

**AN INVESTIGATION OF HOW NEWLY APPOINTED TEAM LEADERS IN
AN AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURING ORGANISATION EXPERIENCE
THE ROLE TRANSITION FROM SPECIALISTS TO TEAM LEADERS.**

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By

PATRICK SBUSISO MZELEMU

(G18M9756)

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ii DECLARATION

I, **Patrick Sbusiso Mzelemu**, hereby declare that the effort contained in this dissertation is my original work and that it has not in its entirety or part been submitted to any university for a degree qualification.

iii ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate and understand how specialists who are newly appointed team leaders in an automotive manufacturing organisation experience the transition from specialists to team leaders. The role of leading others in an organisation is linked to human resource leadership. The human resource is highlighted as a valuable resource as it is the only thinking resource in an organisation. It also influences cost and quality and it is central to the organisation's competitive advantage. Consequently, any interruptions or lack of effective management of the human resource will result in a loss of value that the human resource brings into the organisation since they maximise the use of all other resources.

The role transitioning process takes place in three phases. These are the separation, transitioning and incorporation phases. In the separation phase, the transitioning individuals have difficulty detaching from their previous role; the individuals still having the urge to do the work for their subordinates instead of delegating illustrate this. In the transition phase, the individuals in the study experienced the anxiety of wanting to make the new role a success whilst experiencing a sense of lack of belonging due to not being in the familiar old role and not entrenched in the new role. In the incorporation phase, the transitioning individuals experience a sense of stability where they are comfortable acting in the new role.

Problem: This study aims to answer the question of how newly appointed team leaders in an automotive manufacturing organisation experience role transition from specialists to team leaders

Method: The study will be employing the qualitative thematic deductive method. The target population consists of team leaders who have transitioned into the team leader position in the past two years in different departments. The data was collected by way of face-to-face semi-structured interviews with a sample size of seven participants. Data analysis was conducted with a method that is consistent with thematic analysis.

Key Findings: Individuals transitioning have urgencies to perform their previous roles in the early phase; during the transition phase, they have anxiety because they are not yet successful in the new role, and in the final phase, they have become comfortable with their new roles and their new identities.

Implications: The study's outcome is to identify insights and resultant recommendations for non-leading specialists transitioning into roles where they have to lead others. The study will add to the research in the field of leadership behaviour and organisational behaviour.

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v TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

ii DECLARATION	2
iii ABSTRACT	2
iv ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
v TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
1 CHAPTER: INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1 Introduction and Research context	7
1.2 Problem Statement	7
1.3 Research objectives.....	7
1.4 Research questions.....	8
1.5 Justification of the study	8
1.6 Research contribution	9
1.7 Methodology.....	9
1.8 Theses structure	10
2 CHAPTER: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Research Aim.....	11
2.3 Background Introduction	11
2.4 Macro Role Transitions	15
2.5 Phase One Separation	17
The Separation Process:.....	17
Phase one: Mechanisms and practical examples for individuals navigating this phase:.....	18
2.6 Phase Two Transition	19
The Transition Process :	19
Phase two: Mechanisms and practical examples for individuals navigating this phase:.....	20
2.7 Phase three Incorporation.....	22
The Incorporation Process:.....	22
Phase three: Mechanisms and practical examples for individuals navigating this phase:	24
2.8 Conclusion: outline the three phases	24
3 CHAPTER: METHODOLOGY	26
3.1 Introduction.....	26
3.2 Research Aim.....	26

3.3	<i>Research Objectives</i>	26
3.4	<i>Research Propositions</i>	27
3.5	<i>Research paradigm</i>	27
3.6	<i>Research method</i>	28
3.7	<i>Data collection techniques and instruments</i>	28
3.8	<i>Population and Sampling</i>	29
3.9	<i>Data Analysis</i>	29
3.10	<i>Ethical Consideration and Procedures</i>	30
3.11	<i>Summary and Conclusion</i>	30
4	CHAPTER: RESEARCH FINDINGS	32
4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	32
4.2	<i>Background and objective of the chapter</i>	32
4.3	<i>The demographics of Participants</i>	33
4.4	<i>Findings</i>	34
4.5	<i>Phase 1 code: SE: Separation findings</i>	36
4.6	<i>Phase 2 code: TR: Transition findings</i>	40
4.7	<i>Phase 3 code: IN: Incorporation findings</i>	43
4.8	<i>Separation</i>	44
4.9	<i>Transitioning</i>	45
4.10	<i>Incorporation</i>	45
4.11	<i>Summary</i>	46
4.12	<i>Recommendations for the organisation and the transitioning individual</i>	48
	Recommendations for the organisation and the transitioning individual.....	48
	Recommendations for the organisation on the transitioning process.	48
4.13	<i>Conclusion</i>	49
5	CHAPTER: CONCLUSION	50
5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	50
5.2	<i>Conclusion based on the study aim and objectives</i>	50
5.3	<i>Conclusion based on the study propositions and key outcomes</i>	51
	Recommendations for future research and limitations for this study.	53
6	References	54
7	Appendices	57
7.1	<i>APPENDIX A Conceptual Framework</i>	57
7.2	<i>APPENDIX B Question Matrix</i>	57
7.3	<i>APPENDIX C Table 1: Macro Transitioning Process</i>	62

7.4 APPENDIX D Propositions 62

7.5 APPENDIX D Code Book..... 63

7.6 APPENDIX E Institution Participation Letter..... 65

..... 65

7.7 APPENDIX F Ethics Approval Letter 66

1 CHAPTER: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Research context

Changing jobs from a specialist to a manager where one needs to lead others or in a case of a promotion where they have to lead colleagues is a transition that will require severe mental and emotional effort (Mallaby, Price and Hofmeyr, 2017). The challenges with transitioning to a manager position are that tasks are achieved through others; therefore, in the manager role, the specialist has to lead the team in order to accomplish tasks (Charan, Drotter and Noel, 2010). The challenge for new managers is to determine what to continue from the previous role and what to discontinue (Mallaby, Price and Hofmeyr, 2017). The transitioning specialist must go through a transformation (Mallaby, Price and Hofmeyr, 2017). Moreover, Ibarra (2003, p.1) states that role transition is accompanied by a shift in role identity since people first take on the role, then define what they do, and then give it a name. For example, one can practice leading a team, then give it a title, a name and then assume that identity.

1.2 Problem Statement

The problem that this study aims to answer is the question of how newly appointed team leaders in an automotive manufacturing organisation experience role transition from specialists to team leaders. The professionals participating in this study belong to an industry that is characterised by high requirements for output and quality (Black, 2009). Therefore this study aims to contribute to the unique automotive industry professionals, organizational behaviour and work transition.

1.3 Research objectives

- To investigate how first-time team leaders in a manufacturing organisation experience separation, transitioning, and incorporation phases during a transition from a specialist to a team leader.
- To investigate how transitioning team leaders adapt to the new leader's role.
- To investigate how role identities were developed as new leaders experienced a role change from a specialist to a team leader.
- To develop recommendations based on the findings on how organisations and transitioning team

leaders should approach this process.

1.4 Research questions

- How do first-time team leaders in an automotive manufacturing organisation experience the transition to team leading for the first time?
- Which process can best explain the identity role transitioning?
- How can individuals and organizations support or navigate this process for a smooth transition?

1.5 Justification of the study

Changing positions within organisations is a common occurrence, the individual who undergoes this change goes through a transition period. This study focuses on the transition of specialists into a role where they will have to lead a team for the first time. If the transition of a manager into a new role is not done correctly, the manager and the business suffer (Mallaby, Price and Hofmeyr, 2017). Transitioning managers are said to go through a sensation of losing meaning and stability; therefore, the process is a stressful one that is filled with anxiety (Andersson, 2005 and Ashforth, 2000). The transitioning process from leading self to leading others is linked to the leadership of the human resource. Human resources are highlighted as a valuable resource and it is the only thinking resource in an organisation. It also influences cost and quality, and it is central to the firm's competitive advantage (Pesic, Milic and Stankovic, 2013). Furthermore, competitive advantage is a critical factor of the resource-based theory (Pesic, Milic and Stankovic, 2013). The critical concepts in this research will be the macro transitioning process and role identity change underpinned by the resource-based theory. The resource-based theory states that the firm must identify, use, and direct all of its resources and capability in order to achieve a competitive advantage (Pesic, Milic and Stankovic, 2013). Pesic, Milic and Stankovic, (2013, p.1) suggest that all of the firm's resources are important; however, the human resource is specifically essential because it is the only thinking resource with characteristics such as knowledge, abilities and experience. The improved competitive advantage of an organisation can be enhanced by investing in the knowledge and capacity of the human resource (Pesic, Milic and Stankovic, 2013). The human resource formulates a relationship and culture with the organisation that is valuable, rare, inimitable, and not substitutable, resulting in a competitive advantage for the firm (Barney, Ketchen and Wright, 2011). The current study focuses on newly appointed team leaders in an automotive

manufacturing organisation located in South Africa. The South African automotive sector is integrated into the global industry (Black, 2009). South Africa's regional geographical location and small domestic market make it difficult to attract international investors (Black, 2009). Globally, the automotive industry is competitive (Black, 2009). The South African automotive industry strategy for competing was but not limited to improving the plants, increasing production volume and penalising low production volume (Black, 2009). The team leaders that this study focused on influence both the above-mentioned competitive advantages for the industry. Meaning that they are responsible for the plant facility and the human labour volume output. Therefore any inefficiencies or disruption in their transition will affect the performance of the sector just the same that efficient management of their transition has the potential to improve the performance.

1.6 Research contribution

The study's outcome is to identify insights and resultant recommendations for specialists transitioning into leadership roles. The study will add to the research in the field of leadership behaviour and organisational behaviour. The automotive industry is an industry that is characterised by high quality and volume requirements. Additional, any time lost and poor quality produced have a high cost attached to them. New team leaders within this field have high pressure to perform the first time correctly since there is less room for errors. Therefore the study can contribute to the knowledge that can be utilised by organisations and professionals that require insight into the transitioning process in similar industries or contexts.

1.7 Methodology

According to Andersson (2005, p.58), “identity is best investigated through qualitative, interpretivism methods”. Therefore the study will adopt an epistemology philosophy with the paradigm of interpretivism. As a result, the interpretivism paradigm is appropriate. Since the knowledge that is intended to gain insight resides in the new team lead’s minds, it then requires interpretation. The study will be employing the qualitative thematic deductive method. The target population consists of the twenty team leaders who have transitioned into the team leader position in the past two years in different departments. Ibarra (2003, p.178) conducted interviews with individuals for a period of two years during different phases before and during their transition. The study made use of a sample size of seven. In previous studies, theoretical

saturation was reached after seven participants (Warriner and Lavalley, 2008, p.6). Convenience sampling within the sample was based on who was available and willing to take part in the study. This is because the participants work in a fast-paced environment and have high pressure to prioritise production in a production line environment, and thus their availability is limited. The data will be collected using face-to-face or skype platforms and semi-structured qualitative interviews scheduled with open-ended questions (Warriner and Lavalley, 2008 and Kraus, 2000). An interview guide was developed to best answer all the research questions and propositions (see Appendix B). The information was compiled and analysed based on the macro role transitioning process outlined in the codebook (See Appendix C). Furthermore, the analysis aimed to investigate the three phases of the transitioning process, namely separation, transitioning, incorporation and change in role identity.

1.8 Theses structure

The following study comprises 5 Chapters, and the chapters are outlined below.

Chapter 1: This chapter will focus on introducing the study, providing the research objectives, the research justification, the contribution to the research and the approach method for the study.

