	2	0	0
Technical/Professional	3	1	3	0	1

Table 2 shows the age band and length of service of the final study participants. The age bands and length of service illustrated are reflective of the total possible participant pool within the five branches of the provincial government ministry that agreed to participate in this study.

Table 2

Study Participant Age Band and Length of Service Overview (*N* = 19)

Age band	Study participants	Length of service	Study participants
≥25, ≤29	3	≤1	2
≥30, ≤34	1	>1, ≤5	4
≥35, ≤39	4	>5, ≤10	5
≥40, ≤44	3	>10, ≤15	4
≥45, ≤49	4	>20, ≤25	1
≥50, ≤54	3	>25, ≤30	2
≥55, ≤59	1	>35, ≤40	1

Data Collection

Qualitative Component

Nineteen employees in five branches of a provincial government ministry in a Canadian province completed an exercise that scored twenty belief statements relative to their degree of agreement with the statements (see Appendix F). In addition, the participants scored the statements relative to how important these attitudes and behaviors were to the participant. The purpose of this exercise was to identify the study participants' readiness and willingness to change and to provide a discussion focus for the focus group exercise.

After completing the scoring exercise, the participants participated in one of the four focus group sessions. I conducted the focus groups in provincial government meeting rooms. I provided three options for times and dates. Based on participant

availability, the participants selected to attend one of the four focus groups. I did not manipulate participant selection of a specific focus group date or time.

I completed the focus group sessions within approximately 1 hour per session. Participants discussed four focus group questions, as noted in my qualitative data collection instrument (see Appendix G). I recorded the participant observations on flip charts and by typing the responses in a Word document displayed on a screen. With the exception of Focus Group 2, I also recorded participant comments using the audio recording feature in Evernote. I recorded the audio for recordkeeping and comment validation purposes. The number of participants within each focus group session is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Focus Group Participation (*N* = 16)

	Branch A	Branch B	Branch C	Branch D	Branch E
Focus group 1	0	3	2	0	1
Focus group 2	1	0	1	0	0
Focus group 3	1	2	0	1	0
Focus group 4	0	0	2	2	0

I did not encounter any difficulties that resulted in an alteration or impediment regarding the remainder of the data collection process. The focus group protocol and process that I used to record the study participant responses was effective. Participant comments in focus groups 2, 3, and 4 did not substantially differentiate with the participant comments in the initial focus group.

Three participants elected to provide their responses to the focus group questions independent of attending a focus group session. One of these participants elected this option because of illness. The remaining two participants elected this option because of their inability to leave their office during the dates and times available. I sent, via email, the focus group transcripts to these three participants. These participants reviewed the transcripts and provided their comments for each focus group question. The participants then returned the transcripts to me via email. The participant comments reflected a thorough understanding of the purpose of the questions. As the complexity of commentary and number of comments was consistent with those provided during the focus group sessions, I do not believe the integrity of the process was compromised. The demographic of the participants who provided their observations independent of participation within a focus group session is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Independent Feedback Participation (*N* = 3)

	Branch A	Branch B	Branch C	Branch D	Branch E
Focus group 1	0	1	0	0	0
Focus group 2	0	0	0	0	0
Focus group 3	0	0	0	0	0
Focus group 4	0	0	1	1	0

Quantitative Component

Focus group belief statement scoring. Nineteen employees in five branches of a provincial government ministry in a Canadian province completed an exercise that scored

twenty belief statements relative to their degree of agreement with the statements (see Appendix F). In addition, the participants scored the statements relative to how important these attitudes and behaviors were to the participant. The purpose of this exercise was to identify the study participants' readiness and willingness to change and to provide a discussion focus for the focus group exercise.

Using and expanding on questions included in this provincial government's Employee Engagement survey, I created the belief statement document in Excel and sent the Excel file to the participants via my Walden University email. I identified the accessible population through an Expression of Interest email sent to the assistant deputy ministers (ADM) and executive directors (ED) within the ministry. Upon receipt of emails from these ADM's and ED's, confirming, as outlined in the Expression of Interest that I could contact their employees, I emailed a separate Expression of Interest to these employees to determine if any were interested in participating in this study. I identified potential participant email addresses through the ministry email system. I emailed the belief survey to participants upon receiving their consent, via email, to participate. Expression of Interest Participants entered an 'x' in the appropriate scoring column for each belief statement. The participants then emailed their completed belief statement files to my Walden University email.

I did not encounter any difficulties or unusual circumstances during this data collection process. The participants did not disclose any difficulties or unusual circumstances regarding completing the scoring exercise. At no time did any study

participant disclose to me any difficulty in using the Excel software or in using the keystroke "x" to complete the scoring exercise. The protocol and approach that I used to gather this data were effective. I did not encounter any difficulties that resulted in an alteration or impediment of the data collection process.

Psychological assessments. Nineteen employees in five branches of a provincial government ministry in a Canadian province completed three psychological assessments. The three assessments completed by the participants were the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the Strengths Deployment Inventory (SDI), and the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). The purpose of using these assessments was to measure the study participants' ability to change.

I entered the study participants' names and email addresses into the respective assessment's administration tool. I altered the standard email script within the administration tool to reiterate the rationale for why the participants would be receiving a request to complete the assessment. For each assessment, I requested that the participants complete the assessment within one week of receiving the assessment request.

The administration tool for each assessment enabled me to send a reminder email within a specified period. I entered a date that would ensure that the software application would send the reminder email to those participants who had not completed the assessment within two days of the targeted completion date. I received a completion email notification via my Walden University email when participants had completed the identified assessment. For both the MBTI and SDI, I accessed the completed assessments

via the software's administration tool. For the MSCEIT, I accessed and downloaded the assessment dataset from the assessment site. I then saved the downloaded dataset file to an Excel dataset.

Two of the participants contacted me to request direction while completing the MSCEIT. I provided clarification and direction concerning the intent of the questions asked within the MSCEIT. Neither participant articulated any further requirement for support. No participants asked me questions concerning the completion of the SDI or the MBTI. The protocol and process used to gather the quantitative data were effective. I did not encounter any difficulties that resulted in an alteration or impediment of the data collection process.

Data Analysis

Qualitative Component

I used Nvivo 10 and a hybrid approach to analyze the data from the Focus Groups and the independent observations and commentary. NVivo 10 enabled me to categorize, arrange, and manage the focus group information to identify common themes. I used summative content analysis to identify common words and phrases in participant responses (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Initial categorizations allowed me to organize in a timely manner while enabling the important intuitive trends to emerge. I derived the *a priori* codes from the foci of the focus group and independent feedback comments and observations. The *a priori* codes are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

A Priori Codes Used to Categorize Qualitative Data

Focus Group Question	Categorizations
Question 1	Ability
	Motivation
	Readiness
	Willingness
Question 2	Disengagement factors
	Disengagement moderators
Question 3	Outcomes of disengagement
Question 4	Individual Accountability
	Leader Accountability
	Shared Accountability

I analyzed the coding structure iteratively to ensure efficacy concerning the information gathered and organized. I entered the identified codes in NVivo as nodes, which enabled the software to identify common themes. I used data from the first focus group to validate the codes and themes and examined each successive focus group to determine pattern matches and discrepancies as discussed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Data from the second focus group replicated the codes and themes from the first focus group, while providing additional observations. Data from the third focus group again replicated the majority of the observations identified in the first and second focus groups. My examination of the comments from the final focus group resulted in the addition of individual observations to the identified themes, but I did not identify new themes. I examined the comments and observations from those participants who did not

participate in a focus group to identify any new themes. As the comments were consistent with those provided by the focus group participants, I did not identify new themes.

Subsequent to the final focus group and receiving the commentary and observations from the participants who did not participate in the focus groups, I clustered the codes and themes into dimensions that aligned with the frameworks used in this study as well as the research foci and reviewed these dimensions to ensure pattern accuracy and clarity. An analyst within the Strategic Services Board within the ministry participating in this study and a clinical Executive Director within another ministry in this provincial government independently reviewed the data coding and themes. I have summarized the number of statements aligned with second stage nodes and themes in Tables 6, 7 and 8.

Table 6

Second Stage Nodes and Themes Used to Categorize Readiness, Willingness, Ability, and Motivation

Themes	Readiness	Willingness	Ability	Motivation
Passive resignation	7	4	1	2
Perceptions of choice	24	30	17	21
Trust in organization	11	9	0	4
Trust in team	2	3	13	2

Table 7

Second Stage Nodes and Themes Used to Categorize Disengagement

	Disengagement		
Themes	Factors	Moderators	Outcomes
Passive resignation	3	0	1
Perceptions of choice	10	19	16
Trust in organization	3	3	2
Trust in team	4	2	0

Table 8

Second Stage Nodes and Themes Used to Categorize Accountability

	Accountability		
Themes	Individual	Leader	Shared
Passive resignation	0	0	0
Perceptions of choice	10	13	15
Trust in organization	0	14	0
Trust in team	0	1	0

In the redistribution of the second-stage themes to align with codes associated with social and emotional intelligence and the focus areas of the literature review, I completed the final themes that I used to analyze the results. I have summarized these final themes in Tables 9 and 10. I aligned study participant statements concerning feelings of helplessness and perceptions of lack of ability to affect change in the *Passive resignation* theme. I aligned study participant statements concerning having a positive perspective, individual choice concerning engagement, and perceptions concerning ability to change attitudes and behaviors to the Perceptions of choice theme. I aligned

participant statements concerning organizational leaders, organizational culture, and the political nature of the ministerial bureaucracy to the *Trust in organization* theme. I aligned participant statements concerning mentorship, team engagement, peer trust, and transparency in team discourse to the *Trust in team* theme. All remaining tables within the qualitative data analysis reflect a composite of the study participants, rather than branch results. I made the decision to report the results at this level to sustain confidentiality.

Table 9

Final Themes Used to Categorize the Qualitative Data Associated with Social and Emotional Intelligence

Themes	Self-awareness	Self-regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social Skills
Passive resignation	1	1	10	6	2
Perceptions of choice	45	31	43	23	33
Trust in organization	5	0	24	8	10
Trust in team	4	6	5	6	3

Table 10

Final Themes Used to Categorize the Qualitative Data Associated with Literature Review Focus Areas

Themes	Readiness	Willingness	Ability
Passive resignation	12	8	0
Perceptions of choice	55	89	31
Trust in organization	15	24	8
Trust in team	8	10	6

Question 1: Motivation to be Engaged

Question 1 was: What emotions did the belief statement evoke in you? Three specific codes aligned with Social and emotional intelligence are associated with this question: Perceptions of choice, Trust in organization, and Trust in team. I have illustrated the number of statements aligned with this question in Tables 11 and 12.

Table 11

Question 1: Social and Emotional Intelligence Themes

Themes	Self-awareness	Self-regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social Skills
Perceptions of choice	8	2	5	1	0
Trust in organization	2	0	0	0	0
Trust in team	2	0	1	0	1

Table 12

Question 1: Focus Area Themes

Themes	Readiness	Willingness	Ability
Perceptions of choice	3	5	8
Trust in organization	2	0	0
Trust in team	1	1	2

Consistent with the results for each question, and consistent with research conducted into self-determination theory (Shuck et al., 2015), statements from participants suggested individuals have a choice in what they believe about themselves, their team, and their organization. Statements from participants suggested that the

personal choice one makes concerning engagement is important in developing social and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, participant comments suggested that being ready, willing, and able to make that personal choice concerning engagement is an important factor in sustaining the attitudes and behaviors consistent with employee engagement. Comments such as "I had a positive mindset when approaching this" and "When I was answering things, I replied very transparently" were consistently articulated by the focus groups. Trust in organization and trust in team statements focused on awareness that the participants have a positive work environment and the perception that participant teams have developed the empathy and social skills to "air grievances organically."

Question 2: Motivation to be Disengaged

Question 2 was: What do you think causes people to disagree with these belief statements? The number of statements aligned to this question is shown in Tables 13 and 14.

Table 13

Question 2: Social and Emotional Intelligence Themes

Themes	Self-awareness	Self-regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social Skills
Passive resignation	1	1	7	5	2
Perceptions of choice	19	12	26	6	13
Trust in organization	3	0	15	3	2
Trust in team	2	4	4	3	0

Table 14

Question 2: Focus Area Themes

Themes	Readiness	Willingness	Ability
Passive resignation	12	4	0
Perceptions of choice	43	29	4
Trust in organization	13	10	0
Trust in team	7	2	4

I asked members of each focus group, and those participants who did not participate in a focus group, to highlight the differences between their focus group statement results and the results of this ministry's employee engagement survey. All participants agreed that individuals have a choice in what they believe about themselves, their team, and their organization. Participant comments such as "I don't know how you change someone's beliefs," "There's a lack of perspective about how lucky we actually are," and "If you make a choice to be disengaged, you have to take personal responsibility" were consistently articulated by participants within the focus groups. Participants suggested, in some way, that perceiving organizational experiences to be positive leads individuals to develop and sustain a positive perspective.

