

**A POLICY ANALYSIS OF THE MSUNDUZI MUNICIPALITY'S
*CAREER PATHING POLICY, 2006.***

Nkosiwabona Nono Zungu

2007

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg

**A POLICY ANALYSIS OF THE MSUNDUZI MUNICIPALITY'S CAREER
PATHING POLICY, 2006.**

NKOSIYABONA NONO ZUNGU

200275574

BSc (Geography and Hydrology) & PG Diploma (Applied Social Sciences: Policy
and Development Studies)

January 2007

A research portfolio submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Social Science in Policy and Development Studies in the Faculty of
Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Pietermaritzburg.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study critically analyzes the extent to which the Career Pathing Policy (2006) of the Msunduzi Municipality reflects the requirements of the national government frameworks. The study further explores the parallels between the Msunduzi Municipality's experience of drafting a Career Pathing Policy (2006) and international experiences. International experiences were used to explore similarities and differences with a view to draw conclusions about the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy's (2006) potential for success. The international experience shows that career pathing is not a new phenomenon. Various organizations both in the public and private sector have embarked on career pathing projects, influenced by very similar issues experienced by the Msunduzi Municipality. The study further critiques the proposed implementation strategy of this policy. In so doing, it explores how the policy was created and assesses the likelihood of its failure or success in the light of the public policy theories, organizational context itself and the national government's legislative requirements on career pathing. The study established that the level of public participation was minimal during the policy making process; thus jeopardizing the final policy document and effective involvement of role players at the implementation stage of the policy.

The study concluded that the implementation strategy of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) is weak in the light of the public policy theory, international experience and the organisational context. Indeed recommended polices need to be developed, resources allocated, interdepartmental relations strengthened and care taken that all the stakeholders understand and declare their support for the policy. Recommendations are offered as to the likelihood of the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) in the Msunduzi Municipality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sir Isaac Newton said that if he was able to see further than others it was because he stood on the shoulders of giants. In fact dwarfs on the shoulders of giants see further than giants. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the following:

My supervisor, Ms Kirsty Trotter for her profound and professional guidance throughout the making of this thesis; her efforts are herein appreciated.

Prof Ralph Lawrence and Kirsty Trotter for the wonderful opportunity to participate on the internship programme which broadened my understanding of public policy and the scope of my career. My warm gratitude to all other Policy and Development Studies staffs, especially Ms. Desiree Manicom and Mrs. Anne Stanton for their extensive knowledge of public policy and development.

The Msunduzi-Pietermaritzburg Municipality staffs for their support in making this study a success, especially the Process Manager (Lulama Mbatha) for Human Resources Development Process Unit.

Mr. Sipho Dlodla and Pastor ST Mabaso (CFCI) for their support during my studies.

My friends Phumlani Makhoba, Alec Mashabane, Dumsani Mashele, Mandlenkosi Zondi, Mncedisi Caluza and Tebogo Matjutla whose lives have been an inspiration. I regard myself fortunate for being associated with you gentlemen. And all those who, in one way or another contributed in the making of this thesis but could not be mentioned. You are herein acknowledged.

I cannot forget my family for always being a source of inspiration even when everything was shaking: My mother (Mrs. Nana Zungu) and father (Mr. Fakalithenjwa Zungu) and my brothers and sisters Vusi, Sandile, Ntombifuthi, Mpilonhle, Mxolisi and S'lindile.

Finally, glory and honor to my Savior, Jesus Christ; the author and finisher of my faith. I found Him worthy to be forever praised.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the content of this research study is my own original work. This work has not been submitted to any other university for any form of examination.

Nkosiyabona Zungu

.....

Signature

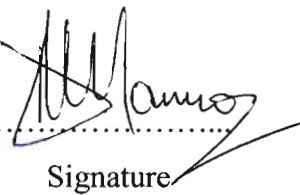
.....

Date

As the candidate's supervisor I have approved this thesis for submission

Ms D.P. Mankwani

Name



Signature

2 / 07 / 07

Date

ABBREVIATIONS

ABET:	Adult Basic Education and Training
EXCO:	Executive Committee
HRD:	Human Resources Development
HRM & ER:	Human Resources and Employment Relations
HRD MANCO:	Human Resources Development Managing Committee
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
IMATU:	Independent Municipal Allied Union
OD:	Organisational Development
PM:	Process Manager
PU:	Process Unit
RPL:	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAMWU:	South African Municipal Workers Union
SBU:	Strategic Business Unit
SD:	Skills Development
SEM:	Strategic Executive Manager
SG & HR:	Sound Governance and Human Resources