Chapter 2: This chapter will examine the literature review on the subject of the resource-based view, role identity and macro role transitioning.

Chapter 3: This chapter will discuss the research paradigm, research method, the data collection method and the population sample. Furthermore, it will examine the analysis method and the ethical considerations for the research.

Chapter 4: This chapter presents the results of a deductive thematic analysis study intending to answer the research question; additional, it makes a comparison and contrasts chapter two with the results.

Chapter 5: This chapter aims to draw conclusions based on the study propositions and make recommendations for the organisation and future research.

2 CHAPTER: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the background, resource-based view, role identity, and macro role transition will be discussed.

2.2 Research Aim

The aim is to investigate the experiences of first-time leaders making the transition from a specialist role to a team leader's role in a manufacturing and production environment.

2.3 Background Introduction

This study aims to investigate leadership as a practical progression for specialists taking up leadership roles for the first time. Furthermore to contribute to the unique automotive industry professionals, organizational behaviour and work transition. The nature of leadership is such that there needs to be a leader and a follower in what is referred to as a leadership construct. The leader has to put out a cue that they are the leader. These signals get received and are interpreted by the followers, and the followers could either grant or dismiss the claim of the leader. The above idea is that for a leader to put out a strong claim of leadership, they need to develop their self-concept internally. Their leadership claim is perceived and received by their followers (DeRue, and Ashford, 2010). Hence, the leader needs to develop an authentic self-concept in the role that will support the leadership claim (Yip, Trainor, Black, Soto-Torres, and Reichard, 2020). The development of a new work identity stems from this process of one redefining themselves (Ashforth, 2000; Ibarra, 2007 and Yip et al., 2020). Our role identity is not this deeply embedded magical object. However, it is many definitions of possible selves within our role in which we act out in our current role. Which eventually defines our identity, or role identity at work (Ashforth, 2000 and Ibarra, 2007).

The individuals that are leading organisations need to be effective as leaders for the success of the organisations they lead. Leaders in the organisation direct all resources, including the human resource. According to the resource-based theory, for organisations to achieve sustained long-term competitive advantage, they need to identify, use effectively, and direct their resources

and capabilities (Pesic, Milic and Stankovic, 2013). Human resource is highlighted as one of the key resources since it is the only thinking resource in a firm and possesses the capability of the firm (Pesic, Milic and Stankovic, 2013). The first-time team leaders will direct the firm's human resources and facility plants; therefore are key to achieving the resource-based theory objectives. It is for this reason that the underpinning theory in this study is the resource-based theory. The team leads in this study will be leading or directing the human resource. Simonet and Tett (2013, p209) state that the difference between management and leadership may seem to be old news to many. The study results by Simonet and Tett (2013, p209) suggest that one cannot speak about management without speaking about leadership and vice versa. The overlap between the two needs to be acknowledged to realise the complexity of directing people and organisations (Simonet and Tett, 2013). Rather, the two domains are more like equal partners sharing much in common, but each of them offers attributes that the other does not (Simonet and Tett, 2013). According to Simonet and Tett (2013, p.) Among five leader perspectives, bipolarity depicts managers and leaders as two ends of the same circle, bidimensionality contrasts managers and leaders as two different realms, hierarchical differentiates a manager who has to lead and a leader who has to manage, and a unidimensional leader manager perspective aims to find individuals who represent both. There have been calls to examine closely recent research on the complexity of modern leadership where it is suggested that both the managers and the leaders are embedded in organisational systems that are characterised by a number of diverse demands. Examination of the manager's daily routine does not resemble the typical rational planner; instead, the manager's role is characterised by planning that is informal, intuitive decisions are political and oral interactions that are brief (Simonet and Tett, 2013). Therefore adopting the view that individuals transitioning into first-time leadership in this research have to be both managers and leaders.

Managers have to wear different hats of a manager and act within the boundaries of the role of a manager or a team leader (Ashforth, 2000). When a specialist has to wear different hats within the realm of a specialist role, they develop their own specialist identity; just as when a manager wears different hats within the realm of a manager role, they develop their own manager identity; the above-mentioned roles define role identity, and changing from a specialist identity to a team leader identity will involve a transition between the two (Ashforth, 2000). The theory that explains the development of identity is the identity theory and it explains identity transitioning into a new role since the individual transitioning must formulate a new identity.

Identity theory can be explained as the theory that gives insight into the process of how people formulate an identity (Ibarra, 2005). Identity refers to the various meanings that are attached to oneself by the self and others (Ibarra, 2005). Identity theory emerged from symbolic interaction which suggests that personal identity is grounded in the perceptions of others (Ashforth, 2000). Therefore suggests that for an individual to hold a particular identity it must have been developed with a social group that has placed a collective acknowledgement of that individual's identity through interacting with them (Ashforth, 2000). Further suggests that for an individual to hold a stable identity they must have personal validation and social validation (Andersson, 2005).

In identity theory, the self can take a step back and look at itself or treat itself as an object that can be classified and categorized with meanings placed by others or a social group, we've all heard of classification by oneself when asked the question who are you, To attempt to answer the question the individual responds by stating a role they play in society, for example, they may say I am a Manager or I am an engineer (Burke and Stets, 2000). They may also respond in relation to societal labels of who they are for example they may say I am a woman or Male (Burke and Stets, 2000). This is also known as self-categorization (Burke and Stets, 2000). The identities or self-categorise that one hold stems from the reflective activities of an individual as a result of participating and interacting within particular groups.

Therefore successful transitioning into a new role and developing a new identity cannot be achieved only by planning or by developing a theoretical requirement of the role. However, it requires one to act out the role's requirements to understand and successfully achieve the new identity for the new role (Ibarra, 2003). For example, a new leader transitioning from a specialist position. They will have to start acting the part within the new leadership role in order to understand, gain feedback, and adjust actions within the role. By acting the part, new team leaders can support the transition required to gain a step closer to success until they have achieved congruence within the role, are comfortable within the role, and have successfully accomplished the role and understood the new identity. The idea illustrated above suggests that one cannot plan their way only, but one must act out the role, and that is the only way to achieve a new role (Ibarra, 2003).

Furthermore, the identity transitioning concept suggests that one must act out the new role to see what works for them within the new role and solicit feedback and reactions from the social interaction responses from their colleagues (Ibarra, 2003). The new insights gained do not become an add-on, but they are incorporated as part of the transitioning individual, shifting them

towards a new self (Ibarra, 2007). This study is situated in a stream of research that investigates the link between role transition and identity development. (Ibarra, 2007) The above-mentioned suggests that the new leaders transitioning into new roles publicly act out provisional selves (Ibarra, 2007).

With the transition of a specialist into a leadership role, role identity also transitions, since, by definition, the concept of role identity addresses the question, "Who am I?" within the context of an occupation or work role Ibarra, (2003, p.1).

As they move from one role to another, they follow the pattern of "first act and then thinking" since what we do is intimately connected to who we are Ibarra, (2003, p.1).

One important aspect of identity is the self-concept or image of oneself, this can be the image of oneself in the present setting, or one can have an image of themselves in a future setting.

It is the image of what one may become, what they aspire to become and what they may have fears of becoming (Ibarra, 2005).

Furthermore, this personal concept or identity about the self is the understanding or significance attached to a job title by a person playing a specific role such as an engineer, or a specialist, that particular meaning being attached to this person by themselves (Ibarra, 2003). For example, when asked what do you do? The response may be, "I am a specialist."

The second level of identity is social identity. These are the meanings that are attached to an individual by others. In relation to the social role, one holds as a group member or in the organisation (Ibarra, 2007).

An example of the level of social identity is a manager, who holds a manager role they are perceived firstly by their peers as playing the role of a manager, the manager also perceives themselves as a team leader and the subordinates as well, perceive them as their team leader. So, therefore, within the social group, the team manager holds a manager's identity in relation to all others within the organisation (Ibarra, 2005). Leadership identity is both a personal identity and a social identity. So, therefore, it has both intra and interpersonal components (Yip et al., 2020).

Identity is not only a historical construct, nor is it locked to the current roles and interactions within the social group, but identity can also be formulated from the future projections or what the individual aspires to be in future. Therefore the aspirations can inform and influence the current identity of an individual (Ibarra, 2005).

Furthermore, in relation to social groups, role identities are claimed and granted during the interactions with the social group (Ibarra, 2005). This suggests that it is not sufficient to have

only the personal/individual level of identity, but others as well must affirm that the individual does hold the identity they claim (Andersson, 2005; Ashforth, 2000; Ibarra, 2005; Yip et al., 2020). Role identity also evolves over time due to the fact that, as you interact with the social groups, you gain insight into your preferences, talents and values throughout your work journey (Ibarra, 2005). Furthermore, individuals cannot transition without working on their identity (Yip et al., 2020).

Transitioning into a new leadership role triggers the individual identity process and, later on, integration of the new leadership identity with other identities relevant to the success of the new role (Yip et al., 2020). The integration of a new leader identity involves the claiming of the new leader identity by the new leader and the granting from valued other role-players within that social group (Yip et al., 2020). For example, a new leader can be appointed to a formal position, but a formal appointment in leadership does not guarantee that the new leader will internalise or integrate the new leadership identity (Yip et al., 2020).

Furthermore, it is suggested that they go through a three-phase process of separation, transition and incorporation phase (Ashforth, 2000; Andersson, 2005; Ibarra, 2007). The three-phase process is referred to as Macro role transition (Andersson, 2005 and Ashforth, 2000).

2.4 Macro Role Transitions

Role transition can occur when an individual changes jobs or when they are expected to perform roles that are different from their current role; this is termed inter-role transition or what can be referred to as macro role transitioning (Ashforth, 2000). Macro role transitioning is defined as a physical or a psychological transition between sequential held roles (Ashforth, 2000). An example of macro role transitioning is an individual transitioning between a specialist and team leader position (Ashforth, 2000). The macro transition has been cited as the most common, involving what has been termed Intra organisational transitioning, lateral transfers between positions and short-term assignments within the same organisation (Ashforth, 2000). Macro role transitioning in most cases involves a permanent move within the organisation's social structure and is often infrequent. Ashforth (2000, p.10) have cited three phases that a transitioning individual goes through during transition. The macro role transitioning process consists of three phases for individuals transitioning between roles; these phases are adopted from Lewin's model of change, which states that there are three phases that a transitioning individual goes through during transition. The first is separation, the second is the transition, and the final or last phase is incorporation (Ashforth, 2000; Andersson, 2005; Ibarra, 2005; Snook, Ibarra and Ramo,

2010).

Ashford, (2000, p.10) also maintains that the phases mentioned above or social states are not permanent nor fixed, but one can move in between the different phases back and forth, depending on what is happening. Furthermore, these social states are in a quasi-stationary equilibrium held together by counterbalancing forces depending on the forces; one moves between the phases (Ashford, 2000). Additionally, macro transition phases do not necessarily start when one starts in the new position, nor does it stop long after one has assumed the new position. For example, one may start the separation phase long before assuming the new role.