This suggestion supported participant statements that implied choosing to perceive experiences as negative can lead to passive resignation. Within this theme, participant statements included comments such as "You try to do something, and there's negative feedback," "Other employees who have been here longer have been dealing with demands to 'do more with less' for a very long time," and "People have been beaten

down by culture." A prevalent trend in this theme was the tendency to describe experiences and feelings in the third person.

Study participant statements that I coded to the trust in organization theme focused on the unpredictability of government direction. Comments such as "Responses can change based on uncertain times," "Length of stay in <this ministry> affects positive outlook negatively," and "A lack of direction and lack of big picture direction" suggested that focus group participants believed that employee engagement is negatively affected due to perceptions of being "pawns to the political will."

Study participant statements that I coded to the trust in team theme focused on the lack of trust leading to disengagement. The use of the third person sentence structure differentiated these statements from the others. Comments within this theme include "They're talking the talk but not walking the walk," and "Once you've lost trust it may never be recovered."

The number of participant statements that I coded to *perceptions of choice* suggested that participants believe that all categories of social and emotional intelligence are developed through a conscious choice to change and sustain attitudes and behaviors consistent with emotional engagement. In addition, participant comments that focused on the difference between the focus group results and the employee engagement survey suggested that individual motivation to score in the *agree* columns can be negatively affected by a lack of trust in the organization. While participant comments coded to *perceptions of choice* were the dominant factor to be ready, willing, and able to sustain

attitudes and behaviors, it appeared that participants also believe that individual perception of choice to be ready, willing, and able can be negatively affected by perceptions of distrust in leaders and the organization.

Question 3: Outcomes of Disengagement

Question 3 was: What do you think happens in a team when people disagree with these statements? Tables 15 and 16 shows the number of statements I aligned to this question.

Table 15

Question 3: Social and Emotional Intelligence Themes

Themes	Self-awareness	Self-regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social Skills
Passive resignation	0	0	3	1	0
Perceptions of choice	7	14	8	11	5
Trust in organization	0	0	6	0	2
Trust in team	0	1	0	3	2

Table 16

Question 3: Focus Area Themes

Themes	Readiness	Willingness	Ability
Passive resignation	0	4	0
Perceptions of choice	1	42	2
Trust in organization	0	8	0
Trust in team	0	6	0

Consistent with participant comments for all four questions, statements that I coded to *perceptions of choice* suggested that focus group participants believed that the choices individuals make concerning attitudes and behaviors lead to disengagement within a team. Participants identified job dissatisfaction and burnout as two specific outcomes when a team is in disagreement that attitudes and behaviors of engagement are present. Additional disengagement outcomes that I identified within the trust in team and trust in organization themes were consistent with the following statements: "People who disagree don't feel bonded or connected with team/boss," "People who see these statements as not important or not applying to their team, have a lot of power in the workplace," and "The more positive and engaged the team is, more likely there will be less disagreement about the belief statements. The more isolation and distrust among the team, then the results will differ."

Participant statements that I coded under *Trust in Organization* focus on how organizational culture, leadership ability, and government mindset affect perceptions of team engagement. Participant statements such as "A bad manager can wreck a team," "Government – hard to get rid of people," and "Pretty much have to burn the place down to get fired" suggested that participants believed that organizational culture can negatively affect individual, team, and leader perceptions regarding the ability to sever disengaged employees. Recognition by participants that the "government method is conciliatory" may have resulted in exacerbation of this perception.

Based on the focus theme coding I suggest that the state of readiness has less effect when teams are in disagreement concerning individual, team, and organizational engagement. The majority of the comments that I coded were within the state of willingness to be engaged. Participant statements that suggested being willing to shift attitudes and behaviors is most important when a team is in disagreement concerning the state of engagement include "Sometimes each side will try to change the other," "Most of the statements are about the trust and support among team members," and "If team knows you're working with a person, the team can be supportive."

Question 4: Responsibility for Engagement

Question 4 was: Who do you think is mainly accountable for the attitudes and behaviors in your team? Tables 17 and 18 contain the number of statements that I aligned to this question.

Table 17

Question 4: Social and Emotional Intelligence Themes

Themes	Self-awareness	Self-regulation	Motivation	Empathy	Social Skills
Perceptions of choice	11	3	4	5	15
Trust in organization	0	0	3	5	6
Trust in team	0	1	0	0	0

Table 18

Question 4: Focus Area Themes

Themes	Readiness	Willingness	Ability
Perceptions of choice	8	13	17
Trust in organization	0	6	8
Trust in team	0	1	0

Participant statements that I coded to the theme *Perceptions of choice* dominated the discussion in all four focus groups. Participant statements that I coded aligned to all five factors of social and emotional intelligence. Within the focus area themes, the majority of participant statements that I coded were within the ability area. Participant statement terminology was representative of Kouzes and Posner's (2012) *The Leadership Challenge* core practices, specifically concerning modeling the way.

Individual, team, and organizational accountability was also a prevalent theme for this question in the *Perceptions of choice* theme. Statements included "Everyone is accountable to respect each other," "A good team gets great results," and "Personality is important – who are we hiring." Accountability statements were also prevalent within the *Trust in organization* theme. Statements included "Higher level leaders may need to step in," "How are Ministers, DMs, ADMs and EDs leading? Who they pick as leaders shows how they lead." and "There comes a point where the leader needs to do something."

Discrepant Cases

Study participant responses did not result in any significant discrepant cases. Participants were able to view all the statements documented during the discussion. My

facilitation of the focus groups consisted of describing the study purpose, confirming their ongoing participation, confirming the confidentiality process, asking the focus group questions, and documenting their responses. In addition, participant opportunities to provide clarity to statements during the focus group sessions and subsequent review of the transcripts resulted in an accurate reflection of the participant perspective.

The sole discrepant case focused on the limited experience of two focus group participants, given their recent hiring by the ministry. These participants actively engaged in the focus group discussions and offered their perceptions from what they had experienced to date. These perceptions were consistent with those offered by other focus group participants.

Quantitative Component

Focus group belief statement scoring. I used the results from the qualitative belief statement results to generate engagement scores. The questions used in the qualitative belief statement exercise corresponded with the questions used in the engagement survey from this provincial government. I used the Excel CountIf formula to tabulate the focus group participant scoring. I then translated the participant scoring of the belief statements into a level of engagement.

I organized the belief statements to generate an individual, team, and organizational engagement score for each study participant as well as participant mean scores. I applied a 6-point Likert scale that included the following classifications: Clearly disengaged (1-2), moderately disengaged (3-5), slightly disengaged (6-9), slightly

engaged (10-12), moderately engaged (14-16), and clearly engaged (17-20) to the total number of participant Agree or Strongly Agree selections. Table 19 shows the participant degree of engagement based on score results. Table 20 shows the composite result of the scoring exercise.

Table 19

Study Participant Degree of Engagement

Degree of engagement	Number	Percentage
Slightly engaged	1	5%
Moderately engaged	6	32%
Clearly engaged	12	63%

Table 20

Belief Statement Scoring

Belief Statements	% of Agree/ Strongly agree
I am comfortable making suggestions to my team about how to improve the work of my unit/team	95
My manager acts in my best interests	79
My team inspires the best performance in me	100
My team has provided coaching/mentoring for me focused on developing social and emotional intelligence	53
I understand the impact my attitude/behavior has on the team	100
I trust the information I receive from my immediate supervisor	89
I trust the information I receive from my team members	95
I look forward to coming to work	84
My team helps me use my past experience & knowledge to resolve new situations	89
My team resolves work conflicts with mutual respect	84
I am comfortable going to members of my team concerning interpersonal conflict within the team	68
My team members am comfortable coming to me concerning interpersonal conflict within the team	84
The culture in this team supports speaking up, holding each other accountable and asking for help	74
My team members are accountable for their attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion	79
I am accountable for my attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion	100
I take ownership when I do something wrong	100
My team members take ownership when they do something wrong	89
I trust the information I receive from my Director	89
My team members provide feedback concerning my attitudes and behaviors that helps me be a better team member	63
I am comfortable providing feedback to my team members concerning their attitudes and behaviors that helps them be a better team member	63

Spearman correlation results. I used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 to analyze the participant engagement scores from the belief statements and the results of the three psychological assessments for the quantitative portion of this study. I used **t**he MSCEIT total score and the Positive or Negative predisposition score to identify any social and emotional intelligence association with the study participant engagement scores. I used the eight MBTI typology scores to identify any personality association with the study participant engagement scores. I used the three SDI collaboration and conflict categories to identify any collaboration and conflict association with the study participant engagement scores.

I was able to gather demographic information from the ministry HRIS system. All surveys were completed by the participants online. I assessed the survey results for data completion. Participants completed the MSCEIT in an average of 52 minutes. MBTI and SDI reports do not track how long participants take to complete the assessment. The participants submitted their responses electronically through the assessment software. All participants completed the three psychological assessments. I provided participants with their individual assessment results and an explanatory summary of their results. I also offered participants an opportunity to participate in an individual session to explain their MSCEIT and MBTI results. Three participants requested and received a one-hour session with me to review and discuss their results. I also offered participants an opportunity to participate in an individual session with the Managing Partner of Personal Strengths Canada to explain their SDI results. No participants requested me to schedule a session.

Study participant engagement scores resulted in one outlier. I made the decision to include this participant in the quantitative analysis as this participant's results were more representative of the ministry mean engagement scores and enabled a broader transferability of the study. As the outlier score was sufficiently lower than the rest of the participant scores to result in an exaggerated influence on the value of Pearson's *r*, Spearman's rank-order correlation was used for the quantitative analysis. The selection of Spearman's correlation coefficient was also appropriate given that the study participant engagement scores were not normally distributed based on the Shapiro-Wilk test ($p < .05$).

Spearman's correlation coefficient calculated a coefficient that measured the associative strength and direction of two variables. The variables represented paired observations. Finally, there was a monotonic relationship between the study participant engagement scores and the MSCEIT, MBTI and SDI results.

Study participant engagement scores reflected an ordinal structure. Determining whether a relationship exists between the quantitative and qualitative data requires a consistent structure between the two types of data. Therefore, I translated the MSCEIT and MBTI continuous data into ordinal data. See Tables 21 and 22 for the assessment results for the study participants, expressed as ordinal variables. Table 21 shows the MSCEIT assessment results by participant. I used the MSCEIT user manual to identify the ordinal classifications as: Consider improving (≤89), Competent (≥90, <110), Skilled (≥110, <130), and Expert (≥130). I used the MSCEIT user manual to define the positive

or negative predisposition ordinal classifications as more than typical negative (≤85), typical (>85, <115), and more than typical positive (≥115).

Table 21

MSCEIT Assessment Results by Participant

	MSCEIT	
Participant	Total score	+/- predisposition
1	Skilled	Typical
2	Skilled	Typical
3	Consider improving	Typical
4	Competent	More than typical positive
5	Skilled	Typical
6	Competent	Typical
7	Competent	Typical
8	Competent	Typical
9	Skilled	Typical
10	Consider improving	Typical
11	Skilled	Typical
12	Consider improving	Typical
13	Consider improving	More than typical positive
14	Skilled	Typical
15	Consider improving	More than typical positive
16	Competent	Typical
17	Consider improving	Typical
18	Competent	Typical
19	Expert	Typical

The MSCEIT scores are reported similar to that of traditional intelligence scales. The average score was 100. The standard deviation was 15. The highest score for the MSCEIT was 150. Participant scores that reflect *consider improving* suggested that these participants may not be able to generate and access emotions consistently. At times, these participants may only selectively attend to emotional signals and may value logic over emotion. Participant scores that reflected *competent* suggested that these participants may not perceive emotions or non-verbal body language accurately at times. Emotional perceptions may not be accurate, and consideration of emotions may not occur during decision-making. Participant scores that reflected *skilled* suggested that these participants can understand why people feel the way they do. Emotional vocabulary is used when describing feelings. Participant scores that reflected *expert* suggested that these participants are consistently accurate in appraising emotions. Emotions are consistently used to enhance thinking and decision-making. Positive-Negative bias reflected an individual's tendency to respond to stimuli with positive or negative emotions. A marked tendency to consistently interpret stimuli as overly positive or negative can lead individuals to misread situations.

Table 22 illustrates the MBTI assessment results by participant. Ordinal categories are defined by the MBTI assessment as: Slight (≤5), Moderate (>5, ≤15), Clear (>15, ≤25), and Very Clear (>25).