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Declaration	iii
Acknowledgement	v
Abbreviations	v
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: POLICY CONTEXT	3
1.1 Career Pathing in a Global Context	3
1.2 The Career Pathing Framework in South Africa	9
1.2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.	10
1.2.2 Presidential Review Commission, 1996.	12
1.2.3 The Skills Development Act, 1998.....	16
1.2.4 White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 1995	18
1.2.5 White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998.....	20
1.2.6 White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service, 1997. ...	22
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	24
2.1 Public Policy	24
2.2 Policy Making Process.....	27
2.3 Policy Problem Identification	28
2.4 Policy Design / Formulation	30
2.5 Policy Decision-Making	33
2.6 Policy Implementation	35
2.7 Policy Monitoring and Evaluation.....	38
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	41
3 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES.....	41
3.1 Data Collection Methods	41
3.2 Sample.....	42
3.3 Data Analysis	43
3.4 Shortcomings of the Study.....	44
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS	45
4.1 SAMWU and IMATU Secretary-Generals at the Msunduzi Municipality ...	45
4.2 Human Resources Services Support Managers	49
4.3 Strategic Executive Managers.....	54
4.4 Human Resources and Employee Relations	60
4.5 Human Resources Development Managing Committee.....	65
CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS.....	73
5.1 Policy Purpose/Objective.....	73
5.2 Participation in Policy Making and Implementation Process	78

5.3 Financing the policy.....	82
5.4 Potential Challenges of Policy Implementation.....	83
5.4.1 Leadership capacity	83
5.4.2 Policy resources/other policies to be developed	84
5.4.3 Interdepartmental relations	87
5.4.4 Organizational structure.....	88
5.4.5 Organizational culture and political dynamics	89
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION	92
BIBLIOGRAPHY	96
APPENDIX 1 (Human Resources Services Support Managers).....	99
APPENDIX 2 (Human Resources Development Management Committee).....	101
APPENDIX 3 (Strategic Executive Managers)	103
APPENDIX 4 (SAMWU and IMATU Secretary-Generals)	105
APPENDIX 5 (HRM and Employee Relations Officers and Managers)	107
APPENDIX 6 (Msunduzi - Pietermaritzburg Municipality Organogram)	109

INTRODUCTION

In 2004, the Msunduzi Municipality embarked on a major process of organisational restructuring and placement of employees in different, higher positions with new roles and responsibilities. Before the placement process, many workers had been employed by the Municipality for many years without any progress in terms of career development and/or moving to better positions. This is largely because there were no clear guidelines or policies that made provision for such career mobility and as a result professional workers like engineers rarely completed their contracts, preferring to leave for better opportunities elsewhere.

Limiting factors to career mobility included a lack of effective means to explore and prepare for other job opportunities within and outside the municipality; no recognition of further studies in terms of promotion; lack of skills for progression more especially on the low levels (general workers like street sweepers); no further effective guidance after Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) level four (equivalent to grade 12). After the 2004 organisational restructuring and placement, the Msunduzi Municipality conducted a survey aimed at determining the impact of the placement process. The survey showed, in addition to the above mentioned problems, some employees were inappropriately placed, experiencing a lack of job satisfaction, high work loads, low staff morale and a lack of clear paths for career progression.

In early 2006, in response to these problems, and guided by national policy agendas, the Msunduzi Municipality formulated a Career Pathing Policy. Through this policy, the Msunduzi Municipality aimed to create an improved approach to employee development by recognising and responding to their need for a satisfying and rewarding career. The Msunduzi Municipality has committed itself to ensuring that its Career Pathing Policy (2006) becomes a significant personnel consideration, applying to all staff, from all levels, and generating progressive changes to related personnel policies like Staff Development Policy (2004), Assessment Policy (2006), Progression Policy and Promotion Policy.¹

¹ Career Pathing Policy Draft appeared in May 2006 drafted by the Sound Governance and Human Resources Business Unit.

This qualitative study explores the Career Pathing Policy (2006) of the Msunduzi Municipality and investigates the extent to which it accurately echoes the sentiments of the national Career Pathing framework. In addition, this study critiques the implementation strategy proposed for this policy. In so doing, recommendations have emerged as to the likelihood of success of the implementation of this policy in the Msunduzi Municipality.

CHAPTER ONE: POLICY CONTEXT

This chapter focuses on three sections: career pathing in a global context and the career pathing policy frameworks in South Africa. The first section explores the concept of career pathing in a global context; the second section critically examines the South African national policy frameworks which mandate the implementation of career pathing in all administrations of government. It is critical to provide an explanation of 'career path'. Merelo (2004: 3) defines a career path as the design, method and framework employees use as a path or sequential channels to reach their career destiny. According to Cappellen & Janssens (2005: 349) a career path is the "unfolding sequence of a person's work over time with an occupational or organisational context." They further argue that a career path is a journey marked by the time and direction or objectives of an individual or organization.

1.1 Career Pathing in a Global Context

The governments of Canada, state legislature of Massachusetts (United States) and the Canadian Saskatchewan Association of Health Organisations (SAHO) offer good international examples of the issues related to this topic. Much is drawn from their career pathing experiences. In addition, the career pathing experiences in Britain, France and Egypt are also consulted.