An example may be a specialist who determines that there are more benefits to being a team leader instead of the current role of being a specialist. This will automatically shift their balances towards the team leader role. Furthermore, this automatically creates an imbalance in the forces or shifts the equilibrium, resulting in the separation of the specialist identity in consideration of a team leader role (Ashford, 2000). Similarly, when a team leader finds balance in the role of a team leader and determines that this role offers more benefits than any other position, they will incorporate the team leader identity (Ashford, 2000). In that phase or social state of equilibrium, they will trigger a no transition decision, therefore, stay in that role (Ashford, 2000). It is worth noting that the transition process is not linear; the three macro transitioning processes, separation, transition, and incorporate, do not occur in an ordered fashion as indicated. Instead, they occur in parallel and are hard to separate (Andersson, 2005)

2.5 Phase One Separation

The Separation Process:

The Separation phase is the first state of the macro role transitioning process that suggests that the individual going through this process needs to let go or be receptive to change by unlearning or moving away from the current status or role. This phase involves letting go of current behaviours and de-identifying the current social object that is currently held. Furthermore, Andersson (2005, p. 67) states that they must let go of the idea of who they are in regard to their current role. The separation phase does constitute not only de-identification but also Self-definition along the new existence and context (Andersson, 2005). Furthermore, Andersson (2005, p. 204) states that the separation phase is necessary as it frees up the energy that is required for the transition phase.

The first phase is a psychological experience of separating from the identity, which is characterised by anxiety and anticipation of potentially losing the current identity during the transitioning process of becoming a new leader (Yip et al., 2020). An example, separation from familiar tasks and skills that the person has mastered (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010). The separation phase requires much energy; it is characterised by vulnerability and a feeling of instability (Andersson, 2005).

The separation phase may create a feeling of losing meaning, organisational position, and stability; therefore, it can be a difficult and emotional phase for the individual (Andersson, 2005 and Ibarra, 2007).

During this phase of separation, the individual is aware of the upcoming change, which leads the individual to think and compare their self-concept with relation to the new role; this brings about uncertainty, which creates anticipation of the upcoming change into first-time leadership and brings about anxiety about the unknown (Yip et al., 2020). For example, previous studies suggest that individuals going through this phase have found it very difficult to leave the old and that the challenge is not necessarily embracing the new (Andersson, 2005). The challenge of the separation phase is losing one's present identity (Yip et al., 2020). Furthermore, this phase generates the most resistance out of the three transitioning phases (Andersson, 2005).

The separation phase is triggered when the balance of forces in Ashforth, (2000, p.10) quasi-stationary equilibrium cost to benefit is not balanced for the individual that is transitioning. Furthermore, this separation phase can be triggered by either internal or external cues or both (Ashforth, 2000). Some of the common external cues include inflexible occurrences such as

being forced to change roles based on the organisational requirement, which could be due to a new project, Where there is not much choice, but to transition into a role, therefore, forcing the individual into the separation phase (Ashforth, 2000).

The internal cues include push factors. An example of this would be an individual seeking a higher-paying job in order to meet their financial obligations, thus necessitating a transition into a new job and beginning the separation phase. There are internal pull factors as well. These are the desire to play a different role or have a different work experience. Therefore, this pulls the individual towards the desired role (Ashforth, 2000). The above-mentioned cues are said to have emotions that are associated with them. Furthermore, they activate attention and trigger appropriate identity within the transitioning individual (Ashforth, 2000). An example of this would be a job advertisement for the desired role (Ashforth, 2000). Once the psychological disengagement of the separation phase has started, it becomes a challenge to keep the transitioning individual engaged in the current role (Ashforth, 2000). Even though they are still present physically within the current function (Ashforth, 2000). The new leader at this phase disengages from previous central behaviourally anchored identities while exploring new possible selves (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010). However, at this phase, the possible future selves are underdeveloped (Ibarra, 2005). This phase is more of a preparation for transition. The actual transition takes place in the next phase. Furthermore, this phase is a psychological exit. So, therefore, it may take place long before the actual physical exiting of the role (Andersson, 2005).

Phase one: Mechanisms and practical examples for individuals navigating this phase:

Transitioning individuals are said to psychologically exit their current roles long before the appointment into a new role. For example, when the individual starts to go for training in preparation for the new role and developing new skills for the new role, it is taken as a signal of separation or exiting the current role (Andersson, 2005)

It is believed that the separation process generates the most resistance for those going through a transition; therefore, it is best if they can let go of their current identity during training or before they leave the role, doing so could make it easier to transition into the new role (Andersson, 2005). In cases where the training has an impact on the individual at a personal level, it is stated that this reduces the resistance to transitioning to a new role (Andersson, 2005). One of the activities that are also prevalent in this phase is the observation of role models or colleagues that are already acting within the space of the desired role (Ibarra, 2007).

The transitioning individual may also find themselves reading books and magazines associated with the new role. These are also parts of the separation phase activities (Ashforth, 2000).

Employees going through this phase may find themselves going through a psychological separation requiring them to stop doing work that had been comfortable and familiar to them (Ibarra, 2007). In this phase, the transitioning new leader should acknowledge and deal with the potential feelings of anxiety about the unknown territory and identity loss (Yip et al., 2020).

2.6 Phase Two Transition

The Transition Process :

The Moving/Transitioning phase is defined as the moving or in-between roles phase (Andersson, 2005). If the first phase is a preparation phase, the second phase is the actual transition phase. It is the state of not being in the old role yet not in the new role. This creates an unstructured and ambiguous state of confusion (Andersson, 2005). Therefore the transitioning new leader is still in between roles psychologically. For example, it could mean that the specialist psychologically has left the specialist role but has not yet fully taken up the role of the team leader (Andersson, 2005). Another way of looking at the transition phase is the process of leaving one thing but not having yet fully left it whilst they are entering something new, but they are not yet fully a part of what they are about to enter (Ibarra, 2007). Alternatively, it is a process of leaving one thing without having left it, and at the same time, entering something else without being fully a part of it (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010).

This phase has been explained as a state of limen or limbo in the “rite of passage” process (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010). Limen is a Latin word that means threshold. It was first introduced by van Gennep in 1960, referring to the middle phase of the three-phase process that gives a sensation of ambiguity and a sort of social limbo (Ibarra, 2007). The transitioning phase is a psychological movement, but if relevant, it can also be a physical movement into a new role (Ashforth, 2000). This second hurdle in the framework for the transitioning individual, the liminality or the transition, is fluid in between the identities phase. The new leader starts to interact with other identities of interest as part of the transition (Yip et al., 2020). Individuals who begin to practice possible future selves lose any existing clarity about who they are as uncertainty and ambiguity take hold. (Ibarra, 2005). The transitioning leader lacks a clear role identity (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010). The liminality phase is characterised by identity confusion and conflict (Ibarra, 2005). In this phase, the old and new identities all exist

simultaneously. The transitioning individual is trying out provisional selves for the new role (Yip et al., 2020). The biggest hurdle with the transition/move phase is interchanging between identities (Yip et al., 2020). Successful role attempts or role practices are essential for the aspirations towards the new role because it creates a snowball effect, which helps speed up the process towards the final phase of role transition (Andersson, 2005). Furthermore, this phase starts with anticipation or mental preparation for the new identity and role (Andersson, 2005). It is also suggested that this in-between phase is ideal for figuring oneself out and is not for making grand decisions (Ibarra, 2003). The transitioning individual must make gains by making small wins, especially at the beginning of the phase, because these have a snowballing effect that speeds up transitioning (Andersson, 2005).

Because of the nature of the new role, the new leader will start to come into contact with the new social group, possible psychological change, at the same time they experience lingering feelings of belonging to the old team, the differences between the old and new become more apparent (Yip et al., 2020). The big challenge in this phase for the transitioning individual is dealing with the ambiguity and the uncertainty of internalising the new identity (Yip et al., 2020). For example, a transitioning specialist could still feel a sense of belonging to the specialist team that he was part of, whilst at the same time, is now part of the new leadership team and leading a new team (Yip et al., 2020). The transition is a battleground for identities whilst the workplace, and the organisational context is set as the arena (Yip et al., 2020). The transitioning phase does not automatically lead to the next incorporation phase, but it is essential that the transitioning individual gains the social audience buy-in for the new role identity. Otherwise, the individual may linger in transitioning/liminality in between roles. A prolonged transitioning phase where the individual does not reach the incorporation phase can be a painful space to be in (Andersson, 2005).

Phase two: Mechanisms and practical examples for individuals navigating this phase:

The key insight for this phase is to act or experiment because the idea is that one cannot gain insight by introspection only (Ibarra, 2003); therefore, one of the activities in this phase is role prototyping or trying out not yet fully formed self-concept (Ibarra, 1999).

Rites and ceremonies are essential to making a successful transition, and institutional changes, and articulating the new role in the social spaces of an organisation is essential in supporting the new role (Andersson, 2005). Individuals who have experienced this phase described this phase as being neither here nor there (Ibarra, 2005). Furthermore, it has been described as

having extreme identity conflict (Ibarra, 2005). A common strategy of dealing with this phase is by compartmentalising and erecting boundaries among the different identities, held to avoid direct comparison between them (Ibarra, 2005).

Persons going through this phase have also described it as having no clear role and multiple-defined selves whose definitions are incompatible (Ibarra, 2007).

Individuals who have undergone this phase have described it as a feeling of being in-between identities and described it as being in a vacuum or mid-air (Ibarra, 2007).

The transitioning individual activity time allocation reveals or is an indicator of identity interests and preferences (Ibarra, 2003). Transitioning enablers in this phase are to seek role models within the new social circle who will support and can be emulated (Ibarra, 2003).

New leaders that are going through this phase have to start the behaviour or actions of identity claiming. This is when a leader acts as a leader, he or she dresses the part, presides over meetings, and leads group activities. Furthermore, they have to start thinking of themselves as a leader. The above-mentioned are some of the identity-claiming behaviours (Yip et al., 2020). Transitioning individuals in the liminality phase must be aware that the liminality phase is a challenging phase but also is a great potential for learning and growth opportunities (Yip et al., 2020). In this phase, the developing new leader should seek practical feedback so that they can embark on potential developmental topics (Yip et al., 2020).

The other mechanism for dealing with the liminality phase is for the transitioning individual to select tasks and projects that are suited to their strengths since these would be competencies that would have been already claimed or would have been previously granted identities to them (Yip et al., 2020).

The liminality phase is characterised by having self-doubt; therefore, the individuals should proactively create self-affirmation during this phase to build on the positive narrative since that has a snowball effect on building on the new identity for successful transitioning (Yip et al., 2020). Activity that is suggested against identity threats is identity buffering. This is the act of making notes of old identity claims that are positive or noting positive results during the transition process so that they can be used later on as input in the transitioning process (Yip et al., 2020).

The transitioning individuals should take advantage of the opportunities or the events presented during this phase but must be mindful that the events are not the key part, but the insights gained instead (Ibarra, 2003). Examples of these events are training, new projects and unplanned events that need one to step in (Ibarra, 2003). It is also stated that the transitioning individual should avoid reverting back to old routines to linger, but instead, they should

change, experiment and learn (Ibarra, 2003).

2.7 Phase three Incorporation

The Incorporation Process:

The Incorporation phase is the last phase of the transition process characterised by the individual being comfortable and acting confidently in the new role (Andersson, 2005 and Ibarra, 1999). The final and third phase in the role transitioning framework is identity, integration, incorporation, or incorporation (Yip et al., 2020).

Transitioning Individual's possible future selves are well developed or matured in this phase (Ibarra, 2005). For the provisional selves to be incorporated into the individual's identity, it first must be evaluated against the internal and external feedback process (interaction) (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010). The individual going through this final phase will have to have personal validation and social validation for the role for successful incorporation (Andersson, 2005). The transitioning new leader will remain in limbo, unsettled and uncertain of the new identity in the new role until the social group provides the stamp of approval for the new identity (Andersson, 2005; Ibarra, 2007 and Yip et al., 2020).

