CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in the study aimed at developing a framework to enhance the effectiveness of Transformational Leadership in fostering employee retention within the Manufacturing Industry of Zimbabwe, with a particular focus on the Bakery Sector in the Harare Metropolitan Area. Saunders *et al.* (2018) define research methodology as "a systematic and theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge." The chapter discusses the research philosophy, approach, design, strategies, data collection methods, population and sampling techniques, questionnaire administration, data analysis methods, validity and reliability, ethical considerations, and concludes with a summary.

The primary aim of this research is to develop a framework to improve the effectiveness of Transformational Leadership as a catalyst for employee retention in the Bakery Sector of the Manufacturing Industry in Harare, Zimbabwe. The main study objective is to explore the relationship between Transformational Leadership and employee retention and to identify factors that enhance this relationship. The major research question guiding this study is: *How can Transformational Leadership be optimised to improve employee retention in the Bakery Sector of the Manufacturing Industry in Harare, Zimbabwe?* The hypotheses to be tested include:

- H_0: Transformational leadership has no relationship with employee retention in Zimbabwean Bakery Industry.
- H_1: Transformational leadership is positively related to employee retention in Zimbabwean Bakery Industry.

The study is grounded in a positivist research philosophy, premised on the assertion that social phenomena can be observed objectively and analysed through empirical, systematic measurement. Positivism privileges quantification, replicability, and hypothesis testing, offering a framework through which causal relationships between leadership behaviours and retention outcomes can be rigorously examined (Bryman, 2016). This orientation accords with the objective nature of the research problem and the need for reliable empirical evidence in the Zimbabwean manufacturing context. Positivism further enhances reliability by enabling replication of results and ensuring that findings may be generalised to a wider population (Kumar, 2019). Its emphasis on quantification also aligns with the present study's focus on measuring specific attributes of Transformational Leadership and their statistical relationship to retention outcomes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

A deductive research approach was employed, in which existing theoretical propositions—most notably Transformational Leadership Theory—were operationalised and tested within the empirical context of the Bakery Sector in Harare. Deduction begins with theoretical postulates and proceeds towards hypothesis testing, offering a systematic process of verification (Bryman, 2016). By deploying this approach, the study assessed whether constructs such as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration demonstrably influence employee retention. Deductive reasoning was thus appropriate, as it provides both rigour and generalisability by grounding empirical results in established theoretical constructs (Kumar, 2019).

An explanatory research design was adopted to establish causal linkages between Transformational Leadership behaviours and employee retention outcomes. This design moves beyond mere description, seeking to clarify mechanisms and pathways through

which leadership practices exert influence. By investigating causal dynamics, explanatory research produces insights of both theoretical and applied significance, thereby allowing the proposed framework to be both contextually grounded and practically implementable within Zimbabwe's bakery industry.

The study employed a quantitative strategy, given its exclusive reliance on numerical measurement and statistical analysis. Structured questionnaires served as the primary instrument for data collection, enabling precise quantification of leadership behaviours and retention-related constructs. Quantitative analysis subsequently employed inferential techniques to detect significant associations and patterns within the data. Such strategies provide the statistical robustness necessary for hypothesis testing, while also allowing for generalisation across the manufacturing sector in Harare.

Both secondary and primary data sources informed the investigation. Secondary data were drawn from scholarly literature, industry reports, and organisational records, providing theoretical grounding, contextual understanding, and a basis for instrument design. This stage offered a synthesis of existing evidence on leadership, retention, and Zimbabwe's bakery industry, ensuring that the study's conceptual foundations were both comprehensive and contextually appropriate.

Primary data collection was undertaken through a structured survey administered to employees in the Bakery Sector. The survey instrument was designed to capture perceptions of Transformational Leadership practices, employee retention factors, and demographic variables. Established scales were adapted from prior research to ensure validity, with items addressing leadership behaviours (e.g., inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration), alongside constructs related to retention, including job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and perceived career

opportunities. Demographic items captured key characteristics such as age, gender, educational attainment, and years of industry experience. Prior to deployment, the questionnaire underwent pilot testing with a small cohort of bakery-sector employees. This stage allowed for refinement of wording, sequencing, and conceptual clarity, ensuring that items were both comprehensible and contextually relevant. Feedback from the pilot informed iterative revisions, thereby improving instrument reliability and construct validity. The finalised questionnaire was thus optimised for full-scale implementation.

The population of interest encompassed employees and managers engaged in Zimbabwe's bakery industry within the broader manufacturing sector. As Sekaran and Bougie (2013) assert, the population comprises the full set of entities, events, or individuals relevant to a researcher's inquiry. In this study, the target population included manufacturing organisations in Harare's bakery subsector, from which the sample was drawn for empirical analysis.

Table 3.1: Population of the study (Primary data, 2023)

Respondents	**Organisation**	**Population**	**Sample size**
Employees	Bakers Inn	304	94
	Lobels Bread	280	86
	Proton Bread	216	66
Managers / supervisors	Bakers Inn	38	12
	Lobels Bread	35	11
	Proton Bread	27	8
Total		900	277

The study was confirmed to the bakery industry alone. The main bakery firms in Zimbabwe are bakers Inn bread, Labels bread and Proton bread.