According to the Treasury Board of Canada (1999), profound changes in Canadian business required organizations to increase their human resources planning and career development strategies for employees. The Treasury Board of Canada (1999) further argues that these changes included the challenges of globalization and international competition; technological advancement; government employment equity legislation; redefined concept of client-driven service delivery and labour shifting demographics. Globalization being the most challenging factor refers to the liberalization of markets, quick flow of goods and services from one part to all parts of the world, international competitive performance of firms and sectors, free labour migration, rise and maturity of multinational corporations (Hirst & Thompson, 1996; Warper, 1996). Hirst and Thompson (1996) further contend that globalization tends to erode the national boundaries and allow for trade, business and labour skills competition between the

nations of the world. Thus, increasing pressure to the local organisations to improve their human resources planning and career development for their employees.

According to the Treasury Board of Canada (1999), these technological advancements are linked to career development and human resources management in two ways. First, they have increased the need for staff training in new skills in order to continue being part of the workforce. Second, the difficulty in recruiting new employees with skills in Information Technology (IT) has been worse in the public service. This is important for this study as its focus is on the public service, specifically local government. The Treasury Board of Canada, 1999 continues to argue that the new Canadian government legislation on employment equity, Affirmative Action and other employment standards have had major effects on career development. For a public service to achieve a representative workforce, new human resources development strategies have to be developed to ensure that the previously disadvantaged groups are capacitated in order to effectively execute their new jobs, related roles and responsibilities.

Changing demographics in the Canadian (and other countries) labour forces have been a contributing factor in the increase of importance of career developments. Demographic studies, as the Treasury Board of Canada (1999), illustrate that the experienced and highly skilled workers are of much older age and as they retire or die there will be a major shortage of skilled labour. This poses a challenge for career development and career pathing in the workforce.

The Canadian Public Service, which is conceived in this study as the government and its administrative services, has developed various strategies to respond to these challenges, including programme review, public service reform, downsizing, restructuring and improved customer service (Treasury Board of Canada, 1999). Program reviews involve refining the policies of public administration like hiring policies, staff development, human resources development and other personnel policies. Treasury Board of Canada (1999) further contends that public service reform concerns transforming the traditional operating culture of the public service into a more 'business like Public Service' and that restructuring involves reviewing the structures of the Public Service bodies/departments into a more effective system.

Downsizing is argued to concern the reduction of the size of the workforce and maintaining the small effective employees rather than the large number of redundant and ineffective employees (Treasury Board of Canada, 1999). All these strategies contribute to improved customer service and service delivery and they demand that both managers and employees and managers must embark on human resource development focused strategies (Treasury Board of Canada, 1999).

The Treasury Board of Canada (1999) further argues that career development as a component of human resources development strategies will thus play a major role in assuring the successful implementation of these strategies as it provides employees with the knowledge and skills needed for organisational change and effectiveness. However, without organisational restructuring and reform, human resources development policies reviews and career development will not be effective. Employees' careers should be developed in a way that ensures employees progress and organisational change. Stone and Meltz (1993); Cascio and Thacker (1994), argue that the literature shows that organizations engage in career development and planning activities being influenced by amongst other things, the need to develop and promote employees from within the organization; shortage of promotable talent; a desire to increase productivity and improve customer service; a concern about employee turnover and employment equity legislation and planning pressures.

Grindle (1997: 78) argues that strengthening human resources development strategies and career development will play a major role in improving the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of government performance. Grindle (1997: 79) further adds that strengthening human resources and career development is a key in enhancing capacity building in the public service.

In 1996, the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO)² in Canada, established a career pathing project for health sector and health labour force (SAHO, 2004: 3; 4). The establishment of the Saskatchewan Career Project was prompted by the fact that Saskatchewan town has an aging workforce with a significant number of

² A non-profit, non-government and member-driven organization whose members include Saskatchewan's regional health authorities, independent hospitals and special care homes, education institutions and various agencies associations that provide health care services.

employees nearing retirement, with about 1, 400 nurses eligible to retire by 2007; this has resulted in the town experiencing difficulties in recruiting for several jobs, especially in rural and remote areas; as well as difficulty in retaining skilled employees in the health sector (SAHO, 2004: 3). The SAHO then resorted to increase the pool of skilled health employees by developing partnerships with employees, unions, education and training institutions, governments and the native Canadian community in developing an effective and consolidated Career Pathing Project (SAHO, 2004: 3). The SAHO's example shows that career pathing was developed to ensure that there is adequate supply of expertise to replace the retiring employees within the health sector. The involvement of the labour unions is critical for the project support from the workforce side. The involvement of higher education institutions provides the strong training and development role with the government involvement serving the political support role of the whole project.

In 2000, the state legislature of Massachusetts (United States) adopted the Extended Care Career Ladders Initiative (ECCLI) as part of a broader Nursing Home Quality Initiative. "Both Acts were a response to high turnover and vacancies among paraprofessionals in long-term care, creating instability that threatens quality and access to health care" (Wilson et al 2002: 5). The ECCLI's primary objectives were to improve the quality of care, promote skills development, develop career ladders and personnel workplace practices that support and develop workers, and improve retention of certified nursing assistants. To achieve these goals the Massachusetts legislature invested \$ 5 million in the first phase (2001) of the project and an additional \$ 5 million for the second phase (2002). Wilson et al (2002) further argues that these projects embarked on partnerships with other training and education providers and workforce development organizations including community based organizations, unions, workforce's development agencies and higher institutions of learning.