The most challenging aspect of the incorporation phase is incorporating the newly attained identity with the multiply identities that an individual holds (Yip et al., 2020). A conclusion needs to be made on what to keep or reject depending on the feeling of congruence or authenticity (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010). Developing congruence and authenticity is linked to the story the individual narrates to themselves and others (Yip et al., 2020). The explanation or narrative we offer to the new selves is a critical element of the transition phase (Ibarra, 2005). Each time the individual self-narrates the story, it clarifies to the self why the old self was traded for the new one; therefore, a logical narrative is crafted (Ibarra, 2005).

Since individuals make use of stories to define themselves and others, this also gives meaning and direction to their life. Also, in the case of them reinventing themselves, it forms part of reinterpreting past events in light of the new experiences, pulling together the past and the new into one coherent story about whom they are becoming (Ibarra, 2005). Events in the transitioning process serve as narrative points for the transitioning individual; self-narrating is essential for sense-making and for the construction of the final new identity (Ibarra, 2005). It is suggested that transitioning individuals take note of pivotal moments to catalyse change so that it can be used to frame the story that makes sense about their transitioning and the reinventing

process for the transitioning process (Ibarra, 2003). As the new leader enters this phase, they attempt to create links between the many identities they hold and to create a coherent sense of self based on the multiple identities they hold (Yip et al., 2020). The integration phase concept allows the transitioning leaders to bring a part of themselves to the new leadership role since a decision is made on what to keep or discard from previously held identities (Yip et al., 2020). As an example, a transitioning leader must decide what to take with them to the new role and to their new identity, just as they must decide what to leave behind (Yip et al., 2020). It is during the transition phase that individuals buffer the affirmations they are granted so that they can use them against potential identity threats, and make a final decision about the role, whether to reconcile it with existing identities or reject them (Ibarra, 2005). Additionally, once the narrative is clear and the decision is clear, it generates momentum for the incorporation process (Ibarra, 2005). In order to end the disjointed identities of the first two phases, unify the role identity into one and persuade social groups to collaborate on the claim, the new leader must craft a convincing narrative that offers continuity about the transition process or journey (Ibarra, 2005). The crafted narrative about the experience of the transition process is especially important in the final phase of transition since it ticks all the boxes, allows one to reflect on an interpersonal level, and it also permits continuous overtime evaluation of the self (Ibarra, 2005).

Successfully navigating this phase means that the new leader undergoes a deep structural change where their network expands to incorporate elements of the self and relevant social groups or social identity (Yip et al., 2020). After the individual has successfully separated from the previously established identity, transitioned, and incorporated his or her new self, a new self-concept will emerge (Yip et al., 2020). The process of transition is usually characterised by existing clarity followed by a phase of doubt, uncertainty, and ambiguity, and then, at the very end, it leads to renewed clarity, resulting in a new person (Ibarra, 2005).

Transitioning and identity development are progressive in nature. The more one probes, the deeper the insight, with learning taking place in increments initially with the first probe immediate or surface understanding of the problems, takes place. Later on, they progress through asking the next bigger questions, including assumptions. In this next level, because of the small wins in the early probing, they gain confidence to examine even bigger questions. This leads to deeper changes until they can understand what the topics mean. The small wins and probing throughout the transitioning process give rise to a deeper understanding of the self at a later phase, leading to a deeper change (Ibarra, 2003).

Phase three: Mechanisms and practical examples for individuals navigating this phase:

To complete the process of transition, the new leader must create and tell a story that best represents the transitioning leader's journey (Ibarra, 2005).

The narrated story should be told to others and the self through self-narrating (Ibarra, 2005). Keep notes, recall the events that contributed positively or achievements in the new role, and include them in the story (Yip et al., 2020).

The story should be told repeatedly, improved, corrected, and adjusted until it represents the new role's journey and is a fit with the current multiple identities held by the transitioning individual (Ibarra, 2005). The transitioning leader should make sense of their story (Yip et al., 2020). The process of navigating the integration phase involves having a perspective on the ongoing experience that one is going through and making sense of it; the individual is encouraged to take a step back and take stock of his current experience, gain insight and make sense of what they are currently experiencing (Yip et al., 2020).

The individuals should communicate the new changes; it is suggested that the transitioning individual should practice telling their story about the journey even to sceptics, different versions and to different people (Ibarra, 2003). During this phase, transitioning leaders should also be encouraged to externalise their challenges and rewrite their experiences, openly acknowledge their narrative, and openly rewrite their internal scripts (Yip et al., 2020). For the transitioning leader, having someone to bounce ideas off and bring about perspective on current challenges and experiences will also help during this phase (Yip et al., 2020). For example, they are using a coach or mentor (Yip et al., 2020).

2.8 Conclusion: outline the three phases

This chapter outlines the literature review for the process of transitioning new leaders that are appointed as team leaders to lead teams in a manufacturing production environment for the first time. The literature examination on resource-based view, role identity and role transition suggest that the macro role transition process best explains role transition; accordingly, the theoretical framework that will underpin this study is the macro role transition process. Macro role transition has three phases that explain the process of role transition, which are separation, transition and the incorporation phase. From the above-identified theoretical framework, a three-detailed review of the three phases was developed with their corresponding practical example the phases. A further three propositions were developed to facilitate the development

of the interview guide, data collection, and analysis of the findings. The next chapter will outline the above-mentioned propositions and the method that was applied to conduct the study.

3 CHAPTER: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research design for this deductive qualitative study on how role change affects first-time team leaders of a manufacturing organisation when they transition into leading a team for the first time. This chapter will discuss the research paradigm, research method, the data collection method and the population sample. Furthermore, it will discuss the analysis method and the ethical considerations for the research.

3.2 Research Aim

The aim is to investigate the experiences of first-time leaders making the transition from a specialist role to a team leader's role in a manufacturing and production environment.

3.3 Research Objectives

- To investigate how first-time team leaders in a manufacturing organisation experience separation, transitioning, and incorporation phases during a transition from a specialist to a team leader.
- To investigate how transitioning team leaders adapt to the new leader's role.
- To investigate how role identities were developed as new leaders experienced a role change from a specialist to a team leader.
- To develop recommendations based on the findings on how organisations and transitioning team leaders should approach this process.

3.4 Research Propositions

The macro transitioning process is described by Ashforth (2000, p.10); Andersson (2005, p.204); Ibarra (2007, p.19); Yip et al. (2020, p.507). led to the formulation of the three propositions.

Proposition 1

The first-time leader goes through the first phase of identity change, experiencing anxiety over losing the old identity, anticipating and unsure about the new role, and letting go of the old identity to make way for the new.

Proposition 2

In the second phase, the individual transitioning experiences the psychological state of not being in the old role or completely entrenched in the new role, thus feeling neither here nor there.

Proposition 3

In the final phase of transition, the transitioning individual is comfortable with their new identity, feels stable, and acts confidently in the new role.

3.5 Research paradigm

According to Andersson (2005, p.58), “identity is best investigated through qualitative, interpretivism methods”. Therefore, the study adopted the paradigm of interpretivism. This aligns with Andersson (2005, p.58) since the knowledge to gain insight into lies within the minds of the new leaders; it needs to be interpreted. Thus interpretivism paradigm is appropriate. The study will be employing the qualitative thematic deductive method. As indicated before, Andersson (2005, p.58) recommended adopting the qualitative approach. The thematic analysis is suitable for linking deductive propositions that are developed from literature to the qualitative data collected in the field (Pearse, 2019). Participants in this study led teams for the first time in a production environment in an automotive manufacturing environment in the Eastern Cape.

3.6 Research method

This study investigates the lived experiences of transitioning leaders who are appointed into the team leader role for the first time. The qualitative research approach gives the researcher the best opportunity to gain insight into the innermost negotiation of the participants' lived experiences (Alase, 2017). This is because the approach is participant orientated since it allows the participants to express their lived experiences in their own words (Alase, 2017). Furthermore, this type of approach gives the researcher the flexibility to ask such questions as "how did you feel" and "what did the experience mean to you" in the interview schedule (Miller, Chan and Farmer, 2018). A qualitative approach was appropriate for this study as the interpretive naturalist approach is based on the observations and interpretations of the people experiencing the event (Khan, 2014). The nature of the research question provides a substantial base for developing this study with the qualitative method. This approach also ensures obtaining a detailed view of the lived experience of the individual participant. Furthermore, the interpretive process is used because the researcher aims to see the social world from the participants' perspective and consider the participant's perceptions (Khan, 2014). The interpretive approach depends on the researcher and the participant's view of reality (Khan, 2014). The researchers' role is to identify the importance and significance of the participants' actions or synthesise the information to be easily consumed by others, or it is to be translated into the researcher's own words of their interpretation of reality (Khan, 2014). Therefore the researcher needs to interpret and deduce that others can understand (Khan, 2014). The qualitative research method ensures that the interpretation of information is conducted against existing knowledge that others can understand. Deductive qualitative research differentiates itself from other research approaches in that it first determines the theoretical propositions (Pearse, 2019). It then uses the understanding to develop the collection and analysis of the data (Pearse, 2019). For this reason, the deductive thematic analysis approach was selected as appropriate for conducting this study. Deductive thematic analysis has been identified and recommended as a sound qualitative analysis method (Pearse, 2019).

3.7 Data collection techniques and instruments.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The interviews took place face-to-face using an interview guide with open-ended questions. In order to document data collection, a schedule and mobile app were used for transcription. The duration of the interview ranged from

45 and 55 minutes to conduct the interview. The interview schedule to guide the interviews consists of 11 questions. Questions 1 to 3 consisted of background questions, questions 4 to 6 examined proposition one of the first phases of transition, questions 7 to 9 the second phase of transition and questions 10 to 11 proposition three, the last phase of transition. The interview venue was spacious or had a protective screen and sanitiser to observe the organisation covid-19 the protocol.

3.8 Population and Sampling

The target population consisted of 20 team leaders who have transitioned into the team leader position in the past two years. Ibarra (2003, p.178) conducted interviews with individuals for a period of two years during different phases before and during their transition. The study made use of a sample size of seven. In previous studies, theoretical saturation was reached after seven participants (Warriner and Lavalley, 2008, p.6). Furthermore, a consistent theme had emerged within the sample size that conformed to the theoretical framework of this study. Convenience sampling within the sample was based on who was available and willing to take part in the study. This is because the participants work in a fast-paced environment and have high pressure to prioritise production in a production line environment, and thus their availability is limited. The researcher works for the organisation where the study was conducted. As part of the ethics process, the study had to be reviewed by the organisation's gatekeeper. Following management approval, the Human Resources division at the organisation where the study was conducted permitted the study to take place and obtain participants' contact information. All initial discussions with the participants took place telephonically. The participants were called to arrange the interview since both the researcher and the participants are in the same location and work for the same company.

3.9 Data Analysis

During the interview, a mobile transcription application was used, and note-taking was used to document the interview. The names of participants were not disclosed and were only known to the researcher. Member checks were conducted to allow participants to request data corrections or comments to be removed. The analysis process employed in this study was thematic data analysis. Step one in the process was to formulate the theoretical framework based on the literature (Pearse, 2019). Step two was to identify propositions from the theoretical framework

(Pearse, 2019). Step three was to develop the codes and the code book that was utilised to categorise the data from the interviews, in this step the information from the literature is coded to qualify and exclude responses from the participants. In step four the question metrics with the propositions considered are developed (Pearse, 2019). In step five the data was collected using the question metrics that were developed (Pearse, 2019). In step six the information was summarised and analysed against the role transitioning process as outlined in the questioning matrix that was developed with consideration of the propositions (See Appendix C). Deductive thematic analysis was conducted against the developed code book, hit and miss table intending to examine for evidence of the themed three phases of the transitioning process, namely separation, transitioning, and incorporation (Pearse, 2019). As outlined in the research method, deductive thematic analysis has been identified and recommended as a sound qualitative approach (Pearse, 2019).