The determination of the sample size for this study is a critical step to ensure that the findings are statistically valid and reliable. The specific sample size was calculated based on statistical considerations, such as

the desired level of confidence, margin of error, and the estimated effect size. A sample size calculator was used to determine the appropriate sample size for the study, ensuring sufficient statistical power to make meaningful conclusions. Slovin's formula that was formulated in 1960 was used to determine the sample size (Tejeda & Punzalan, 2012)

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne}$$

Where n = sample size, N = total number of bakery industry employees and managers at Bakers Inn, Lobels Bread and Proton Bakery was 900 (the sampling frame), and e = margin of error. N = 900 and a margin of error of 5%, (e) = 0.05. That is, the researcher's confidence level is 95%.

$$n = \frac{900}{1+ 900\ (0.05)^2}$$

$$= 276.9$$

The above means that the minimum sample size of 277 was appropriate.

Factors that influence the sample size determination include the heterogeneity within the population, the expected response rate, and the available resources for data collection. The aim was to obtain a sample size that is representative of the population and sufficiently large to make meaningful inferences about the relationships between transformational leadership and employee retention in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe. It also allowed for subgroup analyses to explore variations among different segments of the sector.

A stratified random sampling method was employed to select participants from various manufacturing organisations. Stratified sampling was chosen to ensure that the sample represented the

diversity within the manufacturing sector. The manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe is multifaceted, comprising various industries and organisations of different sizes. To capture this diversity, the sector was divided into meaningful strata, such as industry type (e.g., food processing), organisation size (e.g., small-scale, medium-scale, large-scale), and geographic location.

Within each stratum, a random sample of employees and managers was selected. This approach ensured that participants were drawn from different segments of the manufacturing sector, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of transformational leadership on employee retention. Stratified sampling improved the generalisability of the study's findings to the broader population, as it took into account the variation present within the sector.

To gather quantitative data on the topic, questionnaires were employed as a primary data collection tool. Questionnaires were distributed electronically to the selected participants. This method offered convenience, allowing respondents to complete the surveys at their own pace and preferred location. Electronic distribution not only reduced the geographical constraints associated with paper-based questionnaires but also ensured data accuracy and efficiency in data entry and analysis. A specified time frame was established for the completion of the questionnaires. Participants were given a reasonable deadline within which to submit their responses. This helped ensure that data collection proceeded according to the research schedule.

The researcher collected quantitative data through surveys to measure variables related to transformational leadership and employee retention. The analysis of this data involved the following steps:

- *Data Cleaning:* Ensured that the quantitative data were accurate and free from errors or outliers. This step was essential to maintain data integrity.

- *Descriptive Statistics:* The study began by generating descriptive statistics such as mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and variance to get an overview of the data. These statistics provided insights into the central tendencies and variability of the data.
- *Inferential Statistics:* To examine the relationships between variables, the study employed statistical techniques such as regression analysis. This analysis helped determine if there was a significant correlation between transformational leadership behaviours and employee retention in the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe. The study used hypothesis testing to determine the statistical significance of the findings, helping the researcher understand whether the relationships observed in the data were likely due to chance or were genuine correlations.

Validity and reliability of the research instruments were assessed through content validity, construct validity, and test-retest reliability measures. Content validity was ensured by expert review to confirm that the questionnaire items adequately covered the intended constructs of Transformational Leadership and employee retention. Construct validity was assessed through statistical techniques, such as factor analysis, to confirm the underlying structure of the measurement scales. Test-retest reliability was evaluated by administering the questionnaire to a subset of participants on two separate occasions and comparing responses for consistency over time. These measures ensured that the research instruments accurately measured the intended concepts and yielded consistent results, enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the study's findings.

Throughout the process of data collection, careful attention was paid to the ethical obligations owed to participants. Respondents were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any

stage, without consequence, and of the voluntary nature of their involvement. They were also advised that they retained the liberty to decline to answer any item on the questionnaire that they considered intrusive or uncomfortable. In safeguarding the principle of non-maleficence, the study took deliberate steps to ensure that participants were not subjected to physical, psychological, or emotional harm. Anonymity and confidentiality were prioritised through the systematic separation of identifying information from the research data, thereby ensuring that responses could not be traced back to individual participants. Privacy was safeguarded by guaranteeing that personal identities would not be disclosed in any dissemination of findings. These protocols reflect a commitment to ethical research practice, grounded in the recognition of participants as autonomous agents deserving of respect, dignity, and protection.

The chapter has detailed the methodological architecture of the study, encompassing the philosophical orientation, research approach, design, strategies, data collection techniques, population and sampling parameters, questionnaire construction and administration, procedures for data analysis, measures to establish validity and reliability, and the ethical safeguards embedded throughout the research process. By employing a rigorously quantitative design, the study was able to interrogate systematically the relationship between Transformational Leadership and employee retention within the Zimbabwean manufacturing sector. These methodological choices underpin the robustness and credibility of the findings and provide a defensible basis for the subsequent empirical analysis presented in the next chapter.