The state legislature of Massachusetts then mandated the Commonwealth Corporation with the administration and operation of the ECCLI. The Commonwealth Corporation (ComnCop) immediately established an Advisory Committee, representing industry, unions, and workforce development agencies to help in the development, strengthening and evaluation of the ECCLI. In 2002, the ComnCorp completed its

baseline evaluation report which was based in two University research teams, the Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and the University of Massachusetts's Mauricio Gaston Institute, Boston (Wilson et al, 2000: 2-5). The evaluation exercise assessed the impact of career development issues like high rate of resignations, low staff morale, lack of job satisfaction, promotions and wage increase; ways in which the nurses benefited from the project; and the impact the project had on Nursing Home Extended Care (Wilson, 2002: 72; 84-94). The findings showed that, through career path development, there were less resignations and more job and organisational satisfaction. The findings further revealed that the career development required more than it was budgeted for (\$ 10 million), more especially for training and development facilities and human resource support. This example reveals three things. First, issues that prompted the development of career development programme which will help in establishing whether the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) is in line with the international career pathing experience. Second, the importance of adequate funding, training and development facilities and human resources support for career development projects; third, ensuring that the project is monitored and evaluated in order to achieve its intended objectives; fourth, the need to involve all relevant stakeholders for the successful policy/programme implementation.

Merelo (2004) used a sample of 37140 (19140 men and 18000 women) from the British Households Panel Survey (PHPS: 1991- 2002) to study the impact of training and career path development on incentives such as job satisfaction and wage increase. He further investigated how training and promotion jointly influence wage growth, how job related training affects the chances a worker has in improving their careers, either in the form of internal promotion or leaving for better positions elsewhere, and how training and promotion contribute in wage increase (Merelo, 2004: 2). The results of the study showed that indeed many workers received promotions and wage increases related to training and promotions.

Job-related trainings had no effect in terms of promotions for the contract and temporary worker workers, and were unclear for fixed-term contract workers (Merelo, 2004: 12). The results also showed that workers (even if they were not promoted) never left for better positions elsewhere when they were employed in unionized

organizations. The understanding here was that their chances of being promoted were very high because unions established that filling of vacancies must be through internal promotions rather than through external hire (Merelo, 2004: 13). Furthermore educated workers showed greater career acceleration than less educated workers. In some cases, training with the previous employer was not considered legitimate by the new employer. The results of the study showed that training did not make any difference to wage increases and promotions in a short space of time but rather were determined by training combined with experience (Merelo, 2004: 22).

Souder (1983: 1) studied the career paths of American engineers who became successful managers. He argues that for an engineer to become a successful manager, a lot of new human management skills require careful career planning, and means of progression on-the-job experiences. Souder (1998: 1-2) further argues that career planning is part of strengthening human resources management. It becomes effective when a variety of jobs and pathways are provided by the organization, when the performance appraisal for the job are clearly stated, when the criteria for promotions are spelled out, and where the salary notches are consistent with all these principles.

A study of a software engineers in a large French electronics firm examined the impact of internal mobility opportunities. The company had employed too many engineers: with a total number of 2000 employees in France, including 800 engineers and executives. The company had a flat structure without any possibilities of upward career mobility. Thus their career options were to accept intra-organisational mobility or leave the company. The company's human resource manager proposed the study because the risk of turnover in the company was very high. The findings provided that the possible channel for upward career mobility was a managerial career path which required the software engineers to acquire new skills of management (Mignonac & Herrback, 2003: 206; 208).

The internal career mobility was seen as a solution to old employees who have been sitting in the same positions, and whose promotion opportunities were non-existent within the organizations. However such opportunities required software engineers to demonstrate a willingness to try new different fields and functions. Thus such career paths must match the objectives of the company and the individual's career

aspirations (Mignonac & Herrback, 2003: 07). The company also wanted to assess the willingness of the software engineers to consider new fields like management (Mignonac & Herrback, 2003: 206; 208).

The findings of the study revealed that lack of dual-ladder career path (managerial and technical) for engineers compelled them to leave the organization in order to attain managerial positions and still maintain their technical careers (Mignonac & Herrback, 2003: 218). The study confirmed that the movement of engineers to managerial careers was highly favourable. It was recommended for the company to ensure balance between the managerial career and technical career in order to retain its staff and increase employee's satisfaction within the organization (Mignonac & Herrback, 2003: 222).