3.10 Ethical Consideration and Procedures

Ethical consideration is crucial for all research approaches, but it is essential for qualitative research since it intrudes on participants' lives (Khan, 2014). It is for this reason that potential benefits and losses of the project were considered. Furthermore, the Rhodes University Human ethical committee approved the study (see Review Reference: 2021-0960-6062). As part of the process, the managers of the division where the study was conducted approved the study, and the human resources department approved its completion after reviewing the risks and benefits. Participation in any research should be voluntary (Khan, 2014). The researcher had to sign a non-disclosure statement that the name of the organisation should not be mentioned and that some of the terminology used in the organisation should be changed. Additionally, the participants were informed about all aspects of the research and had to sign a consent form before participating in the study (Khan, 2014). The participants had to give verbal consent before signing written consent. The study is based on past and current work experience, so names and departments' names that could link back to the participants were omitted.

3.11 Summary and Conclusion

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology in which the study was conducted. The study adopted an interpretative paradigm. The qualitative deductive method was selected for the study, open-

ended questions were developed from existing knowledge, and the thematic deductive approach was employed as a means to structure the analysis of the findings. The participants were sampled based on convenient sampling from the population for interviews. The Rhodes ethical committee and the organisation where the study was to take place granted approval after the approval process. The participants had to provide written consent before the commencement of the interviews. This chapter also outlines the data handling and the method of data collection. The following chapter 4 will present the findings from the study and the interpretation of the determined propositions.

4 CHAPTER: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the results of a deductive thematic analyses study to answer the research question; how leadership identity is shaped during role transition from a specialist role to a leadership role. Yip et al.(2020, p.507) on the subject has identified three propositions for role transitioning into leadership. The three propositions are listed below.

Proposition 1

The first-time leader goes through the first phase of identity change, experiencing anxiety over losing the old identity, anticipating and unsure about the new role, and letting go of the old identity to make way for the new.

Proposition 2

In the second phase, the individual transitioning experiences the psychological state of not being in the old role or completely entrenched in the new role, thus feeling neither here nor there.

Proposition 3

In the final phase of transition, the transitioning individual is comfortable with their new identity, feels stable, and acts confidently in the new role.

4.2 Background and objective of the chapter

This chapter includes thematic analysis, which is a methodology that attempts to investigate the linkages between the determined propositions and the interview data. A demographics table will be included in order to summarise the seven individual information that was interviewed. The analysis to determine the codes and themes for the transcribed interview data is described in detail in this chapter. This chapter includes the graphical table representation of the interview themes to illustrate the key proposition findings.

4.3 The demographics of Participants

Table 1: General Information of Participant

General Information of Participants		
Gender composition		
Code	Number of Participants	Percentage
Male	4	57,1
Female	3	42,9

Source: Primary Field Data 2021

Table 2: Duration in the team leader role of participants

General Information of Participants		
Duration in the team leader role.		
Gender	Participant: code	Duration
M	R1	3 Months
F	R2	1 Year
F	R3	6 Months
M	R4	2 Years
M	R5	2 Years
F	R6	7 Months
M	R7	8 Months

Source: Primary Field Data 2021

Table 3: Composition of Duration in Role

General Information of Participants	
Composition of Duration in Role	
Percentage	Period in Role
57,1	less than one year
14,2	more than one year
28,5	more than two year

Source: Primary Field Data 2021

Seven participants were interviewed for this study. As indicated in Table: 2. The participants comprised three or 42% females and four or 57% males. 57% of the participants had less than one year of experience in the team leader role, whereas 28,5 % had more than two years in the role, and 14% had more than two years of experience in the role. All of the participants had gone through a team leader development program before starting in the team leader role.

4.4 Findings

Table 4: Finding Record of Hits and Misses

Findings Record of Hits and Misses																											
Participant code		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
Proposition	P1								P2								P3										
Title of incident or event																											
The individuals anticipate the new role. Individual start to define themselves along the new role.		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Has the desire to act as in the previous role task.		N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y/O		N/A	N/A	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Individuals are experimenting and prototyping, The individual has entered the new role without being fully a part of it, resulting in confusion, is unstructured, a lack of belonging and is not yet stable.		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Individual is stable, comfortable and acts confidently in the role.		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		O	Y	O	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Total hit and misses for separation proposition 1	*12/14																										
Total hit and misses for transition proposition 2	*7/7																										
Total hit and misses for incorporation proposition 3	*5/7																										
Key: Y= confirmation of the proposition: N= proposition contradicted: O = incident had nothing related to the proposition																											

Source: Primary Field Data 2021

The seven participants were asked questions about events in the transition process to extract information about the experience in the transition process. The questions were aimed at investigating and extracting information relating to the propositions. Table 4 is the hit and miss table that is a summary of the findings. Four events were identified from the interview schedule; the first two events were aimed at investigating the first proposition. The first event was confirmed by all participants, therefore reaffirming proposition 1. The second event was confirmed by four of the participants, with the other three offering an alternative to the event, of which we will discuss the details further at a later stage.

Furthermore, one respondent confirmed that this theme can be experienced at all phases of transition. All participants reaffirming proposition 2 confirmed the third event. Two of the seven participants did not confirm proposition three but did not offer an alternative theme or disprove proposition 3. Whilst five of the participants confirmed proposition 3.

Table 5: Team Leader role Transition

Team Leader Role Transition																	
	Participant: code	Deveelopment program	Start in Role	Duration in the team leader role in months												After one year in the role	Duration in role
No				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
1	R1	Phase 1	Phase 1 + Phase 2	Phase 3 not confirmed												3 Months	
2	R2	Phase 1	Phase 1 + Phase 2						Phase 3						1 Year		
3	R3	Phase 1	Phase 1 + Phase 2						Phase 3 not confirmed						6 Months		
4	R4	Phase 1	Phase 1 + Phase 2											Phase 3	2 Years		
5	R5	Phase 1	Phase 1 + Phase 2			Phase 3											2 Years
6	R6	Phase 1	Phase 1 + Phase 2			Phase 3										7 Months	
7	R7	Phase 1	Phase 1 + Phase 2						Phase 3							8 Months	

Source: Primary Field Data 2021

In table five the results of the findings are summarised. The participants identified from R1 to R7. All participants participated in the development program and confirmed that they experienced the first phase in the development program and again when starting in the role of official or when they were appointed. Participants R1 and R3 had less than three months in the position, and experience phase 1 and phase 2 but did not confirm phase 3 of transitioning. The participants that had seven months and more all confirmed experiencing all the phases of identity transition.

4.5 Phase 1 code: SE: Separation findings

Proposition 1 Event: The individuals anticipate the new role, and Individuals start to define themselves along with the new role.

The first phase is a psychological experience of separating from the identity of the current role (Yip et al., 2020). Furthermore, this phase is a psychological exit. So, therefore, it may take place long before the actual physical exiting of the role (Andersson, 2005). Transitioning individuals are said to psychologically exit their current roles long before the appointment into a new role. For example, when the individual starts to go for training in preparation for the new role, developing new skills for the new role, this is taken as a signal of separation or exiting the current role (Andersson, 2005). All the participants in this study went through a team leader development program in preparation for the new role. Therefore, phase one or proposition one is qualified.

Question:

Before starting in this position, what ideas did you have about what it takes to be a team leader?

Example: what a team leader does and how a team leader should behave and act. Interviewer:

Follow up: How did you prepare yourself mentally before your first day to say I now have to carry myself like a team leader.

Answers:

R5: *"My first day is not really the first day; you are given many first days in preparation for that first day. In the development program as acting team leader."*

R4: *"I did not jump straight from being a technician straight to a Team leader role, but I went through a team leader program, which helped with the transition."*

R7: *"I have been in the current position for eight months and in the development team leader position for two years."*

R2: *"it is an adjustment that I did foresee as I was developed into the position."*

R3: *"Now I have to really jump in." But what was nice was that my manager. "*

"He put me in the team leader development program." So with that, we basically have our mentors." So, yeah, we meet up with our mentors; they give you some type of tools on how to deal with people and so on."

R1: *"From my previous role, I moved into a development post."*

Yip et al.(2020, p.507) state that during the separation phase, the individual is aware of the upcoming change, which leads the individual to think and compare their current self-concept in

relation to the new role. This brings about uncertainty, which creates anticipation of the upcoming change into first-time leadership and brings about anxiety about the unknown (Yip et al., 2020). Furthermore, the separation phase does constitute de-identification and self-definition along with the new existence and context (Andersson, 2005). Some of the individuals starting up in a new role had to deal with merging their self-concept with the new appointment or title.

Question:

What position did you hold before you became a team leader? Follow up: who are you in the organisation.

Answers:

R3: *"I can't say that I am fully a team leader because I'm still learning. I'm still trying to find my feet."* *"So it's a bit hectic. Six months,"* R3: *"I want to give it my best, So that's the type of mindset I want to have for this role." So I need to give myself time to be able to get into everything, learn everything." So it won't just happen like that by itself."*

R2: *"So I think even now and again I have to keep reminding myself that you are now leading people you are the leader, so then I think it's an ongoing thing I'd say."*

The participants also had their own ideas of how they needed to approach the new role and what their role was in the new team. This is in line with self-definition along with the new context of the individual reaffirming further proposition one after appointment having had physically moved into the new role. So we find evidence of phase one before the move (psychologically move) and immediately after (physical move or appointment) moving into the new role as illustrated in Table 3.

Question:

Before starting in this position, what ideas did you have about what it takes to be a team leader?

Example: what a team leader does and how a team leader should behave and act. Interviewer:

Follow up: How did you prepare yourself mentally before your first day?

Answers:

R1: *"I had to take off that old role thinking cap and then put on my management cap."* R1: *"So I had to step into and fill the position."* *"Obviously, you have to give your best so you can make a good impression."*

R6: *"So when I prepared myself, I told myself the same thing. What you did before, you know what you have to do, you know, what your tasks are. I start writing down a list of where do you start where you're going to end?"*

R4: *"As a team leader, it actually means my hands are no longer going to be touching or as hands-on as before. But you have to make sure that the guys that you're leading have a nice*

working space, which means I must make sure that they are protected wherever they work within the confines of the company policies .”

R5:” Yeah, the idea that I had around the team leader is that you are directing the behaviour of other people, motivating them to perform better, and then bringing out the best in them. And then being able to like, come with authority, and then being able to use that authority wisely, to push forward the goals of the company.”

R7: “I was seeing it as a challenging position, position, that would not be an easy one because as a leader or as a team leader, you'll be dealing with people. And also, it will be challenging because I will have the responsibility of taking some of the decisions that I was not taking before. So that means, before the position, I thought it would be better for me to prepare myself for the challenge because I saw the position as a challenging one.”

Proposition 1 Event: Has the desire/urge to act as in the previous role task.

This phase involves letting go of current behaviours and de-identifying the current social object that is currently held (Andersson, 2005). For example, separation from the familiar task and which they were good at (Snook, Ibarra and Ramo, 2010). Some of the individuals interviewed managed to stop themselves from acting out the task of the previous role, whilst others could not stop themselves. Additionally, some of the participants suggested that in the first few weeks could not identify themselves with the title, and it took some time to sink in. Therefore identification with the new role takes time after the appointment.

Questions:

Describe the time when you had to perform your previous tasks from your previous job whilst you were already acting in your new job?

How did you feel about the occurrence?

How did you deal with tasks from your previous role? Furthermore, how easy was it to deal with the situation?