Table 22

MBTI Assessment Results by Participant

	MBTI			
Participant	Extroversion/ Introversion	Sensing/ Intuition	Thinking/ Feeling	Judging/ Perceiving
1	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Very clear
2	Very clear	Slight	Slight	Clear
3	Slight	Moderate	Moderate	Slight
4	Slight	Very clear	Slight	Clear
5	Slight	Moderate	Clear	Slight
6	Slight	Clear	Slight	Slight
7	Slight	Slight	Slight	Very clear
8	Slight	Moderate	Slight	Slight
9	Moderate	Clear	Moderate	Slight
10	Moderate	Slight	Slight	Slight
11	Slight	Slight	Slight	Slight
12	Moderate	Slight	Slight	Clear
13	Slight	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
14	Clear	Clear	Moderate	Slight
15	Moderate	Slight	Slight	Slight
16	Slight	Moderate	Clear	Slight
17	Slight	Slight	Slight	Slight
18	Slight	Slight	Slight	Slight
19	Moderate	Moderate	Slight	Slight

Clear or *very clear* reflected scores that suggested the participant consistently selects specific attitudes and behaviors in a variety of circumstances. These specific attitudes and

behaviors are heightened when the individual is in conflict. Extroversion or Introversion participant scores reflected a preference for where individuals focus their attention. C*lear,* or *very clear* responses suggested these participants will consistently choose either an external focus of people and things (Extroversion) or an internal focus of ideas and impressions (Introversion). Sensing or Intuition participant scores reflected a preference for how individuals receive information. *Clear,* or *very clear* responses suggested these participants will consistently choose either a focus on the present and concrete data (Sensing) or a focus on future possibilities and patterns of behavior (Intuition). Thinking or Feeling participant scores reflects a preference for how individuals make decisions. *Clear* or *very clear* responses suggested these participants will either make decisions based on logic and objective analysis of cause and effect (Thinking) or make decisions based primarily on values and subjective evaluation of person-centric concerns (Feeling). Judging or Perceiving participant scores reflected a preference for how individuals manage the outer world. *Clear* or *very clear* responses suggested these participants will either prefer a planned and organized approach to life and a preference for stability (Judging) or prefer to have a flexible and spontaneous approach to life and to keep options open (Perceiving).

The SDI assessment reflected a participant score along a three-dimensional plane. Due to the complexity of translating the SDI results into ordinal data, the SDI assessment results retained their continuous variable structure. The SDI motivational value typology,

an outcome of the plotting of the three SDI scores, integrated the SDI results for the third research question. Table 23 illustrates the SDI assessment results by participant.

Table 23

SDI Assessment Results by Participant

	Well			Conflict		
Participant	Blue	Red	Green	Blue	Red	Green
1	50	38	12	45	22	33
2	55	15	30	41	33	26
3	44	39	17	35	31	34
4	29	42	29	18	30	52
5	57	23	20	30	24	46
6	27	51	22	38	20	42
7	32	21	47	44	1	55
8	40	24	36	28	38	34
9	30	64	6	29	65	6
10	49	20	31	19	18	63
11	39	29	32	28	12	60
12	38	13	49	26	15	59
13	57	18	25	41	24	35
14	56	11	33	36	22	42
15	26	30	44	26	33	41
16	53	36	11	45	19	36
17	36	28	36	29	38	33
18	31	22	47	21	22	57
19	33	12	55	27	19	54

Blue, red and *green* categories reflected participant preferred responses to various situations when there is no conflict. *Conflict blue, red* and *green* categories reflected participant preferred responses to various conflict situations. Within the situations

described, ipsative scoring was used by the participants to allocate a total of 10 points across three possible responses to each scenario. A significant number of points allocated to a specific response suggested a preference for a specific motivational value system (Blue, Red or Green) (Scudder, 2013). The three scores are then plotted on a symmetrical triangle to identify a specific motivational value system and style. A total of 100 points was assigned and equally distributed to each color. The physical center of the triangle was the intersection at 33.3 (Scudder, 2013). A specific type is assigned based on the participant scoring across all three possible value systems (Scudder, 2013). Participant scoring resulted in six possible value systems aligned with the three colors, and one value system that is the intersection of all three colors. A value system represented by a single color suggested the participant assigned greater than 42.3 points to the responses aligned with that specific value system (Scudder, 2013). Value systems represented by two colors suggested the participant assigned greater than 33.3 points to the responses aligned with those specific value systems (Scudder, 2013). The Hub, which is the intersection of all three colors, suggested the participant assigned an equal distribution of points to the responses aligned with all three value systems. See Table 24 for an explanation of the seven value systems.

Table 24

SDI Value System and Traits

Value System	Traits
Blue	Concern for the protection, growth, and welfare of others
Red	Concern for task accomplishment and achieving desired results
Green	Concern for the establishment and maintenance of order
Blue/Red/Green	Concern for the welfare of the group and belonging to the group
Red-Blue	Concern for the protection and welfare of others through task accomplishment and leadership
Red-Green	Concern for justice, leadership, order and fairness
Blue-Green	Concern for developing self-sufficiency in self and others and justice

SDI conflict sequences indicated participant motivational and behavioral changes when faced with conflict and opposition. There were thirteen possible conflict sequences based on the order of the c*onflict blue, red,* and *green* totals. Blue, red or green totals that are less than 6 points apart resulted in a conflict sequence that may be blended or interchangeable in terms of attitudes and behaviors. For example, study participant 1 conflict sequence scores reflected a *Blue, Green, Red* sequence. This means that this participant will demonstrate attitudes and behaviors consistent with a *blue* value system in the first stage of conflict, a *green* value system in the second stage of conflict, and a *red* value system in the third stage of conflict. See Tables 25, 26, and 27 for an explanation of the SDI conflict sequence attitudes and behaviors.

Table 25

SDI Conflict Sequence Blue Attitudes and Behaviors

	Conflict stage		
	1	2	3
Attitude	Accommodates to the needs of others	Gives in and lets the opposition have its way	Feels completely defeated
Behavior	Accommodates others	Surrenders conditionally	Surrenders completely

Table 26

SDI Conflict Sequence Red Attitudes and Behaviors

	Conflict stage		
	1	2	3
Attitude	Rises to the challenge being offered	Fights off the opposition	Fights for one's life
Behavior	Rises to the challenge	Fight to win	Fight for survival

Table 27

SDI Conflict Sequence Green Attitudes and Behaviors

	Conflict stage		
	1	2	3
Attitude	Is prudently cautious	Tries to escape from the opposition	Retreats completely
Behavior	Is prudently cautious	Pulls back and analyzes	Withdraws

Table 28 contains the mean and standard deviation results for the MSCEIT, MBTI, and SDI assessment results using the assessment continuous variable data.

Table 28

Assessment Mean and Standard Deviation Results

	Mean	SD
Participant Engagement	85.44	11.91
MSCEIT Total	97.60	14.03
MSCEIT Positive/Negative Predisposition	105.5	8.82
MBTI-E/I	7.32	7.66
MBTI-S/N	9.21	7.75
MBTI-T/F	6.26	7.33
MBTI-J/P	8.79	9.61
SDI Blue	41.16	11.06
SDI Green	28.21	14.02
SDI Red	30.63	13.86
SDI Conflict Blue	31.89	8.64
SDI Conflict Red	25.58	13.21
SDI Conflict Green	42.53	14.20

I constructed correlation matrixes from the MSCEIT total results, MCEIT positive or negative predisposition, MBTI results, SDI results, and the participant engagement results. Refer to Table 29 for the results of Spearman's Correlation Coefficient for MSCEIT scores and participant engagement scores.

Table 29

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient between Study Participant MSCEIT Total and Engagement scores

	N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
MSCEIT Total/Engagement	19	.110	.653

There was a modest positive correlation between study participant MSCEIT results and engagement scores. Consistent with Mahon et al.'s (2014) research, this correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = .110, p > .05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Refer to Table 30 for the results of Spearman's Correlation Coefficient for MSCEIT Positive or Negative Predisposition scores and participant engagement scores.

Table 30

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient between Study Participant MSCEIT Positive/Negative Predisposition and Engagement scores

	N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
MSCEIT Positive.Negative Predisposition/Engagement	19	-.134	.585

There was a modest negative correlation between study participant MSCEIT positive or negative predisposition results and engagement scores. Consistent with Mahon et al.'s (2014) research, this correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = -.134, p > .05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Refer to Table 31 for the

results of Spearman's Correlation Coefficient for MBTI scores and participant engagement scores.

Table 31

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient between Study Participant MBTI and Engagement scores

	N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
MBTI Extroversion.Introversion/ Engagement	19	.334	.162
MBTI Sensing.Intuition/ Engagement	19	-.085	.729
MBTI Thinking.Feeling/ Engagement	19	.117	.632
MBTI Judging.Perceiving/ Engagement	19	-.064	.794

There was a moderate positive correlation between study participant MBTI Extroversion.Introversion results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = .334, p > .05$. There was a modest negative correlation between study participant MBTI Sensing.Intuition results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = -.085$, $p > .05$. There was a modest positive correlation between study participant MBTI Thinking.Feeling results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = .117$, $p > .05$. There was a modest negative correlation between study participant MBTI Judging.Perceiving results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = -.064$, $p > .05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Table 32

contains the results of Spearman's Correlation Coefficient for SDI scores and participant engagement scores.

Table 32

Spearman's Correlation Coefficient between Study Participant SDI and Engagement scores

	N	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
SDI Blue/ Engagement	19	.193	.428
SDI Red/ Engagement	19	.118	.630
SDI Green/ Engagement	19	-.193	.429
SDI Conflict Blue/ Engagement	19	.255	.293
SDI Conflict Red/Engagement	19	-.266	.272
SDI Conflict Green/Engagement	19	.141	.566

There was a modest positive correlation between study participant SDI Blue results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = .193$, $p > .05$. There was a modest positive correlation between study participant SDI Red results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = .118$, $p > .05$. There was a modest negative correlation between study participant SDI Green results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = -.193$, $p > .05$. There was a modest positive correlation between study participant SDI Conflict Blue results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, $r_s = .255$, $p > .05$. There was a modest negative correlation between study

participant SDI Conflict Red results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, r_s = -.266, p >.05. There was a modest positive correlation between study participant SDI Conflict Green results and engagement scores. This correlation was not statistically significant, r_s = .141, p >.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Study Results

Findings for research question 1. Research question one focused on how a team's social construction of reality sustains the team's high engagement. Qualitative summative content analysis identified common themes for the study participants. Predominant within the results was the participant perspective that individual perceptions of choice sustain the individual construction of reality. Perceptions of choice also sustain how the team constructs their social reality. Whether that social reality predisposes individuals to view situations and experiences positively or negatively affects the degree of individual engagement within the team. I have summarized the number of focus group statements that align to the final themes in Table 33:

Table 33

Factors affecting the Social Construction of Reality

Factor	Frequency	% of statements
Perceptions of choice	175	66
Trust in Organization	47	18
Trust in Team	24	9
Passive resignation	20	8

Results of the belief statement scoring are consistent with the study participant comments pertaining to individual perceptions of choice. Table 34 contains the percentage of participants who agree or disagree with the belief statements that correlate to individual accountability.

Table 34

Results of Belief Statement Scores that Correlate to Individual Accountability

Belief Statement	% Disagree	Agree
I am comfortable making suggestions to my team about how to improve the work of my unit/team	5	95
I am accountable for my attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion	0	100
I am comfortable providing feedback to my team members concerning their attitudes and behaviors that helps them be a better team member	38	62
I understand the impact my attitude/behavior has on the team	0	100
I take ownership when I do something wrong	0	100
I look forward to coming to work	16	84

As indicated in Table 34, the majority of participants agreed with the statements that align the social construction of reality and engagement within perceptions of choice. The single discrepant result suggested that participants are less comfortable with being accountable for the social construction of reality and engagement when the requirement is to provide feedback to team members.

Participants also believed that trust in the team and the organization affects how the team socially constructs reality, which in turn affects engagement. There were 71

statements from participants that addressed the presence or absence of trust as it relates to engagement. Table 35 contains the percentage of participants who agree or disagree with the belief statements that correlate to team accountability.

Table 35

Results of Belief Statement Scores that Correlate to Team Accountability

	%	
Belief Statement	Disagree	Agree
My team members take ownership when they do something wrong	12	88
I trust the information I receive from my team members	5	95
My team inspires the best performance in me	0	100
My team members are accountable for their attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion	22	78
My team helps me use my past experience & knowledge to resolve new situations	11	89
My team members am comfortable coming to me concerning interpersonal conflict within the team	16	84
I am comfortable going to members of my team concerning interpersonal conflict within the team	33	67
My team members provide feedback concerning my attitudes and behaviors that helps me be a better team member	38	62
My team has provided coaching/mentoring for me focused on developing social and emotional intelligence	49	51
My team resolves work conflicts with mutual respect	16	84

Consistent with the individual accountability results, team belief statement results were higher where the discussion focused on individual accountability. Belief statements that focused on holding others accountable reflected lower levels of agreement by the

study participants. Belief statement results that correlate to organizational accountability also reflected a focus on individual accountability. Results were higher for questions that focused on individual accountability for trusting the information provided by the organization. Table 36 contains these results.

Table 36

Results of Belief Statement Scores that Correlate to Organizational Accountability

Belief Statement	% Disagree	Agree
I trust the information I receive from my immediate supervisor	11	89
I trust the information I receive from my Director	11	89
My manager acts in my best interests	22	78
The culture in this team supports speaking up, holding each other accountable and asking for help	27	73

The belief statement results suggested that all the participants are engaged to some degree, with 95 percent either moderately or clearly engaged. This engagement level differentiates the participants from the mean engagement scores reported at the ministry (54%), branch (62%), management (68%), Administrative (67%) and Professional (67%) levels. Therefore, the participants are uniquely qualified to identify how a team's social construction of reality sustains or inhibits the team's high engagement.