El-Sabaa (2000: 3) studied the skills and career path of an effective project manager using 85 project managers both from the public sector and the private sector organizations in Egypt. The findings of this study showed that the skills and career path of a project manager are not like that of a general manager, but are more broad and demanding. It requires the project manager to be knowledgeable in technical skills, conceptual and organisational skills in order to manage various projects with various stakeholders. The score of these skills in terms of their importance were as follows: human skills (85%), conceptual and organisational skills (79.6%) and technical skills (50.46%) (El-Sabaa, 2000: 3). The human skills included mobilization, communication, coping with situations, delegations of authority, political sensitivity, high-self esteem and enthusiasm. The importance of this example lies in showing that career pathing plays a definite role in identifying relevant skills and training that will improve the capacity and effectiveness of the employees on their work.

1.2 The Career Pathing Framework in South Africa

There is a wide range of international literature available on this topic, but relatively little using South African case studies. However, the South African government has taken the significant step of developing national frameworks that mandate the development and implementation of career pathing in all government spheres. These

career pathing national policy frameworks include the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998; White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995); the White Paper on Human Resources Management on the Public Service (1997); White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service (1998); White Paper on Public Training and Education (1998); Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995; and The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 200 of 1996, Chapter 13: Public Service.

According to the Public Service Commission (2000) there are three government departments that have implemented this nationally mandated policy: the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Department of Public Works. This reality has prompted this research project; its relevance and importance lies in the step that the local Msunduzi Municipality has to join the aforementioned governments departments to create a career pathing policy.

1.2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 200 of (1996) is the supreme legal framework that governs every conduct, policy and process within the country. It provides basic guidelines to all public and private sector Acts and policies. The relevant section of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 200 of (1996) to this study is Section 10 (Public Administration). This Section has three subsections: the first section outlines the basic values and principles governing public administration; the second subsection delineates duties of the Public Service Commission; and the third subsection discusses how the provincial and local government spheres are expected to operate.

The first basic value and principle governing public administration is that a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained in the Public Service (Section 195 (1) (a)). Promoting and maintaining a high standard of professional ethics means promoting and implementing sustainable and effective capacity building programmes in the Public Service for effective and efficient execution of government objective and hence improved service delivery. Section (195 (1) (h)) states that good human resources management and career development guidelines and practices must be cultivated in order to maximise human potential in the public service. Public

servants must be trained and allowed to acquire adequate skills relevant to their jobs and future careers. Section (195 (1) (i)) states that public administration must be representative of the South African citizens and address the imbalances of the past. Personnel management practices must consider Affirmative Action and must be based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 200 of (1996) states that all these principles (including human resources development and career development) must be practiced by administrations in every sphere, level and organs of government. In addition, the national legislature must ensure that all government departments comply with the national frameworks. This means all government levels and organs are obliged to develop, implement and maintain career pathing policy as part of career management system (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 200 of 1996: Section 195 (2) (a) (b) (c)). However it should be taken into account that the nature and functions of government levels and organs are not similar. Therefore these factors must be taken into account in legislations regulating public administration (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996: Section 195 (5) (6)). This means career pathing policies in the public sector should be developed according to the structure and the nature of the organisation or department.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 200 of (1996: Section 195 (5)) states that the Public Service Commission for the Republic of South Africa is independent, impartial, and is responsible for investigating practices of public administration in all government departments and organs and give advice and possible solutions where necessary. It is accountable to the National Assembly and exists to enforce the maintenance of effective and efficient public administration and high standard of professional ethics in the Public Service (Section 196 (1) (2). Section 196 (4)) further outlines some of its functions including to:

- investigate, monitor and evaluate personnel practices of the public service and propose effective measures
- advise national and provincial organs of government regarding personnel practices in the public service including those of the employees career development.

1.2.2 Presidential Review Commission, 1996. Developing the Culture of Good Governance: Reform and Transformation of the Public Service in South Africa.

This document was presented to the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr NR Mandela on the 27th February 1996 by the Presidential Review Commission composed of international and local academics in the relevant government fields, consultants, government and public policy experts. The document highlighted issues that were important for the transformation of the Public Service in South Africa. The relevant sections to this study are Section One on Developing a Culture of Good Governance, Section Three on Transforming the Structure of and Functions of Government, and Section Four on Human Resources Management and Development. Human resources development strategies like career pathing practices cannot be effectively developed and implemented without transforming the culture and structures of government departments.

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 1.1) recommended that the government must “shift power and authority from national government to provincial and local government, within a framework of national norms, standards and values.” This shifting of power and responsibilities from national to provincial arena means the administrations at local government level must have adequate capacity to deal with new roles and responsibility. Therefore human resources and development strategies should maximise personnel potentials in order to effectively execute their jobs (Presidential Review Commission, 1996: Section 1.1). The Presidential Review Commission further adds that the responsibility for achieving efficient and effective service delivery should be located at the lowest possible level (Presidential Review Commission, 1996: Section 1.1). Thus it is not only managerial personnel that need to be capacitated but also people at lower levels should have the opportunity to develop their skills and career. Capacity building programmes should not be centralised at national departmental level as often actual policy implementation and service delivery takes place at district and local municipal levels.

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 1.1) further argues that without ensuring that high ethical and professional standards are developed and maintained throughout the administrations of all government levels and organs, Public Service

would be incomplete in South Africa. So to promote professionalism in the public service, achievements must be rewarded, failure acknowledged and grievances be addressed.