Answers:

R2: “It's not easy, but outside, you must counsel yourself, to say no I must stand by and have self-confidence, you cannot do it yourself now, So it kind of feels a bit of like, you know, I was betraying that part of myself. R2: Yes, I wanted the feel of being on the shop floor and actually attended problems solving.”

R3:” I think, for the first month or so, it was quite hard just stepping back because I'm so used to being involved in the technical side.” “My colleagues, they were like you need to learn to step back now, you need to let go of being hands-on, and yes, you can guide people and tell

them, this is what you need to do." I've learned to take a step back." R3: *"delegation has become easy because we have the people, but I do sometimes, like, want to take control." But it's to the point where you have to tell yourself, okay, no, you can't do that."*

R4: *"The urge is always there to want to go and do the task for the guy, but at the back of your mind, you tell yourself do not, and when you go home, you reflect."*

Others suggested that they wanted to be hands-on at first to understand the area better since it was a completely new area suggesting that this was not done because they were used to being hands-on in the previous role.

R1: *"To be honest, I cannot actually recall me being in that position as wanting to do things on my own." The lack of delegation was only because the skill was still being acquired; it had nothing to do with the fact that I still had the habit of working by myself."*

Some of the participants had experience from their previous role, which stopped them from jumping in and doing the task as in their previous role not because the urge was not there.

R4: *"I avoided being hands-on because I know how it feels within our field when you are not given the space to make your own mistakes and use your own thought process in finding the solutions. R4: "The urge is always there to want to go and do the task for the guy, but at the back of your mind, you tell yourself don't, and when you go home, you reflect."*

R6: *"it's not easy." Because even now, when something is not done, right, I still have that urge to go there and show somebody, this is how you do it, But it is also demoralising to somebody when you come in to try to tell them their job." I don't want to take away the learning experience from the technician."*

Two participants provided an alternative proposition suggesting that they had to apply a situational leadership approach to the new team. Where they first had to weigh the skill level of the subordinates and had to decide whether to show them or delegate the task.

R5: *"The biggest issue when you are starting is the fear of failing or the anxiety that makes you more (helicopter or micromanage), and you find yourself to be hands-on, but after some time, you trust the guys to run by themselves." It was leading them by example. "R5: "Delegation was not so easy in the beginning in terms of the team that I started with R5:" Gradually, you are able to pull back and for two months. At the end of two months." It was at a state that I wanted it. R5: "It was what was necessary at that particular juncture. "I had the responsibility of keeping that line moving." When I started seeing the improvement, I started pulling back because I knew that the purpose of my being involved was done."*

R7: *"So, as a team leader, I would end up taking up my subordinate's tasks in helping and*

trying to influence what I think will give us a result in that role." If you understand, that is the position that I will be in until I find that the subordinate is on the qualification level that I want him or her to be. So, yes, I have to lead from the front."

Delegating skills was suggested as a factor that contributed to the new leader taking up tasks by themselves instead of working through the new team, and this was not an indication of wanting to act as in the previous role. Furthermore, it was suggested that this skill improved over time.

"R1: "To be honest, I cannot recall me being in that position as wanting to do things on my own. The lack of delegation was only because the skill was still being acquired; it had nothing to do with the fact that I still had the habit of working by myself."

R4: "Delegation skills were bad; the first time I came to the team, I wanted to understand best how everything works, So I did everything myself. But then I realised that I was spending too much time at work, slowly I started delegating some of the tasks ."

R2: "It was hard Because then you always afraid of the response. And there was some resistance from the guys." I think it took a while for some of the guys." Some not all of them. But now, when you are delegating something to someone and saying here, please do A, B, and C, and some will resist some you tell them to go there someone will say no, but why not the other person?"

R6: " In the beginning, I think I did everything myself, and then only at some point, I start realising that the other guys can do the work." R6: I held on for quite a while until I started realising, hey, but you're putting a lot of pressure on yourself."

4.6 Phase 2 code: TR: Transition findings

Proposition 2: Individuals are experimenting and prototyping; the individual has entered the new role without being fully a part of it, resulting in confusion, is unstructured, lacks belonging and is not yet stable.

If the first phase is a preparation phase, the second phase transition phase is where the actual transitioning occurs. Therefore the transitioning new leader is still in between roles psychologically. For example, it could mean that the specialist psychologically has left the specialist role but has not yet fully taken up the role of the team leader (Andersson, 2005). Once individuals start to practice in the new role, any pre-existing clarity about who they are giving way to the middle phase's uncertainty and ambiguity. It is the state of not being in the old role yet not being entrenched in the new role. This creates an unstructured and ambiguous form of

confusion (Andersson, 2005). At the time of the interviews, some individuals were still going through this phase as they had recently started in the role. So they confirmed their present situation reaffirming proposition two and phase 2.

Questions:

Can you describe the time when you were still discovering what works and what does not work within the team leader job? , How did this period make you feel?

Answers :

"R1: I'm still there every day; there are new topics that are coming up." So you need to understand."

"Every day is a new day." I see it as a new day." Because every day has got its own challenges, And obviously, you need to challenge different aspects of the new problems." You need to tackle them differently."Yeah, the area is just a different world."

The above suggests that the individual is currently in phase 2 and has not yet reached phase 3.

R2: "I wasn't really sure what I was doing If it was the right thing." So every day, maybe after a meeting, I'm kind of like, I don't know, maybe I should have said it like this."

R3: " Like you might think you've got the formula right now, but then something throws you off." "So, yeah, it's an ongoing thing; yeah, You can never say 100%." R3: " Sometimes, it makes you feel like you don't know what you're doing." Because especially when you are going into meetings. "

The above suggests that the individual is currently in phase 2 and has not yet reached phase 3.

R4: " It was sort of an awakening. Okay." " This is what I thought. And this is not what I thought. But as you can see, my hair colour changed to grey."

R5: " It was a challenge, but I found ways to deal with it, such as going to the gym so that it does not impact my family negatively. But it was a challenging moment, I must admit, the biggest issue when you are starting is the fear of failing or the anxiety that makes you more (helicopter or micromanage)."

R6: "I'm still learning. So this point is, I'm still learning. "But I'm doing much better than I did." When I started."R6: So it's a matter of figuring it out, and it's not easy, but there are systems in place for everything." And I just need to apply myself to the systems." R6: Can I use as much as I am excited?" There's the word I don't want to say confused." It's not

confusing. "There's a word I want to use, you know, as much as things are, exciting." But there's still that, that figuring things out at the back. "

R7: "Sometimes you feel lost, confused, and you have to find yourself, you don't know how to perform correctly, and no one will tell you that you have to perform in a particular way, You know you are there, but instead you need to be there. "

This can be a painful space to be in for a prolonged period (Andersson, 2005). Transitioning managers are said to go through a sensation of losing meaning and stability; therefore, the process is a stressful one that is filled with anxiety (Andersson, 2005 and Ashforth, 2000). Individuals going through a transition at work are said to experience a great level of anxiety and uncertainty (Yip et al., 2020).

R1: "I want to be honest with you." It makes you sometimes feel frustrated; hence I am saying that look, it's a little bit frustrating for me because I know my worth." R1: "Every day, the dynamics change, like a virus that, you know, that changes form." So there's no actual vaccine to it. I am discovering the hard way what works. "

R2: "But it did affect me personally; in terms of frustration, I do not know how to put it into words. "I was not really sure what I was doing If it was the right thing. "

R3: "So, yes, at times, I will be like, Okay, do I really know what I am doing?" "Am I suitable for like, for this position?" But like, I've always pushed through something, I'm not the type to easily just give up on something." I get that I have no other option if I just decide to throw in the towel. "

R4: " Personally, it does dent your ego a bit in the sense that you come to a new team, you think you know everything, and you think you can make sure that all the people are super-efficient. One, I felt like am I being set up to fail?" "Am I good enough for the role?" "I 'was now spending more time at work." I got burnout so; therefore, I had to find a new strategy that was new to myself, and I had to find it on the go, "

R5: "That was what it is at the end of the day; you do have those, like butterflies in your stomach because you feel that this is it. " R5: " also depend on what you tell yourself; for example, I knew what I signed up for and understood that it was going to be better over time with experience. "

R6: *"Were you scared about this excitement, as much as you are excited in the role." You're scared that you're going to miss something, or you're going to do something wrong; the word is uncertainty, where not everything will go as you plan."*

R7: *"One had to let go of this side in order to go to that other side, meaning stop the previous role activity so that one can advance the activities of the new role and mature in the new activities." "You feel like you are hanging; you feel like your feet are not on the ground."*

4.7 Phase 3 code: IN: Incorporation findings

Proposition 3: The individual is satiable, comfortable and acts confidently in the role.

Transitioning Individual's possible future selves are well developed or matured in this phase (Ibarra, 2005). The Incorporation phase is the last phase of the transition process characterised by the individual being comfortable and acting confidently in the new role (Andersson, 2005 and Ibarra, 1999). The individuals in this phase have a clear idea of what they are doing, and if they find challenges, they know how to deal with them for a positive outcome. Furthermore, the participants who acknowledged this phase fully identified with their roles, meaning they were clear about who they were as individuals.

Question:

How is your job right now compared to the time when you were starting up. Follow up questions, how have you stabilised in the new role compared to when you were starting up? After how long did you get to this stage? What are your thoughts if you had to do it again? Will it be easy? What are your lessons learnt?

Answer:

R2: *"In three to six months, it became a bit better." I have been in the position for a year now."R2: If I had to start in a new area, I think it would be easier because the current experience has equipped me to understand the approach when dealing with the new team example I need to see what level the team is at before I can implement my own new ideas and support."*

R4: *"Things became stable after one year." I have been in the position for two years now." R4: "The lessons learnt can be taken over from one team to another team. "For example that it is best to evaluate the team's strengths and people capabilities so that you can see how best to work with them. "*

R5: *"I reached stability in two to three months."R5: " With my current experience, It is different now because now I can focus on my core functions of a team leader in comparison to where we*

are coming from; as discussed before, I am able to now take a step back and have an overview, and I am now like a music conductor I can juggle."

R6: "it went from? Okay, too good. So I was constantly under pressure at the beginning, where I felt like everybody was putting pressure." And now people are putting pressure, but I can deal with it." R6: "I feel much better." I go home in a better mood." I have more time. It took seven months to get to this point."

R7: "It is very much different. Yeah, today we talk about stability now." "R7: So for now, everything has changed. Because the lines have been drawn." Now. Everybody knows his or her role."

"The team was converted to stability very much quickly and consistently." it's a very good team and a very talented people." R7: "I have been in the current position for eight months and in the development team leader position for two years."

Some of the individuals that were starting out or going through phase 2 do not confirm phase 3, suggesting that it is not possible to be in phase 2 and phase 3 at the same time.

R1: "I know, it's going to be a long, long time for me to actually be in a position where I can say to myself, I am comfortable enough;" R1: "Starting in a new area should be easy with the experience that I have gained."

R3: "So it's a bit hectic." Six months, I'm still discovering what works." It's, it's ongoing." "It's really ongoing." "Like you might think you." You've got the formula right now, but then something throws you for a six." So, yeah, it's an ongoing thing." Yeah. You can never say 100%."