The participants clearly articulated a perception that each is accountable for his or her attitudes and behaviors. Statements such as "disengaged people complete the survey

to rant," "people do not see the options they might have," and "some people just won't be happy" indicated that participants believe that disengaged employees have, to some degree, chosen disengagement.

The perception that each is accountable for his or her attitudes and behaviors does not appear to universally extend to agreeing that each has a responsibility for encouraging the attitudes and behaviors consistent with engagement. Statements such as "People are fearful of their jobs," "Leaders aren't supporting engagement," "A bad manager can wreak a team," "The leader carries a heavier burden and more responsibility," and "I think the Manager should be accountable for team engagement" suggested that participants believed they have accountability for their engagement, but that the organization has a higher accountability for team engagement. In addition, focus group statements such as "If you don't trust the employer, you won't be engaged," "it matters who my manager is" and "have to have good leadership" suggested that when leaders do not perceive a clear accountability towards their attitudes and behaviors, opportunities for disengagement become exacerbated within the team.

When team and organizational members do not perceive individual accountability, individuals may then experience passive resignation that results in disengagement. Study participant comments such as "people that are frustrated think they have no options," "bad memories color perceptions today," "not being heard in the organization" and "feeling like you have a lack of control of your path/future" supported this observation. While these statements suggested participants experience empathy for

the factors that result in disengagement, this perception reflects a paradox. It is difficult to suggest that individuals are primarily accountable for their attitudes and behaviors yet recognize that situational and contextual factors independent of individual choice can affect engagement.

Findings for research question 2. Research question 2 focused on the relationship between MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, SDI scores, and work engagement. The corresponding null hypothesis stated there was no significant relationship between study participant MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, SDI scores, and work engagement. I completed a correlation analysis to investigate the possible associations. I imported data from the MSCEIT, MBTI, and SDI assessments as well as the study participant engagement scores into SPSS for analysis. Spearman's correlation was used to examine the association between the variables. I determined that no significant relationship exists between variables. As a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Participant belief statement scores generated the degree of engagement experienced by each study participant. Table 37 contains the degree of engagement by study participant.

Table 37

Results of Degree of Engagement by Study Participant

Participant	Engagement	Participant	Engagement
1	90%	11	100%
2	90%	12	68%
3	95%	13	70%
4	70%	14	95%
5	85%	15	70%
6	100%	16	85%
7	95%	17	75%
8	95%	18	85%
9	70%	19	55%
10	100%		

Participant scores suggested that the study participants, with one exception, engage in attitudes and behaviors that develop or sustain engagement and psychological well-being. Spearman's Correlation calculations suggested there is modest or moderate correlation, but no statistical significance, between the study participant engagement levels and MSCEIT, MBTI, and SDI results. Eighteen out of 19 participants rated the attitudes and behaviors described in the belief statements as important. Therefore, it is possible that specific aspects of social and emotional intelligence, personality traits, and collaboration and conflict resolution skills are more causative than correlational in developing and sustaining the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement and psychological well-being.

Findings for research question 3. Research question 3 focused on how personality traits, social and emotional intelligence, and collaboration and conflict skills support a team's social construction of high engagement. For this research question, I combined qualitative and quantitative data to determine if a specific combination of personality and skills enables an individual to develop engagement. To analyze the findings for this research question, I aligned study participant results to the participant's readiness, willingness and ability to hold themselves and others accountable to develop the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement and psychological well-being.

Within the qualitative themes, I aligned the statements within the perceptions of choice theme to individual readiness, willingness, and ability to hold themselves accountable for attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. I aligned the statements within the themes of passive resignation, trust in team and trust in organization to study participant beliefs that others are accountable for their readiness, willingness, and ability to demonstrate attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. Then I reviewed the individual psychological assessments to determine if participant scores provide the skills necessary to hold self and others accountable to develop the attitudes and behaviors consistent with engagement and psychological well-being. Table 38 contains the difference between study participant comments concerning individual accountability and perceptions of requirements to hold others accountable for

attitudes and behaviors that develop and sustain engagement and psychological well-being.

Table 38

Results of Participant Readiness, Willingness, and Ability

Themes	Self	% of total comments	Others	% of total comments
Readiness	55	21	35	13
Willingness	89	33	42	16
Ability	31	12	14	5

Based on results in Table 38, participants do not appear to perceive they have a primary accountability to assist others to develop the attitudes and behaviors indicative of engagement and psychological well-being. These results are consistent with the focus group belief statement scores aligned with team and organizational accountability. Mean participant scores within these accountability categories were ten basis points lower than the mean participant scores within the individual category.

Psychological assessments that measure degrees of personality traits, emotional intelligence capacity and degrees of collaboration can assess individual ability to hold others accountable for developing and sustaining attitudes and behaviors consistent with engagement and psychological well-being. Two preferences of MBTI, specifically extroversion or introversion and thinking or feeling, measure an individual's predisposition to focus on other people. Two branches of the MSCEIT, specifically perceiving emotions and managing emotions, evaluate an individual's ability to recognize

how other people are feeling and how to determine the most effective option to achieve outcomes involving other people. Table 39 contains the MBTI and MSCEIT participant assessment scores revised to a consistent ordinal structure of Slight, Moderate, and Clear or Very clear.

Table 39

Results of Participant Assessments Revised to a Consistent Ordinal Structure

	MBTI		MSCEIT	
Category	E/I	T/F	Perceiving	Managing
Slight	12	13	4	4
Moderate	5	4	10	12
Clear or Very Clear	2	2	5	3

I aligned the MSCEIT *consider improving* score to reflect a slight ability. I aligned the MSCEIT *competent* score to reflect a moderate ability. I aligned the MSCEIT *skilled* and *expert* scores to reflect a clear or very clear ability. As shown in Table 37, the majority of participants can perceive and manage emotions consistently accurately.

Fifty-eight percent of participants reflected an *Extrovert* score in the MBTI assessment. As noted previously, *extroverts* are predisposed to focus on other people. One hundred percent of those participants who have an extroversion preference reflected scores that suggested this preference is not dominant, and that an internal focus on ideas and impressions may also be a consistent preference. Fifty-three percent of participants reflected a *Thinking* score in the MBTI assessment. As noted previously, a preference for *thinking* results in decisions based primarily on logic and objective analysis. One hundred

percent of those participants who have a thinking preference reflected scores that suggested this preference was not dominant, and that these participants may often make decisions based on person-centric concerns. The combination of these results suggested that the majority of participants have a consistent ability to attend to emotional signals and perceive emotions or non-verbal body language accurately. In addition, the majority of participants can balance a focus on other people with ideas and impressions. The majority of participants were also able to balance a focus on logic with person-centric concerns.

Four styles of the SDI, specifically Altruistic-Nurturing (Blue), Flexible-Cohering (Hub), Assertive-Nurturing (Red-Blue), and Cautious-Supporting (Blue-Green), describe individuals who value being open and responsive to the needs of others. Table 40 contains the SDI well and conflict assessment results for study participants.

Table 40

Results of Participant Assessments Revised to a Consistent Ordinal Structure

Participant	SDI Well	SDI Conflict
1	Assertive-Nurturing (Red-Blue)	B-G-R
2	Altruistic-Nurturing (Blue)	B-R-G
3	Assertive-Nurturing (Red-Blue)	[BRG]
4	Flexible-Cohering (Blue/Red/Green)	G-R-B
5	Altruistic-Nurturing (Blue)	G-[BR]
6	Assertive-Directing (Red)	[BG]-R
7	Cautious-Supporting (Blue-Green)	G-B-R
8	Flexible-Cohering (Blue/Red/Green)	[RG]-B
9	Assertive-Directing (Red)	R-B-G
10	Altruistic-Nurturing (Blue)	G-[BR]
11	Flexible-Cohering (Blue/Red/Green)	G-B-R
12	Cautious-Supporting (Blue-Green)	G-B-R
13	Altruistic-Nurturing (Blue)	[BG]-R
14	Cautious-Supporting (Blue-Green)	[BG]-R
15	Analytic-Autonomizing (Green)	G-R-B
16	Assertive-Nurturing (Red-Blue)	B-G-R
17	Flexible-Cohering (Blue/Red/Green)	[RG]-B
18	Analytic-Autonomizing (Green)	G-[BR]
19	Cautious-Supporting (Blue-Green)	G-B-R

Based on the results in Table 40, 12 out of 19 participants have motivational value systems that included seeking ways to help others, being curious about what others think and feel, creating welfare and security for others, and offering assistance for greater self-

sufficiency and independence. As conflict or opposition increases, fourteen study participant SDI scores reflected a conflict escalation response that balances a concern for the welfare of others with a concern for self-sufficiency and the maintenance of order. This change in participant motivational value systems and styles was consistent with a perception that individuals are accountable for self-engagement and leaders are accountable for team or organizational work engagement.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

To mitigate issues of credibility, I had the participants validate the documented statements during the focus group sessions. I also provided a summary of all the focus group statements to the participants for additional review and commentary. This process enabled the participants to validate or refute my interpretations of the comments made by participants. This process also enabled the participants to elaborate further on the perspectives described in the summary. An analyst within the Strategic Services Board within the ministry participating in this study and a clinical Executive Director within another ministry in this provincial government independently reviewed the data coding and themes. These processes supported the authenticity of the themes and findings. I was not required to adjust the strategies selected, as all participants were willing to participate in the credibility process.

Transferability

The multi-stage random sampling method employed during this study was the strategy selected to mitigate issues of transferability. Participants within this study represented professional, clerical, union, non-union, individual contributor, and leader populations within a hierarchical structure. Therefore, outcomes may not be transferable to organizations that thrive on flat structures and a high degree of empowerment at all levels within the organization. In addition, each reader may decide which outcomes are transferable (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Nonetheless, participants provided honest and detailed responses regarding their personal feelings and experiences. Therefore, most organizations should find value from this study. I did not adjust the selected transferability strategy, as all chosen participants were willing to participate in the study.

Dependability

I ensured dependability within this study through a rigorous audit trail. I documented clear information concerning the specific research steps taken through to reporting the study outcomes. My audit trail tracked the information, which included focus group and assessment documentation, data analysis procedures, and the analysis process to identify data themes. This audit trail resulted in a clear depiction of the specific research path I chose, the decisions I made, and the process taken to evaluate and manage the data.

Confirmability

I ensured confirmability and qualitative objectivity through my regular entries in a reflexive journal. My journal entries consisted of the rationales for my decisions concerning methodology, data analysis, and the development of the themes described in the study results. My entries also reflected a systematic analysis of the processes used to ensure continued validity. Finally, I documented my reflections concerning my personal experience, acknowledging how my perceptions, culture, biases, and experiences informed and influenced the research process (Etherington, 2004).

Summary and Transition

Focus group statements were beneficial in answering the first research question, which was: How does a team's social construction of reality sustain the team's high engagement? The responses to the focus group questions shared by the 19 participants were critical in gathering an in-depth and inclusive understanding of the research question. The specific codes and themes that emerged from the conceptual and theoretical framework, the focus group statements as well as the research questions resulted in a foundation that enabled the construction of the common themes. Examples of the specific codes and themes that emerged included disengagement factors, disengagement moderators, individual accountability, leader accountability, and shared accountability.

The final themes associated with the focus group questions (see Tables 11 - 18) were passive resignation, perceptions of choice, trust in team, and trust in organization. I organized the themes based on social and emotional intelligence categories of self-

awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. I also organized the themes based on social construction of reality concepts of readiness, willingness and ability. There were no discrepant cases within the focus group statements.

Focus group belief statement scores and participant psychological assessment results were beneficial in answering the second research question, which was: What is the relationship between MSCEIT scores, MBTI scores, SDI scores, and work engagement? The belief statement scores and assessment results shared by the 19 participants were critical in gathering an in-depth and inclusive understanding of the research question. Based on the belief statement scores, it seems that the participants demonstrated engagement and, therefore, were uniquely appropriate to provide insight into the contextual and situational factors that develop and sustain work engagement. Spearman's correlation coefficient did not identify a statistically significant association beetween the variables. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Focus group statements, focus group belief statement scores, and participant psychological assessment results were beneficial in answering the third research question, which was: How do personality traits, social and emotional intelligence, and collaboration and conflict resolution skills support a team's social construction of high engagement? The combination of the belief statement scores, focus group statements, and assessment results shared by the 19 participants were critical in gathering a comprehensive understanding of the research question. From the belief statement results and focus group statement results, I was able to provide insight into perceptions of

individual accountability regarding developing and sustaining work engagement within a team and organization. Based on the assessment scores, I was able to provide insight into the specific preferences, branches, and value antecedents that enable individuals, teams, and organizations to be ready, willing, and able to develop and sustain the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement and psychological well-being.

Chapter 4 contained the findings of my research study. Chapter 4 included a description of the study setting, demographic information, data collection processes, data analysis summaries, evidence of trustworthiness, and the study results. In addition, I provided a description of the themes and categories discovered and used during the data analysis process.