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 4.1) contends that many countries in both developed and developing regions have embarked on extensive evaluations of the general role, structure, and functions of government as well as on particular human resources management and development issues. This is due to many factors including:

- The growing impact of global markets and competition;
- The increased trend towards economic liberalisations and political democratisations;
- The advancement of international communications and technology;
- The trend towards “knowledge/professional works”, multi-skilling and multi-tasking;
- The pressure for equal opportunities in employment

In response to these international forces, the focus has been on the strategic human resource management and development in the public service. Issues that have been identified to be important included emphasis on quality, performance, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness in the public service (Presidential Review Commission, 1996: Section 4.1); the introduction of more flexible staffing and recruitment practices; the introduction of effective forms of career pathing; emphasis and promotion of training and capacity building; reward individual and team performance. Central to these issues is that capacity building and investing in people is key in transforming and developing public service (Presidential Review Commission, 1996: Section (4.1); (1.1)).

Section 4.1.2 of the Presidential Review Commission (1996) suggests that coherent strategic frameworks for human resource development need to be devised at all three levels of government. This process should consider first and foremost the elevation of

the role of human resource development framework above other government policy for effective public service; secondly it should enhance the:

- Development of effective and lifelong career development paths for all categories of public servants
- Improvement of employment conditions
- Basing of promotion and career advancement on performance rather than on seniority or qualifications
- Introductions of effective systems of staff development and training for all public servants, within the context of a national training strategy;
- And the introduction of affirmative action for broader representation and benefits of the citizens

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 4.2.1) noted that the organisational structures in many government departments were a strong limiting factor for the establishment of a career development system. In some departments, career pathing strategy is impossible without the organisational restructuring. However, departments such as the National Department of Housing had a very dynamic organisational structure that allowed employees to join the organisation at lower position and work their way through up the senior managerial positions.

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 6.7.1) asserted that the traditional perception of viewing employees as a cost rather than assets and commodity, and appreciating and rewarding them for narrow skills rather than for their talents, potentials and competencies in the public service administration must change. Section 6.7.2 of the Presidential Review Commission (1996) further argued that due to the acceleration of technology, employees are expected to use new forms of information technology in executing their duties. However public service workers lack adequate training and background to use new technologies effectively. The government investment in training its staff on information technology in particular is inadequate; as a result, the government workforce will increasingly be unable to keep up with the rapid changes and pace of IT in the market place for improved methods of customer service.

According to the Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 6.7.2) the lack of career development opportunities in the public service was the major cause of the public workforce leaving for the private sector or overseas. The inflexible rules that determined the position, post classification, wages and promotional opportunities for IT personnel in particular did not take into account the realities of IT skills in the market place. The persistence of these traditional rules made it impossible for the public IT personnel to increase their wages and therefore they preferred to explore opportunities in the private sector and overseas. The Presidential Review Commission further recommended the use of public and private partnerships for skills transfer in order to maximise individual's career development in the public service.

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 6.7.4.6) recommended that in order for effective career system to be developed in the public service, the remunerations should be compared with the private sector remunerations; assessment of job satisfaction, supportive work environment, collaboration between workers, managers and relevant service providers.

According to Section (7.2.2.1) of the Presidential Review Commission (1996), government departments should use multi-year planning cycles in order to provide an opportunity for rationalisation of human resources planning which will cover succession planning and career pathing. Multi-year planning would provide employees with opportunities for long term career pathing and succession planning channels. Furthermore, all managers, including junior managers, must be trained about the effective management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of human resources planning.

Section (7.2.2.2) of the Presidential Review Commission (1996) strongly recommended that "a holistic human resources development strategy needs to be developed by departments and provinces, with a clear development strategy, career paths, training opportunities, staff retentions policies and accelerated development mechanisms targeted at the most disadvantaged within the Public Service, as well as at those who are being recruited to redress the racial imbalances at the senior levels.

Norms should be targets set in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service (WPTPS).”

Section 7.2.2.5 of the Presidential Review Commission (1996) recommended that in developing careers and succession planning of the lower grades employees it would be critical to use linkages with the National Qualifications Framework and Career management should be linked to succession planning. The link of career pathing to NQF for lower level employees incorporates the considerations for Adult Basic Education and Training levels and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The importance of this document entitled (Developing A Culture of Good Governance) lies in the issues that were highlighted by the Presidential Review Commission (1996) as recommendations for the successful implementation of, amongst others, human resources strategies and career pathing practices in the public service. These issues will be used in analysing the proposed Msunduzi Municipality’s Career Pathing Policy (2006) and the organisational environment itself.

1.2.3 The Skills Development Act, 1998

In its preamble, the Skills Development Act (1998) provides an institutional framework to develop and implement national, sector and workplace strategies aimed at developing and improving the skills of the South African workforce; align these strategies with the National Qualifications Framework stipulated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995; provide leaderships that lead to recognised occupations qualifications and provide for the financing of the skills development by means of a levy grant scheme and a National Skills Fund. In addition it promotes and supports the skills of the South African workforce in order to improve competency in their jobs, labour and career mobility, productivity, self-employment and improve delivery of social services. Furthermore, it seeks to increase the level of investment in education and training in the labour market (Skills Development Act, 1998: 2 (1) (a) (b)).