4.8 Separation

All participants agree that there is a psychological identity shift that took place before assuming the new role as a result of acting in the role before the actual appointment. The team leader development program provided by the organisation is said to provide a chance to act in the role. Furthermore, training and mentors are provided in the team leader program. The triggers for the separation phase are said to be something as minor as applying for the new role, investigating the new role and training for the new role (Ashforth, 2000). Therefore acting in the role is a major trigger of the first phase. In the case of the team leaders in the study, the separation

process starts in the team leader development program. It is suggested that in this 1st phase, the individual starts to de-identify with the old role whilst identifying themselves with the new role. This is said to be necessary for freeing up the energy needed for the individual when they need to transition (Andersson, 2005). The individuals in the program already identify themselves as developing team leaders and have stated that starting in the program means that they start in the role long before the actual appointment date. This is further evidence that the identity shift towards the new role takes place in the development program long before the appointment to the role. Furthermore, reinforces proposition one's claim that transition is a psychological phenomenon triggered by particular ideas and activities an individual undertakes. In spite of participating in the program, evidence suggests that a 2nd phase is triggered when the transitioning individuals are appointed into the role. It is evident from some individuals who recently started expressing how they do not identify themselves as team leaders yet, as they have not yet succeeded in that role.

4.9 Transitioning

This phase is characterised by identity ambiguity where the individual is not yet feeling confident acting in the new role after assuming the new appointment but at the same time are not in their old role, so they find themselves in between identities (Ibarra, 2005). In this phase, the old and new identities all exist simultaneously. The transitioning individual is trying out provisional selves for the new role (Yip et al., 2020). Because the team leader development program provides the opportunity to act out their future roles, the actual point of start is before the appointment to discover that the separation and transition phases overlap. Yip et al.(2020 p.513), Andersson (2005 p.513), Ibarra (2003 p.65) also suggest that the transition phase is the most stressful in the entire process. Participants noted that during this phase, they worked long hours, and long after work, they thought about work to the point that they needed to devise means to cope with the anxiety of having to succeed at the role, especially in the beginning. According to the study results, those individuals facing the transition phase have felt frustrated due to the lack of stability in the role and the effort of trying to discover what makes the role successful. Many participants reported feeling helpless since they did not know if what they were doing was correct at this phase.

4.10 Incorporation

One participant compared reaching this stage of management to directing a musical where they knew how to direct the team, they could now delegate remotely, and others described their teams as stable. Furthermore, they are no longer taking the emotions of working home, having more free time and coming to work in a better mood. Yip et al.(2020, p.513) state that the individuals who have reached this stage act confidently and are comfortable in the new role (Andersson, 2005). Furthermore, the individual has gained acceptance within the new social group, or their leadership claim is accepted by the new team (Andersson, 2005). The evidence of having gained social acceptance within the new team is the ability to delegate.

The transition individuals experience phase three at different intervals (see Table 5). Participants who had experienced this phase indicated that the role was stable, the stress levels had decreased, and they looked forward to coming to work the following day. A prolonged transitioning phase where the individual does not reach the incorporation phase can be a painful space to be in (Andersson, 2005).

4.11 Summary

This chapter contains the analysed results; furthermore, it connects the results back to the research question using predetermined themes from the literature, and this is consistent with the deductive thematic analysis methodology study. The interview questions were structured so that the research can extract insight into how role transitioning occurs in individuals starting up in a new team leader position. Seven newly appointed team leaders were approached and interviewed using an interview schedule with questions that link back to the research question themes. The sample composition is 57% of the participants had not completed a year in the role, 14% had completed a year, whilst 28% had completed two years in the role. Three propositions of the theoretical transition process were established from previous studies. Proposition one was confirmed by all the participants, with two participants giving an alternative to one component of the proposition. The finding confirms that individuals psychologically transition into the future role before physical leaving their current job; therefore, identity changes take place before starting in a new role. Furthermore, after the actual appointment into the new role, individuals will still have the urge to act as in the previous role. Two individuals stated different reasons for their actions. For example, two individuals indicated that their actions of not delegating the task but doing the task as in the previous role indicated that it was an act of showing or demonstrating or leading by example to manage a situation where the subordinate

did not have the required skill. All the participants confirmed proposition two. The finding confirms the existence of an in-between phenomenon where the transitioning individual feels that they are not in the previous role at the same time and does not feel that they are not fully a part of the new role. Proposition three was confirmed by five participants; two of the participants who had been in the position for less than six months did not confirm proposition three. The finding confirms that after two to six months, the individuals feel that they are part of the new role and that they start to get to a state of stability and routine in the new role. The findings indicated that individuals that are undergoing phase two are not able to experience phase three, meaning that individuals who are still finding their feet in the role are not able to confirm stability and routine in the role. Therefore, proposition three cannot be confirmed. The evidence shows that participants transition at different intervals suggesting that there is no uniform period for going through transition, and there is limited research that has explored this subject. Therefore, there can be a recommendation for further studies. A larger number of the participants confirmed or talked about the themes that emerged from the literature, therefore confirming the literature with two instances where an alternative was given.

Macro role transition as a transitioning process is able to explain the results from the study very closely; refer to the hit and miss Table 4. The transition phase and the incorporation phase seemed to be mutually exclusive since the participants who had claimed to be experiencing the transitioning phase did not claim to be also experiencing the incorporation phase. All the individuals in the study have undergone preparation for the role, so it makes it a challenge to determine the starting point of the transition process from a macro role transition point of view as much as Andersson (2005 p 205) states that identity transition can be triggered long before starting in a position. Further, when individuals move from the training program to their actual role, it appears that they need to go through the separation phase again as acting in the developmental role is not the same as having full control over the role, but participants stated that it was easier to make the transition after having undergone the team leader development program first. One of the participants stated that they started identifying with the role whilst in the development program as well when starting in the position, the title matched their identity.

4.12 Recommendations for the organisation and the transitioning individual

Recommendations for the organisation and the transitioning individual.

Education about the transition process: In the transitioning individual's account, the experience of transition matches the test book definition very well. They were unaware, however, of the moving parts of the transitioning process and how the symptoms and feelings they were experiencing are elements of such a process. Especially the explanation about liminality or the transition phase where they felt frustrated, stressed, and not anchored in the new role after leaving the old one. Armed with the knowledge of the process, the transitioning individual could possibly avoid anxiety and some of the pitfalls associated with it.

Assessment of the team before implementation: The participants suggested that when starting in a new team as a leader, one must apply what is similar to Hersey and Blanchard's Situational leadership theory (Lumen, no date). This is where the leader's leadership style is matched to the direct reports preparedness and maturity level—resulting in the leader deciding to tell what to do, selling, participating or delegating to the new team.

Rapidly creating the new network and mapping stakeholders: Make a quick move to discover the informal organisational chart. Participants in the study stressed the importance of peer support.

Additionally, the key is to know whom to contact or which door to knock on in order to obtain all systems and support available within the organisation. Mapping out stakeholders helps clarify one area for value-adding and what others are expecting from you.

Own the role from the start: At the beginning of their roles, new team leaders tend not to envision themselves with the title. As soon as they are appointed, team leaders should develop their work identity by accepting and owning that they are team leaders.

Recommendations for the organisation on the transitioning process.

Provide onboarding programs for internal transfers as well: a well-coordinated onboarding program for new appointees can provide the newcomers to the position with learning opportunities, orientation and networking opportunities, especially if the move is to a new department.

Provide transition coaching: the team development program already provides mentors to team leaders; they can double up as transition coaches to accelerate the transition process. To support the new leaders in the new journey and to avoid transition pitfalls.

Provide upfront learning: divisions can prepare document packs for new leaders to help them orientate in the new team. The transitioning new team leaders suggested that there is no manual for transition into the new role and may very be that no two people can experience the same way and react the same way. Upfront information can orientate the new leader: e.g. performance targets, Key Performance Indicators, and main customer measuring areas.

Assign a peer in operations or a transition buddy: the Participants cited not asking questions and trying to figure things out by themselves as some of the painful mistakes they made. Furthermore, their peers have been one of the most important resources in their transition.

Check-in sessions: Managers of new team leaders must plan to meet often in the early stages of transition in order to ask for feedback and to provide feedback. The check-in sessions with their managers, according to the study participants, facilitated the transition process positively. Further, the clarification of expectations on a daily basis supported the daily activities and the delegation process.

4.13 Conclusion

Evidence from the results suggests that acting in the team leader development program supports the process of de-identification from the old role and identification with the new role before actual appointment into the role. Although the development program supported the role transition, when starting in the new area as a team leader, participants still had to go through phase one. Participants noted that they had the urge to act as in the previous role earlier in the role transitioning process. In phase two, there was a mention of frustration with the new role and lack of identity because the individual was no longer in the old role but also could not fully claim the new one. The team leaders who showed evidence of phase three were less stressed, stable in their roles, and very clear about their identity and titles.

5 CHAPTER: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we discussed the propositions on transitioning from a specialist role into a leadership role and the results of our participants' lived experiences about the process. The following chapter, 5, aims to draw conclusions based on the study propositions, to make recommendations for the transitioning individual, for the organization, and for future research.

5.2 Conclusion based on the study aim and objectives.

The aim is to investigate the experiences of first-time leaders making the transition from a specialist role to a team leader's role in a manufacturing and production environment. Seven participants who had less than five years in the team leader position were interviewed, and the results were populated in the findings chapter of this study.

The research Objectives are outlined below.

Objective 1: To investigate how first-time team leaders in a manufacturing organisation

Objective 2: To investigate how transitioning team leaders adapt to the new leader's role, experience separation, transitioning, and incorporation phases during a transition from a specialist to a team leader.

Based on the evidence of the investigation of role change, macro role transition fits well with explaining role change for transitioning team leaders in their first leadership roles.

In the study, evidence indicates that role exit is a psychological process, with participants demonstrating signs of role exit before the actual exit and exhibiting signs of not fully exiting the previous role after the exit.

In the study, transitioning individuals went through a phase where they did not identify with the new role because it is still new and they are figuring out how it works, while at the same time they have lost the familiar, comfortable environment of the previous role. As a result, they felt frustrated and did not belong. Anxiety affects them personally and spills over to loved ones because they tend to think about the new role challenges even when at home. Additionally, they

have to determine how to direct their team, so they gain the commitment they need to be successful in their leadership.

The study discovered that after a period that varies from individual to individual, a new leader could reach a stable phase in their journey where they have figured out what it takes to be successful in the role and are stable in it.

Objective 3: To investigate how role identities were developed as new leaders experienced a role change from a specialist to a team leader.

Role change is a psychological phenomenon. Therefore, it is not limited to an individual being appointed to the role. It was stated some participants that began to see themselves as team leaders before they were appointed. Therefore, their role identities had already begun to change before the appointment, but as soon as they started in the position, they did not feel as if they were team leaders since they had not yet successfully performed the role. There is evidence that role identity change is not initiated before the actual appointment but concludes long after one is appointed therefore accounting for an in-between phase of identity that is ill-defined.

Objective 4: To develop recommendations based on the findings on how organisations and transitioning team leaders should approach this process.

Participants were asked what they think works in the implementation of the new leadership, and the many ideas that were shared will be evident in the recommendations.

5.3 Conclusion based on the study propositions and key outcomes.

Proposition 1

The first-time leader goes through the first phase of identity change, experiencing anxiety over losing the old identity, anticipating and unsure about the new role, and letting go of the old identity to make way for the new.

The shared leaved experiences of the participants suggest that as humans, we are not able to switch off one aspect of our work experience and immediately move to the next; somehow, there is a residue that lingers on from our past roles even when we have changed job title. This is evident from the leaders who were once specialists having difficulty in stopping themselves from jumping in and doing the work that was once familiar to them for their subordinates. Letting go of the previous identity frees the individual from receiving the new identity and facilitates maturing the new identity. Individuals that are going through this phase are advised

to stop doing what they did in the previous role and to jump into action on the activities of the new role. In order to support the de-identification along the old path and the identification along the new path.