Chapter 5 is a presentation of the discussion, conclusions, and recommendations from my study. Chapter 5 also includes a discussion focused on the data interpretation and limitations of the study. Finally, Chapter 5 includes my recommendations for further research and implications.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

How of years of moments experienced individually and within an organizational team environment are interpreted can result in employee and team engagement or disengagement. The purpose of this convergent, parallel case study was to identify contextual factors that support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. The study included 19 public-sector employees within a provincial government ministry.

The key themes associated with the focus group questions (see Tables 11–18) suggested that four contextual and situational factors may affect the antecedents of work engagement and psychological well-being: passive resignation, perceptions of choice, trust in the team, and trust in the organization.

- There was a modest positive correlation between participants' MSCEIT results and engagement scores.
- There was a moderate positive correlation between participants' MBTI Extroversion–Introversion results and engagement scores.
- There was a modest positive correlation between participants' MBTI Thinking–Feeling results and engagement scores.
- There were modest correlations between participants' SDI results and engagement scores.

However, none of the correlations were statistically significant (see Tables 21–32). These results suggested that, as relational constructs, social and emotional intelligence, personality traits, and collaboration and conflict resolution skills may have little influence on work engagement.

Belief statement and focus group statement results provided insight into participants' perceptions of individual accountability for developing and sustaining work engagement within a team and organization (see Tables 33–37). Their focus group statements suggested a strong perception that individuals are accountable being engaged or disengaged. This perception was supported by the belief statement scores that correlated with individual accountability. The majority of participants agreed with the statements that aligned the social construction of reality and engagement with perceptions of individual choice.

Furthermore, statements by participants suggested that leaders and the organization are accountable for team and organizational engagement. This perception was supported by participants' belief statement scores that correlate with team and organizational accountability. Participant agreement with belief survey statements decreased for statements addressing coaching, mentoring, or providing feedback. Comments from participants also reflected the perception that the failure of leaders or the organization to hold individuals accountable for their choice to be engaged or disengaged results in increased disengagement and a sense of helplessness with regards to changing attitudes or behaviors.

The assessment scores provided insight into the specific personality preferences, social and emotional intelligence branches and motivational value system antecedents that supported participant perceptions of the contextual factors that generate work engagement or disengagement (see Tables 38 - 40). Fifteen of the participants MSCEIT scores were consistent with a degree of ability to perceive emotions accurately at times. Fifteen of the participant MSCEIT scores were consistent with an ability to evaluate emotions and determine effective options to achieve desired outcomes. Sixteen of the participants interpret experiences and situations neither overtly negatively or positively. None of the participants had a more than typical negative predisposition regarding interpretation of experiences. Seventeen MBTI scores reflected a balanced preference for an external focus on people relative to an internal focus on ideas and impressions. Seventeen MBTI scores reflected a balanced preference for decisions based on logic relative to a preference for decisions based on person-centric concerns. Fourteen participants' SDI scores reflected a conflict escalation response that balances a concern for the welfare of others with a concern for self-sufficiency and the maintenance of order. These assessment results suggested that the combination of the ability to consider multiple perspectives while attending to emotional signals and non-verbal body language, a predisposition to interpret situations neither overtly positively or negatively, and a value system that encourages a person-centric focus may create a contextual opportunity to be ready, willing, and able to develop the skills necessary to create a socially constructed reality that supports work engagement. Lack of leader and organizational support during

this purposeful construction may then result in perceptions of passive resignation, leading to a cycle of disengagement and further passive resignation.

Interpretation of the Findings

The study findings confirmed the research noted in the literature review. The literature showed the complexity of factors required to develop and sustain attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement and psychological well-being. Fugate et al., (2012) noted that assuming individuals have unwavering traits and ignoring contextual factors may be a significant reason interventions targeted at sustaining attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement fail. The results of this study support this contention. As identified in this study, individuals do not have unwavering traits. The complexity of personality preferences, degree of social and emotional intelligence and variety of motivational value systems should be considered prior to identifying, developing and implementing work engagement interventions. Interventions that fail to recognize how these factors affect the differences in the lived experiences of individuals that result in the social construction of reality within a team will continue to fail in sustaining work engagement.

Hujala and Rissanen (2012) have suggested that social discourse targeted at developing and sustaining a socially constructed reality of work engagement requires an ability to hear and incorporate diverse points of view. Non-verbal support, a lack of dialogue domination, participative decision-making, and constructive feedback and coaching are strategies identified by these researchers (Hujala & Rissanen, 2012). The

ability to engage in these strategies may be dependent on the degree of social and emotional intelligence and types of motivational value systems possessed by the team members (O'Boyle et al., 2011; Petrides, 2010). The Strength Deployment Inventory assessment results of the individuals who participated in this study indicate that motivational value systems that include seeking ways to help others, being curious about what others think and feel, and offering assistance for greater self-sufficiency and independence may affect the social discourse necessary for work engagement interventional success. My analysis of the study results also suggested that conflict escalation motivational value responses that balance a concern for the welfare of others with a concern for self-sufficiency and maintenance of order may also affect the social discourse that results in the team's social construction of reality. The majority of participants also demonstrated social and emotional intelligence scores that reflect an ability to perceive and manage emotions consistently accurately. Further, my analysis of the study results suggested that ability in this branch of social and emotional intelligence may also affect the efficacy of the social discourse necessary for work engagement interventional success (Mahon et al., 2014).

As noted in the literature review, identifying the factors necessary for an individual to be aware of the need to change attitudes and behaviors consistent with disengagement requires an understanding of the communication patterns within an organization (Moufahim et al., 2013) and how these communication patterns construct organizational reality (Grant & Marshak, 2011). Furthermore, identifying the factors

necessary for individual awareness of the need to change requires an understanding of the degree of assertive communication within organizations that supports the discourse necessary to communicate a need for attitudinal and behavior change (Ames & Flynn, 2007; Eggert, 2011; Einarsen et al., 2011; Kreamer, 2011. Finally, understanding the role of influential individuals in change resistance or acceptance may be significant in identifying the factors necessary for individual awareness of the need for change (Elder-Vass, 2011).

Alvesson and Kärreman (2011) suggested that communication reflects expressions of power and knowledge. Within this perspective, ideas result in culture standardization. Discourse shapes ways of talking and understanding of what is normal (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011; Gilpin & Miller, 2013; Grant & Marshak, 2011).

The feelings and experiences shared by the participants indicate that cultural standardization within this provincial government ministry reflects a perception that individuals make a choice to be engaged or disengaged through how they choose to interpret the years of moments experienced. The feelings and experiences shared by the participants also indicated that participants believe that holding individuals accountable for their attitudinal and behavioral choices lies with leaders and the organization. The 2013 provincial government engagement survey results indicate that, within this ministry, 38% of employees feel highly or somewhat engaged at work. The 2013 Engagement Index score decreased to 52% from 62% in 2012. While a variety of factors may have affected these results, a cultural norm that indicates that individuals choose to be engaged

or disengaged conflicts with an expectation that leaders hold others accountable for their degree of engagement. This conflict could be identified as a contextual factor of the lack of work engagement and the declining Engagement Index score results experienced within this provincial ministry.

Changing this social construction of reality and recognizing the corresponding need to change the existing cultural norm may require an ability to engage in non-confrontational dialogue. Non-confrontational dialogue can affect how discourse occurs, what is defined to be normal, and whether individuals develop learning agility (Moufahim et al., 2015). Critical to shaping organizational social reality and psychological well-being is individual stakeholder ability to influence team member perceptions, interpretations and actions (Kärreman, 2014). As noted by Zell (2003) and Gilley et al., (2012), professional organizations, and the individuals who are employed within these organizations, are accustomed to a high degree of collaboration and influence concerning how the team and organization's reality is constructed. Zell (2003) noted that assertive communication coaching and development of social and emotional competencies were necessary to alter entrenched beliefs and values.

The study results support these research findings. Assertiveness is characterized by a person's ability to defend actively for their interests while balancing the needs of others (Eggert, 2011). Study participant extroversion and introversion results and thinking and feeling results reflected scores that neither preference was dominant. Twelve of the 19 participants reflected motivational value systems that included curiosity about

different perspectives and a desire to help others. The majority of participants demonstrated social and emotional intelligence abilities to perceive and manage emotions while interpreting situations and experiences neither overtly positively or negatively. The combination of these results suggested that the majority of participants have a consistent ability to advocate for their perspective through the collaboration and influence skills that incorporate the needs of others. Identification of individuals who demonstrate the specific personality traits, social and emotional intelligence abilities, and motivational value systems revealed by the participants may enable this provincial ministry to develop the discourse skills necessary should this ministry desire to resolve the cultural norm conflict that currently exists (Eggert, 2011).

Experiences shared by the participants also highlighted a perception that formal leaders are perceived to be more influential regarding beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Elder-Vass, 2011). As noted by Elder-Vass (2011), regulating what is said and what is thought requires identification of norm circles. Identifying the norm circle individuals within this ministry who demonstrate the specific personality traits, social and emotional intelligence abilities, and motivational value systems revealed by the participants may assist in developing the skills necessary to resolve the cultural norm conflict that is a contextual factor of the lack of work engagement and the declining Engagement Index score results experienced within this provincial ministry.

An individual's willingness to change disengaged attitudes and behaviors requires an understanding of how individuals and teams construct the mental models that result in

their social construction of reality (Johnson-Laird, 2012; Shuck et al., 2015). Degrees of social and emotional intelligence, specific motivational values, and the effect of bias on the construction of mental models affect individual and team willingness to alter an existing socially constructed reality (Augusto-Landa et al., 2011; Barbuto & Story, 2010; Barczak et al., 2010; Demirtas, 2015; Diefendorff et al., 2011; Druskat et al., 2013; Ellis et al., 2012; Ghosh et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2012; Sheldon et al., 2013).

Based on comments from participants, I saw that a willingness to engage in the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement mental models is predicated on positive organizational experiences within the team and consistent leader support. Feelings and experiences shared by participants further indicated that experiences with disengaged leaders result in mental models that reflect lack of leader and organizational trust and passive resignation. This cause-effect relationship (Demirtas, 2015; Ellis et al., 2012; Strom et al., 2014) can then result in a socially constructed reality of disengagement. A socially constructed reality of disengagement may result in a lack of motivation to hold others accountable for their attitudes and behaviors. This cause-effect relationship may be an antecedent to the cultural norm conflict identified within this study. Creating alternative mental models that increase willingness to engage in attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement requires the co-ordination of individual perspectives and a joint understanding of psycho-social cultural norms (Van den Bossche et al., 2011). This, in turn, requires engaging in discourse that examines how information and experiences are internalized and why (Ellis et al., 2012).

The social construction of a work engagement reality requires a perception of safety and acceptance within a team (Van den Bossche et al., 2011). Perceptions of safety and acceptance require the ability to not misread experiences either overtly positively or negatively (Ellis et al., 2012; Ghosh et al., 2012). The results of the study focused on a positive-negative bias suggested that participants were not predisposed to interpret experiences overly positively or negatively. Study participant MSCEIT results suggested the majority of participants can perceive and manage emotions consistently accurately. The MSCEIT assessment results and the MSCEIT Positive/Negative bias results of the individuals who participated in this study indicate that participants have developed, at least at an individual level, mental models that incorporate accurate interpretation of experiences and effective management of emotions resulting from these experiences.

Altering a team's social construction of reality to create a willingness to reflect attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement requires social and emotional intelligence, collaboration tactics for conflict resolution, and the ability to engage in learning agility strategies (DeChurch & Mesmer-Magnus (2010); Kerr et al., (2006), McEnrue et al., (2010), Yan Jiang et al., 2012; Van den Bossche et al., 2011). Feelings and experiences disclosed by study participants indicated that these competencies specifically require individuals to possess a consistent ability to attend to emotional signals and perceive emotions or non-verbal body language accurately. These competencies also specifically require an ability to balance a focus on other people with ideas and impressions, and the demonstration of motivational value systems that value

being open and responsive to the needs of others. These abilities may enhance the safety and acceptance needed to engage in the team-based learning opportunities that enable the coaching and mentoring necessary to accurately interpret and internalize the experiences that result in a socially constructed reality consistent with work engagement (Chien Farh et al., 2012; Clarke, 2010; Ghosh et al., 2012; Sheldon et al., 2013).

Altering a team's social construction of reality to create a willingness to reflect attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement also requires individuals to engage in the functional conflict resolution experiences that arise as the socially constructed reality is altered (Jordan & Troth, 2004; O'Boyle et al.; 2011). These conflict experiences require the ability to demonstrate genuineness, acceptance, and empathy (Jordan & Troth, 2004; Karimi et al., 2013; O'Boyle et al.; 2011). Results from the study that reflected study participant ability to demonstrate motivational value systems consistent with being open and responsive to the needs of others are consistent with these requirements. Study participant conflict escalation responses that balanced concern for the welfare of others with concern for self-sufficiency are also consistent with these requirements.

Inconsistent with these requirements are observations disclosed by participants that suggested participants perceive that leaders and the organization are primarily responsible for team and organizational engagement. Comments from participants focused on this perspective may be reflective of conflicting cultural norms that have not been explored or challenged within the provincial ministry. As noted by McNulty and

Fincham (2012) and Petrides (2010), individual abilities and traits are affected by the social environment in which individuals operate.