However, these objectives will be difficult to achieve without the commitment and involvement from the employees. In this regard, Section (2 (1) (c)) of the Skills

Development Act (1998) encourages employees to use the workplace as an active learning environment; it mandates that government departments should provide employees with the opportunities to acquire new skills and provide new employees with adequate work experience. The maximised skills for public workforce will assist the Public Service to find qualified employees for specific positions. Section (2 (d)) states that Affirmative Action should be taken into consideration in enrolling employees for skills development programmes.

According to Section 2.2 (a) of the Skills Development Act (1998) all these objectives of the skills development are to be achieved by establishing an institutional and financial framework comprising a:

- National Skills Authority
- National Skills Fund
- Skills development levy-grant scheme as stipulated in the Skills Development Levies Act
- SETAS (Sector Education and Training Authorities)
- Labour Centres
- Skills Development Planning Unit

The public-private partnership in providing effective education and training for the workplace is encouraged in all government spheres and organs (Skills Development Act, 1998: 2.2 (b) (c)). The National Skills Authority, among other duties, exists to advise the Minister of Public Service and Administration and other relevant commissions/committees on the national scarce and relevant skills from which the public workforce need to be trained and educated. The SETA exists to develop a sector skills plan with the framework of the national skills development strategy; implement its sector skills plan by establishing learnerships, approving workplace skills plans and allocating grants to employees (Skills Development Act, 1998: 10.1 (b) (c)). Learnerships are training and skills development for a particular job done under close supervision and mentoring at workplace. It can be within or outside the organisation.

The Skills Development Act (1998) will assist in this study in terms of analysing the extent to which its mandates are incorporated in the Msunduzi Municipality's proposed Career Pathing Policy (2006).

1.2.4 White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 1995

The principal aim of the White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service (1995) is to establish a planning framework that will guide the creation and implementation of new policies and legislation aimed at transforming the South African Public Service. It does not provide details of how policies will be implemented but, rather is a statement of intent (White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 1995: Section 1.3). It outlines issues that need to be consolidated for the improved and transformed public service. It further tries to redress the imbalances of the pre-1994 government. This document envisages a transformed and improved public service that is:

- based upon the maintenance of fair labour practices for all public services workers irrespective of race, gender, disability or class.
- committed to the effective training and career development of all staff.

The whole process of training the public service will have major financial implications which cannot be precisely quantified but costs likely to be incurred will include:

- An Affirmative Action system, career development, training of staff and new salaries and benefits;
- Redeployment and relocation of public official;
- The upgrading of training systems, facility and investment on IT.

Section (13.1) states that the development of the country and its workforce does not lie exclusively with the government but also with the public-private partnerships. These must be promoted for effective training and education programmes; private training providers, community organisations, institutions of higher learning must be active partners with the government in building the public service capacity for good

governance. Private sector training providers and consultants can be involved in developing public employees' career paths.

According to the policy, effective and lifelong career development paths should be developed for all categories of public servants, and promotion and career advancement should be based on performance rather than on seniority or qualifications (White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 1995: Section 13.1 (b) (c)). This means performance on the job will be the primary determinant of promotion and career advancement rather than the number of qualifications and the length of service in the public sector.

In addition the policy suggests training is key to improving performance on the job. However, training needs to be linked with policies on recruitment, promotion, career progression and remuneration in the public service (White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 1995: Section 13.2). The training of workers must be further linked to the new emphasis on customer care and service delivery, the development of career paths and restructuring of grading systems within the public service. For lower-level workers, this training, career development and regrading system will necessitate the rewriting of their job descriptions. Training must be based on competencies in the job description. For those employees who cannot directly enrol for training, training programmes will need to be flexible and maximise the access of workers to in-service training, which should include Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) which need to be linked with National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Industry Training Boards. The training and career development of public workers will also need to be conducted in close cooperation with public sector trade unions and the proposed transformation forums or units (s13.3).

The White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service (1995) notes that in the past (pre-1994) the public service had been characterised by the lack of effective career paths and training opportunities for disadvantaged groups. To address the situation, the new democratic government proposes to introduce the development of appropriate career paths for all public servants, and especially those who were previously disadvantaged. The grades in the public service need to be reduced to promote

competency and multi-skilling approach. All these restructurings must be negotiated with the Bargaining Councils and Transformations Forums and Units (White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service, 1995: Section 14.1 (d) (e) (g)).

Section 15 mandates for the introduction of improved pay conditions, effective career paths for all public servants, greater opportunities for staff development and training and greater participatory management in order to improve staff morale and promote professional standards to staff at all levels in the public service.

The White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service (1995) will assist in this study in terms of analysing the extent at which its mandates are incorporated in the Msunduzi Municipality's proposed Career Pathing Policy (2006).