Proposition 2

In the second phase, the individual transitioning experiences the psychological state of not being in the old role or completely entrenched in the new role, thus feeling neither here nor there.

The participants who experienced this phase suggested that they feel like they are in the air or hanging. It is a psychological hangover from not having the old safeties, routines, and security, and at the same time, not having the new role safeties, routines, and security because you have not mastered the new role yet. The anxiety that these individuals experience is a result of the pressure and fear of not being able to make it to the next stability phase as they did in their former role as a specialist. Individuals going through this phase reported feeling frustrated with their experience of lacking an anchored role and having an idea that they are floating or they are neither here nor there. Additionally, the difficulties brought about by having to figure out how the role works through trial and error. Transitioning individuals also expressed that there is no clear manual that lays out how to approach the role; you have to figure it out on your own as you go along.

Proposition 3

In the final phase of transition, the transitioning individual is comfortable with their new identity, feels stable, and acts confidently in the new role.

As participants who indicated they had reached this phase, they feel confident about the job title they hold and the role they play. They claim to have figured out the mechanisms of the role and have the support of the teams they lead. Some of the participants indicated that they had reached stability in the role; others suggested that over time they were able to lead with confidence and confirmed that their ability to delegate improved. Furthermore, indicating they gained insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the new team.

Recommendations for future research and limitations for this study.

It is recommended that the component of transition individual and social group acceptance be measured as well for the different macro transitioning phases. Additionally, to answer the question, how long does it take one to transition?

This study had limitations since the sample composition did not only consist of participants who had undergone the full transition process but also included participants who were still in the early stages of transitioning, so the study was only able to confirm specific phases.

Also prompting the question what is the duration of transitioning since participants cited different intervals for different phases and that they are no indicators of which phase the individual is on until one completes the inquiry.

Significance of this study: From this study, we gain an understanding or an answer to the question of how individuals transition into the team leader role for the first time and the implications on how organisations and individuals might approach this process in the future. Additional, the study a gap in the literature, and that is the study to look into the duration of the transition and the influences of the duration of the transition.

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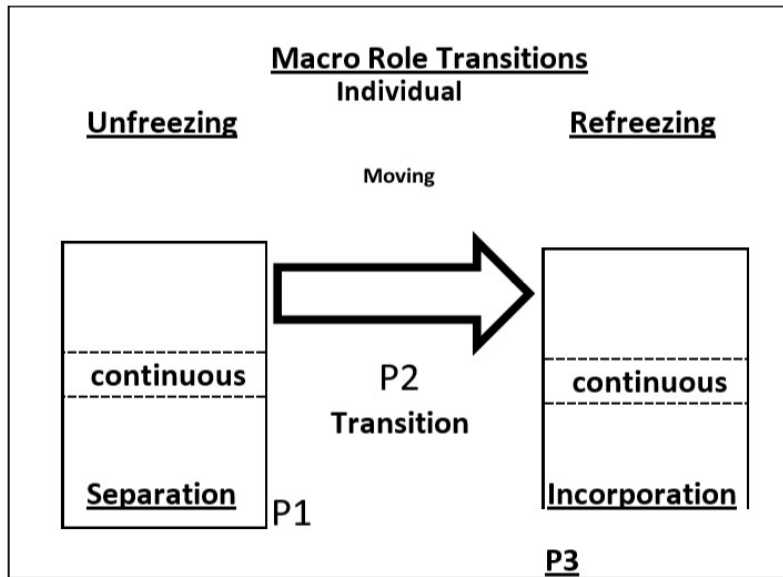
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7 Appendices

7.1 APPENDIX A Conceptual Framework



(Andersson, 2005)

7.2 APPENDIX B Question Matrix

	Script prior to interview :
	I will like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The study is basically researching the process that new leaders go through especial relating to they re identity or, in other words, with regards to how they approach their re-experience whengoing navigating the experience of leading teams as a first time experience.
	Can I have your consent to record this interview for yes / no

Script before the interview:					
I will like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I am conducting a study that is looking into the identity transition of newly appointed team managers. By identity, we mean, who are you or what do you think it means to be what you are in terms of the role you are in. The definition of transition is moving from one role without yet having arrived in the other role. You are neither here nor there with regards to your new role.					
Can I have your consent to transcribing this interview using cell phone app.(yes/no). The app is for transcribing for interview purposes. The documents will be sent to the supervisor for safekeeping on a password-protected drive or a virtual cloud drive such as iCloud or google drive for five years.					
Yes. Thank you. Just let me know if there are any parts you will like me not to transcribe or that you will want me to keep out of the interview No: thank you can I jot down notes as we go through the questions. Thank you					
Before we start are any questions you would like me to clarify. At any point in the interview if there are any questions, please stop me and proceed with your question.					
Question matrix of the interview questions					
		Background	Proposition 1: Separation	Proposition 2: Transitioning	Proposition 3: Incorporation
No	Questions for the interview				
1	What position did you hold before you became a team manager? (who are you in the organisation)	x			
2	How long have you been in the current position?	x			
3	Which team are you leading?	X			
4	Before starting in this position, what ideas did you have about what it takes to be a team manager? Example: what a team manager does and how a team manager should		x		

	<p>behave and act.</p> <p>Follow up: How did you prepare yourself mentally before your first day to say I now have to carry myself like a team manager. Explain.</p> <p>How was the experience of leading a team for the first time?</p>				
5	<p>Describe the time where you had to perform your previous tasks from your previous job whilst you were already acting in your new job.</p> <p>How did you feel about the occurrence?</p>		x		
6	<p>How did you deal with tasks from your previous role?</p> <p>How was your delegating skills when you first started in the team manager role compared to today.</p> <p>Where you able to immediately delegate to the team in your first weeks/months in the new post.</p> <p>Follow up: did you still have the habit from your previous specialist function of doing the task by yourself.</p>		x		
7	<p>Can you describe the time when you were still discovering what works and what does not work within the team manager job.</p>			x	

	How did this period make you feel? How did this period impact your loved ones?				
8	How is your job right now compared to the time when you were starting up. Follow up question, how have you stabilised in the new role compared to when you were starting up?. How did you learn what works and what does not? (follow up was it a test and learn, gain insight process)				
9	After how long did you get to this stage?			x	
10	What was helpful, as not helpful from the time you started this journey to when you were comfortable/settled in the position? (any winning events, how did that make you feel)				x
11	What are your thoughts if you had to do it again? Will it be easy? What are your lessons lent?				x

8	Did you ever get to a point where you were acting with confidently and you felt comfortable after assuming the new role?				
9	After how long did you see yourself as a team manager after, month three months what about a year of starting in the position?			x	
10	What was helpful as not helpful from the time you started in the position to the time when you were comfortable/settled in the position?				x
11	What are your thoughts if you had to do it again will it be easy, what are your lessons learned?				x

7.3 APPENDIX C Table 1: Macro Transitioning Process

Table 6: Macro Transitioning Process

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Separation	Transition	Incorporation
The starting point of the transition process.	The midpoint of the process	The endpoint of the process
The challenge: is the loss of current identity. The identity stretch: Uncertainty and anticipation about the new leader identity.	The old identity is still present, and the new is not completely adopted; the new leader is in-between identities. The challenge: is transitioning between two identities and identity threats, engages in identity buffering.	The new identity is taking shape and gaining acceptance. The challenge: is incorporating or integrating the new identities of the individual's and the groups and experiencing identity conflict.
Mechanisms: of overcoming this early stage is by taking action.	Mechanisms: experimenting and prototyping	Mechanisms: storytelling, sense-making.
Example: stop activities of the past role. Start acting the new part.	Practice delegating, reporting, chairing meetings and dressing the part.	Practice storytelling about the journey and improve the story or narrative.

7.4 APPENDIX D Propositions

Propositions:

Propositions 1

The first-time leader goes through the first phase of identity change, experiencing anxiety over losing the old identity, anticipating and unsure about the new role, and letting go of the old identity to make way for the new.

Propositions 2

In the second phase, the individual transitioning experiences the psychological state of not being in the old role or completely entrenched in the new role, thus feeling neither here nor there.

Propositions 3

In the final phase of transition, the transitioning individual is comfortable with their new identity, feels stable, and acts confidently in the new role.

7.5 APPENDIX D Code Book

Codebook	
Proposition no	1
Code	S.E.
Label	Separation phase
Definition	It is the first stage of unlearning the previous role; The individuals anticipate the new role and Individual start to define themselves along the new role.
Description	This phase involves letting go of current behaviour and de-identifying with the current social object that the individual currently holds (the idea of who they are) (Andersson, 2005)
Data examples to verify the code	the individual may not stop acting out task from the prewise role or not respond when addressed with the new title.
Proposition no	2
Code	T.R.
Label	Transitioning phase
Definition	The state of not being in the old role and yet not matured the in the new role.
Description	A process of leaving one role, without having completely left it, and at the same time, of entering the new role, without being fully reached the phase where you comfortable.

Data examples to verify the code.	The phase of being in-between role identities is said to create an unstructured and ambiguous state of confusion. At this phase, the transiting leader lacks a clear role identity
Proposition no	3
Code	IN
Label	Incorporation
Definition	the last phase of the transition process that is characterised by the individual being comfortable and acting confidently in the new role.
Description	In this phase, the future selves from the previous two phases are fully developed, and the individual acts with confidence and is comfortable in the new role.
Data examples to verify the code.	The individual starts acts on the future selves and a conclusion on what selves to keep or reject depending on the feeling of congruence or authenticity.

7.6 APPENDIX E Institution Participation Letter

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO BY AND BETWEEN:

[REDACTED] SOUTH AFRICA LIMITED

Registration number **[REDACTED]**

("hereinafter referred to as "[REDACTED]")

and

SIBUSISO PATRICK MZELEMU

Full Names

(hereinafter referred to as the "Student")

8406065431083 ID Number

(collectively referred to as the "Parties")

[REDACTED]

[Handwritten signature]
T-S

7.7 APPENDIX F Ethics Approval Letter



Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee
PO Box 94, Makhanda, 6140, South Africa
t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727
f: +27 (0) 46 603 8822
e: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za
NHREC Registration number: RC-241114-045
<https://www.ru.ac.za/researchgateway/ethics/>

28 March 2022

Mr. Patrick Sbusiso Mzelemu
Email: g18m9756@campus.ru.ac.za
Review Reference: 2021-0960-6062

Dear Mr. Patrick Sbusiso Mzelemu

Title: An Investigation of How Newly Appointed Team Leaders in an Automotive Manufacturing Organisation Experience the Role Transition from Specialists to Team Leaders.

Researcher: Mr. Patrick Sbusiso Mzelemu
Supervisor: Mr Kevin Rafferty

This letter confirms that the above research proposal has been reviewed and **APPROVED** by the Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee (RU-HREC). Your Approval number is: 2021-0960-6062

Approval has been granted for 1 year. An annual progress report will be required in order to renew approval for an additional period. You will receive an email notifying you when the annual report is due.

Please ensure that the ethical standards committee is notified should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process. This includes changes in investigators. Please also ensure that a brief report is submitted to the ethics committee on the completion of the research. The purpose of this report is to indicate whether the research was conducted successfully, if any aspects could not be completed, or if any problems arose that the ethical standards committee should be aware of. If a thesis or dissertation arising from this research is submitted to the library's electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) repository, please notify the committee of the date of submission and/or any reference or cataloguing number allocated.

Sincerely,

Prof. Arthur Webb

Chair: Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee, RU-HREC

cc: Ms Danielle de Vos - Ethics Coordinator