Readiness and willingness to change disengaged attitudes and behaviors also requires individuals and teams to be capable of change (Keating, 2014). Learning agility requires the ability to self-correct through feedback processes (Wolf-Branigin, 2013). Feedback processes require team and leader discourse focused on understanding the role individuals have regarding attitudinal and behavioral choices (De Meuse et al, 2010). Strategies in neuroplasticity can encourage new behavior patterns that promote engagement and psychological well-being (Mahon et al., 2014; Peterson, 2012). These strategies include perception and management of emotions, coaching and feedback (Peterson, 2012). Understanding how individuals observe and imitate attitudes and behaviors provides insight into how individuals and teams sustain engagement (Sigmar et al., 2012). Finally, providing leaders opportunities to engage in discourse that enables individuals to develop self-awareness of the need for change may increase individual and team engagement (Briggs et al., 2014). Leadership development targeted at developing coaching skills may increase individual and team ability to shift disengaged attitudes and behaviors (Briggs et al., 2014).

Feelings and experiences divulged by participants identified leader accountability to provide feedback and coaching to individuals to support their development of self-awareness and the role choice has in disengagement. Furthermore, my analysis of the themes identified in this study supported the role interpersonal social and emotional skills

has on whether discourse is present and effective in shifting disengagement. Themes derived from comments addressing the focus group questions and study participant belief statement scores supported the importance of providing coaching opportunities that sustain individual and team ability to be ready and willing to engage in the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement.

Coaching and feedback skills require a desire to be helpful, the ability use both concrete data and a focus on possibilities, and a predisposition to interpret experiences and situations compassionately and positively (Parker, Wasserman, Kram & Hall, 2015; Rafferty & Fairbrother, 2015). This research is consistent with study participant MBTI assessment scores that reflected a balance between a focus on people and a focus on ideas, and a balance between a focus on data and a focus on possibilities. Furthermore, this research is consistent with study participant MSCEIT assessment scores. The majority of participants demonstrated a clear or very clear ability to perceive and manage emotions consistently accurately. The majority of participants reflected a typical positive-negative bias, which suggested that participants are able to read stimuli and situations accurately. The majority of participants also demonstrated motivational value systems consistent with a desire to be helpful and compassionate towards others.

The ability to be ready and willing to engage in the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement require learning new behavior patterns (Keating, 2014). In order to learn new behavior patterns, validation or adaption of existing mental models within individuals must occur (Davidson & McEwen, 2012). This validation or adaption

often occurs through discourse with others focused on understanding expectations within individuals, teams, and organizations (Peterson, 2012). Adaption also often occurs through discourse focused on how to resolve differences in expectations successfully (Peterson, 2012). My analysis of the themes generated in this study identified the concept of passive resignation as an explanation for employee disengagement. A majority of the comments concerning this theme focused on negative experiences of individuals who have attempted to hold others accountable for their attitudes and behaviors, and how these negative experiences demotivate individuals and teams.

Altering these mental models requires the ability to share personal visions and positive moods to encourage new behavior patterns to promote prosocial behavior and work engagement (Herholz, 2013; Mahon et al., 2014; Peterson, 2012). The findings from the study are consistent with this strategy. As demonstrated by the study participants, engaged individuals balance a focus on other people with a focus on ideas, an ability to perceive and manage emotions, and a motivational value system that values concern for others. Participants also demonstrated a balanced emotional response to stimuli and situations. These abilities may enable participants to utilize adaptation and self-correction feedback strategies to share their personal visions and positive moods. These abilities can then enable the participants to assist others in mitigating perceptions of helplessness that contribute to work disengagement.

Inconsistent with these observations are observations disclosed by participants that suggested leaders and organizations are most accountable for developing and

sustaining the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. My analysis of the study data suggested that participants demonstrated a consistent ability to perceive emotional signals and perceive verbal and non-verbal emotional language accurately. Study results suggested that participants are able to balance a focus on other people and person-centric concerns with logic, ideas and impressions. The Strength Deployment Inventory results from the participants suggested that a majority of participants value being open and responsive to the needs of others. These competencies, independent of a mental model that suggests participants do not believe they are accountable for creating the conditions of engagement for others, may enable mirror neurons to alter the existing socially constructed reality. Observing and imitating the attitudes and behaviors of the participants may enable other individuals to choose different interpretations of experiences and feelings (Sigmar et al., 2012). Different choices may result in adaptive strategies that create mental models that support and encourage the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement (Iacoboni, 2009).

The ability to change existing attitudes and behaviors requires an understanding of the impact that specific attitudes and behaviors have on work engagement. As noted by Ellis et al. (2012), Van den Bossche et al. (2011), and Werhane et al. (2012), teams and organizations socially construct mental models. Sapolsky's (2006) suggested that the determination of expected and accepted behaviors results from purposeful actions of group and sub-group members. Empathic emotional responses and social awareness may

be contextual factors that affect how individuals communicate expected and accepted behaviors (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015).

The findings of the study are consistent with this perspective. Individuals with a strong motivational value system that is open and responsive to others may result in the readiness, willingness and ability to develop the discourse skills required to identify expected attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. Feelings and experiences shared by participants suggested that an individual's ability to accurately interpret attitudes and behaviors as desired and mirror these attitudes and behaviors may result in expanding the identified attitudes and behaviors beyond a specific experience into a broader context. This, in turn, may result in increased neuroplasticity resulting in an increased predisposition to interpret new experiences and situations more positively and may result in discourse focused on identifying additional expected behaviors that could sustain a positive perception (Briggs et al., 2004).

My analysis of the themes identified in this study indicated that trust in leaders and trust in the organization is necessary for individuals to develop and sustain the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. These results are consistent with Briggs et al.'s (2014b) research. Briggs et al. (2014b) identified that leadership development programs affect the psychosocial work context. Developmental activities that target assertive communication and the development of motivational value systems that encourage coaching and feedback processes may enable leaders to engage in the discourse necessary to alter the existing psychosocial work context (Briggs et al., 2014b).

This, in turn, may create the conditions necessary for individuals to be ready, willing, and able to develop and sustain the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement.

Feelings and experiences shared by participants further indicated that perceptions regarding the effectiveness of existing work-culture support affect the degree to which passive resignation occurs within the work environment. Mahon et al.'s (2014) research is consistent with these comments. Mahon et al. (2014) suggested that the ability to articulate the type of support wanted and needed by leaders and employees significantly affects the ability to develop and sustain work engagement. Study participant results demonstrated that competencies focused on social and emotional intelligence, an ability to engage in assertive communication and motivational value systems that encourage curiosity and dialogue result in high work engagement. Leadership development strategies targeted at developing these competencies may alter existing perceptions concerning work-culture support. Altering these perceptions may result in a reduction of the degree of passive resignation experienced within this provincial ministry and illustrated by this ministry's engagement score results.

Limitations of the Study

I executed the study in compliance with the strategies identified. My execution of the strategies identified resulted in the mitigation of five limitations identified in Chapter 1:

1. By ensuring that participants represented a broad spectrum of employment categories, I was able to mitigate the risks to external validity generated from my sampling technique.
2. I was able to recruit my target sample size without the use of incentives. An outcome of voluntary participation is representation of all teams within the target population. As noted in Chapter 1, generalization is not a goal within hermeneutic inquiry. Nonetheless, I was able to recruit participants from five of the six branches that were eligible for participation in this study. This strategy mitigated the limitation concerning ensuring voluntary participation.
3. The third limitation focused on the possibility of perceived undue pressure to participate in my study due to my employment within the ministry participating in this study. I did not recruit from the Human Resources Services Branch, where I am employed. My involvement with individual contributors within the other branches continued to be non-existent during the data gathering period. An extension of this perception of perceived undue pressure to participate stemmed from the Expression of Interest process. Expression of Interest emails to employees by ministry Assistant Deputy Ministers and Executive Directors may have been perceived as a directive to participate within the study; however, this ministry employs over 6,000 permanent, full-time employees. In total, 34 employees expressed interest in participating in the study. The total number of employees interested in the

study represents 0.6% of the total permanent, full-time employees; therefore, it does not appear that employees perceived any undue pressure to participate in this study.

4. Differences in skills, knowledge, and abilities of potential study participants resulted in a potential limitation. While I was able to recruit managers, administrative, and professional staff, there is a possibility of differences in study participant self-awareness and understanding of the social construction of reality. The examination of the focus group statements and the participant assessments by an analyst employed within the ministry and a research Executive Director employed in a different ministry confirmed that each study participant possessed an acceptable level of awareness and an understanding concerning the social construction of reality.
5. The use of focus groups to gather qualitative data resulted in a potential limitation. While focus groups offer a perspective that may not be available through interviews or observations (Palys, 2003), a limitation exists concerning the lack of control regarding what data is discussed. In addition, a limitation exists concerning participant comfort in disclosing perspectives contrary to those expressed by the majority. Through reiteration of the focus group questions during the discussion, I was able to ensure that the participants remained focused on the topic being discussed. The ongoing visual display of participant comments also assisted participants to remain

focused on the question being discussed. I also sent the focus group comment transcription document, via email, to the study participants. Participants were then able to confidentially provide additional comments or revisions to the focus group comments. Participants did not provide any additional comments or revisions.

One limitation continues to be applicable to this study. I did not incorporate any objective measures to verify participant perspectives and experiences. Focus group statements showed the existence of participant bias regarding perceptions of control over attitudes and behaviors at the individual level. Participants did not seem to consider the broad contextual or situational factors that affect disengaged individual ability to choose to change the attitudes and behaviors that have resulted in disengagement.

Recommendations for Further Research

Diversification of Study Population

A recommendation for further research would be reproducing my research study design with a broader study population. My research study included a population within five branches of one ministry within a provincial government. Therefore, similarities in focus group statements may be a result of an organizational culture that is prevalent within the ministry being studied. Expanding the study to other ministries within the provincial government or to other organizational models would provide scholar-practitioners a broader understanding of the effects specific personality, social and emotional intelligence and collaboration and conflict resolution skill levels have on the

ability to hold self and others accountable for the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. Expanding the study to other ministries or organizational models may also provide individuals an opportunity to explore whether a command-and-control hierarchical structure has a moderating effect on work engagement.

Longitudinal Study Focus

An additional recommendation for further research would be conducting a longitudinal study focused on recruitment and development of individuals scoring clear or very clear on the personality, social and emotional intelligence and collaboration and conflict resolution skill levels identified in this study. A longitudinal study would enable a researcher to further study the effect these specific skills have on team and organizational social reality. This type of study would also broaden empirical knowledge concerning social learning within a team environment.

Different Methodological Approach

As noted in this proposal, the intent in this study was to identify the different experiences and perceptions of the team members, and how each unique experience has affected the development of engagement within the team. The intent of this study was also to understand how a team socially constructs their reality (Freeman, 2011). Focus groups were the qualitative instrument used in this research study. Focus groups offer a level of data gathering and perspective that may not be available through interviews or observation (Palys, 2003). A focus group approach is appropriate within qualitative research when the purpose of the research is obtaining several perspectives concerning a

specific topic (Litosseliti, 2003). Benefits of using a focus group approach include the ability to gain insight into study participant shared understandings of a phenomenon as well as insight into how group situations influence individuals (Litosseliti, 2003). Using focus groups within this study enabled a unique opportunity for me to observe this social construction in action. Nonetheless, a final recommendation for further research would be examining how teams socially construct reality through observation. Using observations may provide opportunities to examine, in real organizational situations, how teams use discourse, mirror neurons, neuroplasticity, and social learning to communicate accepted social norms and behaviors.

Implications

Implications for Organizational Impact

Human Resource professionals and organizational leaders should consider incorporating assessments that measure personality type, social and emotional intelligence, and collaboration and conflict resolution styles into their recruiting processes. While assessment results should not be the final determiner of whether an individual is successful for a specific position, understanding candidate readiness, willingness, and ability to hold self and others accountable may enable targeted development of those skills subsequent to the recruitment of the successful candidate (Fugate et al., 2012). Furthermore, purposeful recruitment by human resource professionals and organizational leaders of individuals who display readiness, willingness, and ability to hold self and others accountable for attitudes and behaviors

consistent with work engagement may enable increased discourse, social learning, learning agility, and mirror neurons to shift established mental models and facilitate new ways of constructing social reality.

Implications for Social Change

The identification of antecedents necessary to hold self and others accountable for expected attitudes and behaviors can help transform how individuals and teams within organizations cooperate. As suggested by Sapolsky (2006), purposeful actions can cause social paradigms and determination of what is accepted behavior to shift. Hopkins and Yonker (2015) found a significant relationship between successfully managing conflict and social and emotional intelligence skills that focus on perceiving emotions, managing emotions, and adaptability. Salin (2015) identified constructive problem-solving and the role of the leader in modeling the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement to be factors that significantly reduce the risk of workplace bullying.

The MSCEIT, MBTI and Strength Deployment Inventory results of the participants show that specific personality preferences, social and emotional intelligence abilities, and motivational values may increase individual predisposition to be ready, willing, and able to develop and sustain the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. The ability for individuals to develop and sustain concern for and protection of others requires individuals to reflect values consistent with compassion and empathy (Zimbardo, 2011). The ability for individuals to develop and sustain concern for and protection of others also requires individuals to be effective change agents, translating

beliefs and values into social, political action (Zimbardo, 2011). Understanding individual personality preferences, social and emotional intelligence abilities, and motivational values, and the role these contextual factors have on teams and organizations can result in strategies that will enable individuals to challenge workplace injustice. Ultimately, awareness of these contextual factors, individually targeted development to strengthen these preferences and abilities, and organizational support to encourage and sustain shifting attitudes and behaviors will transform organizational culture (Nielsen & Randall, 2013).

Empirical Theory and Practice

Scholar-practitioners who are currently developing or wish to develop interventions that result in highly engaged teams may find this research valuable. Organizational leaders may find this research offers practical options to recruit and retain employees who demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement and psychological well-being. Examination of the results by scholar-practitioners may provide clarity and the context about why most organizational interventions targeted at developing and sustaining work engagement result in modest sustained attitude and behavioral change (Nielsen et al., 2010).

Developing organizational interventions that assume stable, unwavering traits in individuals, models, and processes ignore contextual and unique factors that may affect team collaboration, level of team discourse, and degree of social and emotional intelligence (Fugate et al., 2012). Incorporating assessments that identify a predisposition

to focus on and be responsive to the needs of others may enable scholar-practitioners to develop interventions more targeted to individual skills and abilities. Targeted interventions may then enable sustained attitudinal and behavioral change at the individual, team, and organizational level, resulting in increased work engagement and psychological well-being.

Conclusion

Organizational interventions targeted at developing and sustaining work engagement have been considered a key strategy in organizations (Shuffler et al., 2011). Despite an investment in excess of $156 billion (U.S.) in 2012 (Miller, 2012), efforts to improve work engagement and psychological well-being have often been unsuccessful in achieving desired results (Nielsen et al., 2010). Interventional models continue to be challenged to understand how and why behavior changes (Best et al., 2013; Nielsen & Randall, 2013).

In identifying specific psychological preferences, social and emotional intelligence abilities, and motivational values, I achieved the purpose of the study. The purpose of this study was to identify contextual factors that support individuals, teams, and leaders to be ready, willing, and able to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. I recruited nineteen individuals employed in a provincial government ministry through a multi-stage random sampling approach. These individuals completed three psychological assessments as well as an engagement survey and participated in focus groups that explored contextual and situational factors of work

engagement. Eighteen of the nineteen participant study engagement scores were higher than the mean ministry, branch, management, administrative and professional results. Participant assessment results suggested that to be ready, willing, and able to engage in the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement, individuals may need to be able to balance a focus on others with a focus on ideas. Individuals may also need to be able to balance the use of data relative to intuition within the decision-making process. This balance in personality preferences may also need to be supported by a demonstrated ability to perceive and manage emotions, as well as a demonstrated ability to empathize with others. Individuals may also need to be motivated by a concern for others. Finally, in conflict or in situations where there is opposition, individuals may need to be able to remain consistent with these personality preferences, social and emotional intelligence abilities, and motivational values. Study results did not indicate a correlational association between social and emotional intelligence, personality preferences, communication and conflict resolution styles, and work engagement.

Comments from participants showed that participants clearly perceive they are accountable for their work engagement, but not for the choices others make concerning attitudes and behaviors. Through this analysis, I identified a paradox between individual high engagement and perceptions concerning individual choice to engage in attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement. Highly engaged individuals may not result in highly engaged teams or organizations. This lack of engagement may be due to individual perceptions regarding a lack of accountability to hold others accountable for

their attitudes and behaviors. Individuals must first be ready, willing, and able to hold themselves accountable for their attitudinal and behavioral choices. Developing the readiness, willingness, and ability requires awareness that existing attitudes and behaviors are unacceptable in an organization striving for high engagement. This awareness rarely occurs without the support and feedback of peers and leaders. Therefore, to sustain work engagement, individuals must not only hold themselves accountable for their attitudes and behaviors, but assist others to develop the self-efficacy necessary to be ready to change (Keating et al., 2014).

This paradox enabled me to examine the interrelated effect personality, social and emotional intelligence and motivational values have on individual ability to hold self and others accountable for work engagement. The feelings and experiences articulated by the participants as well as the MSCEIT, MBTI and SDI results of the participants indicated that to be ready, willing, and able to engage in the attitudes and behaviors consistent with work engagement, five specific situational and contextual factors need to be present. First, individuals may need to be able to balance a focus on others with a focus on ideas. Individuals may also need to be able to balance the use of data relative to intuition within the decision-making process. Second, this balance in personality preferences may also need to be supported by a demonstrated ability to perceive and manage emotions, as well as a demonstrated ability to empathize with others. Third, individuals may also need to be motivated by a concern for others. Fourth, in conflict or in situations where there is opposition, individuals may need to be able to remain consistent with these personality

preferences, social and emotional intelligence abilities, and motivational values. Finally, when individuals who demonstrate these contextual factors attempt to shift disengaged attitudes and behaviors within the team or organization, leaders and peers must provide support and encouragement for these efforts.

Figure 1 depicts these factors as a model, which I have labeled Work Engagement Capacity. This model shows the interconnectedness of the five situational and contextual factors that need to be present for individuals to be ready, willing, and able to hold not only themselves, but others, accountable for developing and sustaining the attitudes and behaviors of work engagement. As I have noted previously, an expectation that individuals hold themselves accountable for choosing engagement assumes that each has the self-efficacy and self-awareness necessary to realize that their current attitudes and behaviors may be a key factor in their disengagement (Sheldonet al., (2013).

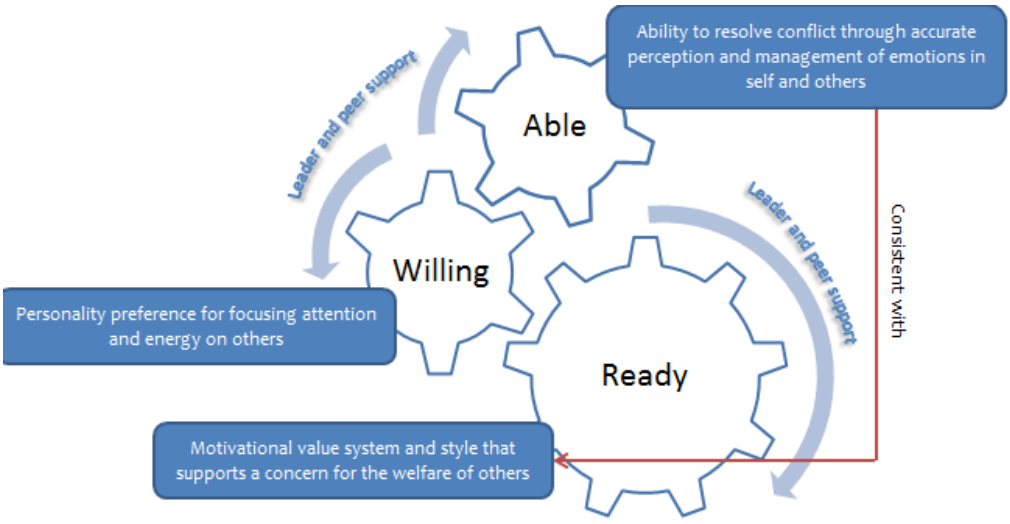

Figure 1. Work engagement capacity

Should any or all of these situational or contextual factors be absent, there is a risk that individual efforts to hold others accountable for attitudes and behaviors consistent with disengagement will be unsuccessful. Unsuccessful attempts will ultimately result in these individuals concluding that the other individual(s) or leader(s) have made a conscious choice to be disengaged. This conclusion will result in these individuals experiencing passive resignation, resulting in a socially constructed reality of disengagement. This socially constructed reality will further encourage passive resignation, resulting in a spiral of further passive resignation and disengagement.

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Appendix A: Reflective Data Process and Analysis

Consistent with hermeneutic and phenomenological principles (Freeman, 2011), this appendix outlines my interpretation of the data gathering and analysis experience. In addition, this appendix describes my perceptions of the team dynamic experienced during the study time-period. This reflective process is described using the Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of describing, experiencing and analyzing qualitative data. This method has been modified for a case study approach.

Horizonalization. Documenting my reflections of my own experiences of work engagement initiated this process. In remembering the various organizations that employed me, I came to realize that I experienced engagement at different times within these organizations, and for different reasons. I identified that my own work engagement required a strong leadership presence as well as team members who encouraged and supported differing opinions. I realized that disengagement occurred rapidly within a command-and-control culture. I horizonalized my own observations and descriptions to begin identifying words and/or phrases that might result in the focus group *a priori* codes. Completion of the first focus group resulted in further horizonalization. Observations and descriptions from my documentation were compared to the focus group results. The observations and descriptions then resulted in the initial *a priori* codes input into NVivo.

I reviewed the initial group's focus group comments repeatedly to ensure that significant statements were identified and aligned with the initial codes. In completing

this process, I realized a major perspective within this group was the concept of individual accountability. Participants identified engagement as “volunteering”, “stepping up”, and “seeing the personal accountability at the employee level”. My realization during this process was my bias that expected that the “chain-of-command” structure within the study ministry would result in an abdication of individual accountability.

Subsequent focus group comments were then reviewed and compared to the first focus group results as well as my observations and descriptions. A consistent theme in all focus groups was the concept of personal choice in being engaged. Similar to the initial focus group, participants in the subsequent focus groups articulated that a key component of engagement was a consistent desire to help others succeed. The effect of the absence of trust, both at the team and organizational level, was articulated by all focus group participants. While the study participants did not articulate personal experience of this phenomenon, comments from each focus group did identify the presence of individuals within the ministry who had reached such a level of frustration and disengagement that passive resignation became the behavioral norm.

Textural Description. A final review of the focus group comments resulted in a textural description of how the study participants experience engagement within the study ministry. The final themes created a clear image of factors that sustain personal, team and organizational engagement. The composite description reflected the significant self-awareness and self-knowledge of the study participant’s experience of engagement.

The belief survey results and the assessments complemented this textural description from the focus group comments. In reviewing the survey and assessment results, I became aware of my bias concerning expected attitudinal and behavioral characteristics of an engaged employee. Most of the study participant assessment results illustrated slight extrovert/introvert and sensing/intuition predispositions. These results surprised me as I had expected that engaged employees would be clear extroverts. I also expected that engaged employees would display a tendency to rely on intuition rather than concrete data. I was not surprised by the MSCEIT results as the attitudes and behaviors demonstrated by the participants during the focus group experience indicated that the participants possessed self-awareness and the ability to perceive and manage emotions. I also was not surprised by the SDI results, given the demonstrated desire of the study participants to assist others to succeed.

Structural Description. A structural description for each participant was created using the belief statement scores and assessment scores. This description illustrated the personal contextual factors of the individual engagement experience. Creating a structural description of the participant experience requires the researcher to be reflective and cognizant of possibility. Combining the belief statement scores and the assessment scores resulted in enhancing the textural description of the engagement experience.

Textural-Structural Description. Combining the qualitative and quantitative data resulted in an integrated description of the participant experience. Completing this portion of the inquiry process illuminated the rigidity of my cognitive perception of an

engaged employee. I struggled to align the participant MBTI results with my preconceived ideas of engagement. My struggles in completing the structural description highlighted the discord between the study results and my interpretation. This caused me to revisit the participant focus group comments and themes, as well as the belief survey results and the assessment results. Personal reflection and discourse with peers enabled me to realize that my bias was constraining what I believed to be possible. Once this was recognized, I was able to restructure my analysis to resolve the dissonance that I experienced.

Composite Textural-Structural Description. This final step enabled me to create a composite description of situational and contextual factors that sustain employee engagement. Resolving the dissonance between my expectations and the participant results created a generalized description that supported participant observations as well as concepts identified in the literature review. The final situational and contextual factors identified in this study were the product of my efforts at interpreting the data, conceptualizing the engagement experience from multiple perspectives and confirming the research concepts with the data. The experience was transformational for me in that it enabled me to surface and recognize my own bias and expectations regarding engagement. It was also transformational for me in that I had the honor of exploring this experience with highly engaged and supportive study participants.

Appendix B: Expression of Interest E-mail to Leadership

Doctoral Research Study

My name is Kris Ellis and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. My field of focus is in Management with a specialty in Leadership and Organizational Change. This research has been approved by Walden University's Institutional Review Board. The research is supervised by Dr. Lilburn P. Hoehn, who has a broad background in leadership, management, organizational change and organizational culture.

We would like to invite your teams to participate in this research study. The remainder of this email will provide information so that you can make an informed decision concerning participation.

What is the research about?
I am doing a research study to identify whether a specific combination of factors needs to be present for individuals, teams, and leaders to demonstrate and sustain high work engagement and psychological well-being. Despite the past four decades of strategies targeted at increasing engagement and psychological well-being, little research exists that examines which specific contextual or situational factors inhibit/support motivation to engage in sustained behavioral change.

What does participation in this research study involve?
Participation in this study will be limited to 20 individuals employed within this provincial ministry. Should any members of your team be included in the final selection, participation would involve participating in a focus group that will explore their unique feelings and experiences of being in a team. The focus group would also explore why and how these individuals feel engaged or disengaged. Participation would also involve members of your team(s) completing three assessments: Myers-Briggs (MBTI), The Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI) and Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). All assessment results will be kept confidential.

The SDI is an assessment that asks you to rank 28 behaviors based on how important they are to you. Completing this assessment should take you about 20 minutes. The MSCEIT is an assessment that asks you to identify what emotions are being expressed based on photographs and scenarios. Completing this assessment should take you about 30 – 45 minutes. MBTI is an assessment that measures how you make decisions and how you prefer to interact and experience the world. Completing this assessment should take you about 20 minutes.

A separate email will be sent to each of your team members (please see attached) outlining the research focus. Each team member will also have the opportunity to decline to participate.

Guarantee of confidentiality
All information obtained in this study is completely confidential unless disclosure is required by law. None of the individual survey results will be made available to participating organizational leaders or the organization as a whole. The results of the study may be used, at an aggregate level, in reports, presentations and publications. Individual participants will not be identified.

Confirmation of participation
By replying to this email using the phrase "(your name here) agrees that Kris Ellis may contact my team members to see if they are interested in participating in this research", you are agreeing that you have read this information. You are also saying that you understand the intent of this research and that you know what you are being asked to do. Please print a copy of this consent information for your records. By responding to this email with this phrase included, you are giving consent for me to contact your team members to identify those interesting in participating in this research.

Please respond no later than (date here).

I am happy to respond to any questions or concerns you have about the research. I can be reached at 587.521.8103 or at kris.ellis@waldenu.edu.

Appendix C: Expression of Interest E-mail to Potential Participants

Doctoral Research Study

My name is Kris Ellis and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. My field of focus is in Management with a specialty in Leadership and Organizational Change. This research has been approved by Walden University's Internal Review Board. The research is supervised by Dr. Lilburn P. Hoehn, who has a broad background in leadership, management, organizational change and organizational culture.

Your (ADM/ED name here) has given us permission to invite you to participate in this research study. The remainder of this email will provide information so that you can make an informed decision concerning participation.

What is the research about?
I am doing a research study to identify whether a specific combination of factors needs to be present for individuals, teams, and leaders to demonstrate and sustain high work engagement and psychological well-being. Despite the past four decades of strategies targeted at increasing engagement and psychological well-being, little research exists that examines which specific contextual or situational factors inhibit/support motivation to engage in sustained behavioral change.

What does participation in this research study involve?
Participation in this study will be limited to 20 individuals employed within this minisstry. Should you be selected as a final participant, participation would involve you participating in a focus group that would explore your unique feelings and experiences of being in a team. Each focus group will be made up of a mixture of ministry employees. The focus group would also explore why and how you feel engaged or disengaged as an employee of this ministry and/or this provincial government. Participation would also involve completing three assessments: Myers-Briggs (MBTI), The Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI) and Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). All assessment results will be kept confidential.

The SDI is an assessment that asks you to rank 28 behaviors based on how important they are to you. Completing this assessment should take you about 20 minutes. The MSCEIT is an assessment that asks you to identify what emotions are being expressed based on photographs and scenarios. Completing this assessment should take you about 30 – 45 minutes. MBTI is an assessment that measures how you make decisions and how you prefer to interact and experience the world. Completing this assessment should take you about 20 minutes. You are not required to participate in this study. Should you initially agree to participate, you also have the opportunity to withdraw at any time through the study.

You are not required to participate in this study. Should you initially agree to participate, you also have the opportunity to withdraw at any time through the study.

Guarantee of confidentiality
All information obtained in this study is completely confidential unless disclosure is required by law. None of the individual survey results will be made available to participating organizational leaders or the organization as a whole. The results of the study may be used, at an aggregate level, in reports, presentations and publications. Individual participants will not be identified.

Confirmation of participation
By replying to this email using the phrase "(your name here) am interested in participating in this research", you are agreeing that you have read this information. You are also saying that you understand the intent of this research and that you know what you are being asked to do. Please print a copy of this consent information for your records. By responding to this email with this phrase included, you are giving consent for me to contact you should you be one of the twenty individuals selected to participate.

Please respond no later than (date here).

I am happy to respond to any questions or concerns you have about the research. I can be reached at 587.521.8103 or at kris.ellis@waldenu.edu.

Appendix D: Consent form

You are invited to take part in a research study that explores the antecedents that are necessary for sustained attitude and behavioral change and how social relationships within teams support/hinder these antecedents. The researcher is inviting all team members within this ministry to participate. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Kris Ellis, who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You already know the researcher as an Organizational Development & Effectiveness Consultant, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to explore social and emotional intelligence, personality traits and interpersonal and conflict styles affect work engagement. An additional purpose of this study is to explore individual perceptions and perspectives within a highly engaged team concerning how and why engagement is present. A final purpose is to explore how a highly engaged team sustains that engagement through the team's social relationship.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- participate in a focus group lasting no more than 1 hour
    - Review and approve the focus group transcript
    - Participate in a ½ hour meeting to clarify any focus group comments or transcript changes (if necessary)
        - Please note: the audio from the focus group discussion may be recorded using Evernote software. Evernote software is software designed to collect information through a phone, tablet, or computer. To learn more about this technology, please visit the Evernote website: https://evernote.com/corp/
- Complete a Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI) and provide the researcher with the results. Completion of the SDI generally requires 20 minutes.
- Complete a Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment and provide the researcher with the results. Completion of the MBTI generally requires 20 minutes.

- Complete a Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) assessment. Completion of the MSCEIT generally requires 30-45 minutes.

- Participate in a debrief of your assessment results (if desired)

Here are some sample focus group statements:

1. I am comfortable making suggestions to my team about how to improve the work of my unit/team
2. My Manager acts in my best interests
3. My team inspires the best performance in me.

Each focus group will be made up of a mixture of employees. During the focus group, you will individually sort a total of 14 statements based on whether you agree/disagree with the statements. Then, as a group, we will discuss the following questions:

1. How did you feel while you were sorting these statements?
2. What do you think are the factors that result in disagreement with these statements?
3. What do you think happens in a team when people disagree about these statements?

You will also be able to use post-it notes to provide additional feedback and observations concerning the discussion and focus group statements.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one in your team will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as stress or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or well-being .

Potential benefits include providing key perspectives that will help identify which factors support sustained behavioral change in organizations. Understanding these factors can aid in increased employee engagement, increased employee retention and decreases in bullying experiences.

Payment:
There will be no financial remuneration for participating in this study. You will receive a personal Thank You card and a letter of acknowledgement will be provided for your personnel file.

Privacy:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by using encrypted drives, with the password known only to the researcher. The data will also be stored on an external drive located at the researcher's domicile. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via email at kris.ellis@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 001-612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is 12-22-14-0079699 and it expires on December 22, 2015.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep. (for face-to-face research)

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below or by replying to this email with the words, "I consent" , I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant _____

Date of consent _____

Participant's Signature _____

Researcher's Signature _____

Appendix E: Data Use Agreement

DATA USE AGREEMENT

psp

2647 Gateway Road
Suite 105360
Carlsbad, CA 92009
personalstrengths.com

DATA USE AGREEMENT

This Data Use Agreement ("Agreement"), effective as of November 4, 2014, is entered into by and between Kris Ellis and Personal Strengths Publishing Incorporated. The purpose of this Agreement is to provide Kris Ellis with access to a Limited Data Set ("LDS") for use in research in accord with the HIPAA Regulations.

Definitions. Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement, all capitalized terms used in this Agreement not otherwise defined have the meaning established for purposes of the "HIPAA Regulations" codified at Title 45 parts 160 through 164 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, as amended from time to time.

Preparation of the LDS. Personal Strengths Publishing Inc. shall prepare and furnish to Kris Ellis a LDS in accord with any applicable HIPAA Regulations

Data Fields in the LDS. Study participant names will be included in the LDS for the sole purpose of alignment within the mixed-method research identified. Kris Ellis agrees to substitute study participants names with a unique identifier for analysis purposes. In preparing the LDS, Personal Strengths Publishing Inc. shall include the **reports specified as follows**, which are the minimum necessary to accomplish the research:

The test results for the SDI assessment for the study participants identified within this research study

Responsibilities of Kris Ellis. Kris Ellis agrees to:

Use or disclose the LDS only as permitted by this Agreement or as required by law;

Use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the LDS other than as permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

Report to Personal Strengths Publishing Inc. any use or disclosure of the LDS of which it becomes aware that is not permitted by this Agreement or required by law;

Require any of its subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to the LDS to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the LDS that apply to Kris Ellis under this Agreement.

Permitted Uses and Disclosures of the LDS. Kris Ellis may use and/or disclose the LDS for dissertation research activities only.

Term and Termination.

Term. The term of this Agreement shall commence as of the Effective Date and shall continue for so long as Kris Ellis retains the LDS, unless sooner terminated as set forth in this Agreement.

Termination by Data Recipient. Kris Ellis may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying Personal Strengths Publishing Inc. and returning or destroying the LDS.

Termination by Data Provider. Personal Strengths Publishing Inc. may terminate this agreement at any time by providing thirty (30) days prior written notice to Kris Ellis.

For Breach. Personal Strengths Publishing Inc. shall provide written notice to Kris Ellis within ten (10) days of any determination that Kris Ellis has breached a material term of this Agreement. Personal Strengths Publishing Inc. shall afford Kris Ellis an opportunity to cure said alleged material breach upon mutually agreeable terms. Failure to agree on mutually agreeable terms for cure within thirty (30) days shall be grounds for the immediate termination of this Agreement by Personal Strengths Publishing Inc.

Effect of Termination. Sections 1, 4, 5, 6(e) and 7 of this Agreement shall survive any termination of this Agreement under subsections c or d.

Miscellaneous.

Change in Law. The parties agree to negotiate in good faith to amend this Agreement to comport with changes in federal law that materially alter either or both parties' obligations under this Agreement. Provided however, that if the parties are unable to agree to mutually acceptable amendment(s) by the compliance date of the change in applicable law or regulations, either Party may terminate this Agreement as provided in section 6.

Construction of Terms. The terms of this Agreement shall be construed to give effect to applicable federal interpretative guidance regarding the HIPAA Regulations.

No Third Party Beneficiaries. Nothing in this Agreement shall confer upon any person other than the parties and their respective successors or assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations, or liabilities whatsoever.

Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

Headings. The headings and other captions in this Agreement are for convenience and reference only and shall not be used in interpreting, construing or enforcing any of the provisions of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and on its behalf.

DATA PROVIDER

Signed: _____

Print Name: Timothy Scudder, PhD

Print Title: Principal

DATA RECIPIENT

Signed: _____

Print Name: Kris Ellis

Print Title: PhD Student, Walden University

Appendix F: Confidentiality Agreement

Name of Signer: Kris Ellis, PhD Student

During the course of my activity in collecting data for this research: "Organizational Cultural Design Factors Leading to Positive Behavior Changes among Employees" I will have access to information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
2. I will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter, or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
3. I will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation.
4. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant's name is not used.
5. I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification, or purging of confidential information.
6. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that I will perform.
7. I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications.
8. I will only access or use systems or devices I'm officially authorized to access and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

Signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

Signature: Date:

Appendix G: Study Participant Belief Statements

Study participants were asked to score the following statements based on a four-point Likert Scale (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree). The scores were used within the qualitative data gathering process to measure participant degree of willingness.

1. I am comfortable making suggestions to my team about how to improve the work of my unit/team.
2. My manager acts in my best interests.
3. My team inspires the best performance in me.
4. My team has provided coaching/mentoring for me focused on developing social and emotional intelligence.
5. I understand the impact my attitude/behavior has on the team.
6. I trust the information I receive from my director.
7. I trust the information I receive from my team members.
8. I look forward to coming to work.
9. My team helps me use my past experience & knowledge to resolve new situations.
10. My team resolves work conflicts with mutual respect.
11. I am comfortable going to members of my team concerning interpersonal conflict within the team.
12. My team members are comfortable coming to me concerning interpersonal conflict within the team.

13. The culture in this team supports speaking up, holding each other accountable and asking for help.
14. My team members are accountable for their attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion.
15. I am accountable for my attitudes and behaviors and the impact these attitudes and behaviors have on our team cohesion.
16. I take ownership when I do something wrong.
17. My team members take ownership when they do something wrong.
18. I trust the information I receive from my Director.
19. My team members provide feedback concerning my attitudes and behaviors that help me be a better team member.
20. I am comfortable providing feedback to my team members concerning their attitudes and behaviors that help them be a better team member.

Study participants were also asked to score these belief statements on an additional four-point Likert Scale (Extremely Important, Important, Moderately Important, Not Important). The scores were used within the qualitative data gathering process to measure participant degree of readiness.

Appendix H: Focus Group Questions

The following four questions were discussed by study participants during the focus group sessions:

1. What emotions did the belief statement evoke in you?
2. What do you think causes people to disagree with these belief statements?
3. What do you think happens in a team when people disagree about these statements?
4. Who do you think is mainly accountable for the attitudes and behaviors in your team?