1.2.5 The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998.

Section 1 of this legislative framework seeks to treat all public servants as valuable resources as they are the driving force for service delivery. It further envisages the public sector as a career public service (employment based on qualifications and experience), and mandates the administrations of government to provide opportunities and guidelines for career development and management. This objective needs to be facilitated by the removal of any barriers and increased opportunities for competition for positions (The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998: Section 1).

The public service should continue as a career service and most positions should continue to be filled by career employees (with relevant qualifications and experience). However, opportunities should be open for external or new candidates who may come in with new skills that are scarce in the public service (The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998: Section 4.5.1). In the past, career systems were closed with restrictive positions requirements, preferential promotion arrangements and a sub-optimal reporting, restructuring both the public servants and restricting external candidates. In order to redress this, the principle of competency for the filling of posts will be introduced in the public service.

The policy suggests that placement strategies should be linked with career pathing in order to ensure there is a ready supply of staff to fill the vacant positions (The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998: Section 5.3).

Linked to career pathing is promotion and lateral transfer or job rotation. Promotion is defined as “the progression from one position to another position at the higher level, and not to incremental advancement within the current grade” (The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998: Section 5.5). An employee may be trained to assume a higher position, but competition must be allowed in order to recruit the best candidate. Job rotations/transfers may be used to develop employee’s career paths and multi-skilling; however transfers must not be used to limit employees in filling some posts, secured for preferred individuals (The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998: Section 5.5).

The policy reiterates that the public service values the employees who are willing and committed to develop their career in the service of the public; there will be opportunities for employees to develop their individual skills and talents in line with the public service’s requirements and organisational objectives. Career management enables employees to maximize their career potential by availing themselves for job opportunities, training and development (The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998: Section 5.10.1). It assists managers to help employees in advancing their career aspirations. However its success rests on the employee’s commitment rather than of the managers because career aspirations are an individual decision (The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998: Section 5.10.2). On the other hand, the efforts of the employees alone cannot materialise without the creation of career development guidelines and the commitment of the management in implementing and monitoring such practices. Section 5.10.2 of The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services, 1998 mandates all provincial administration and national departments to develop their career management procedures that are linked to their performance management system, which comply with the following principles:

- The Individual employee is responsible for his/her career development and should avail themselves for job training and development.

- The immediate employee's supervisors should regularly plan and review the employee's career path in terms of the new opportunities and align it with organisational objectives where necessary.
- The manager must keep up to date with job, training, and development opportunities in order to advise their employees so that they can avail themselves.
- Managers have got a duty in respect of the career of the employees that have been or remain hampered by faults that are not of their own, such as child rearing, educational disadvantage and disability.
- The manager's own performance assessment should take into account the extent to which they have developed their career management system.

The importance of the White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Services (1998) in this study lies in making explicit which government organs and departments are expected to act in developing and implementing the career management system (which consist of career pathing, career development and career planning). It further clearly states what the managers, supervisors and the employees are suppose to do to ensure that career pathing practices are implemented properly. This legislative framework will therefore assist in critically assessing whether the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) is likely to be a success.

1.2.6 White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service, 1997.

The success of the public service in terms of fulfilling its role in rendering efficient and effective services to its citizens rests on the commitment and effectiveness of public servants themselves which also depends on the human resources management (White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service, 1997: Section 1.2). The purpose of this White Paper is therefore to provide a policy framework for developing strategic human resources that will maximise the career development and professional standards in the public service (White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service, 1997: Section 1.3). It stresses that career management which consist of career pathing, career planning and career development must be implemented and monitored for all employees at all levels and sectors of government.

It mandates all managers to ensure that career plans for all employees are developed and reviewed from time to time and aligned with the individual's career aspirations and organisational objectives where necessary. It also provides room for employees to develop their career for positions outside the public sector (White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service, 1997: Section 3.37; 3.38). According to Section (3.38), all processes should be discussed with the employee concerned, and the labour union representing the employee and it must be linked to the personal development plan (PDP). It further explains as stipulated in the White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service (1997), what is expected from the employee and the managers in terms of career management development.

The White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service (1997) will assist in this study in indicating that employee's career paths should be developed immediately after they have been employed. This means that the Msunduzi Municipality's Recruitment and Employment Policy (2003) will have to incorporate career pathing. This legislative framework further highlights the role of the labour unions in the development of the employee's career paths and personal development plans (PDP) which ensures that all the labour practices are fair. All these issues will assist in assessing whether the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) is likely to be a success.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In public management, there are at least six main interdependent, mutually inclusive administrative functions often carried out to achieve specific goals. These functions include policy-making, organising, financing, staffing, determining work procedures and control (Hanekom, 1987: 1). This chapter focuses on policy-making. It outlines a theoretical framework which conceptualises public policy and the policy-making process. It starts by explaining what public policy is and then focuses on three stages of policy-making processes: problem identification, policy design or formulation, decision-making and implementation. The main aim of focussing on only these stages is to critically examine how the need for career pathing was identified, pushed on to the government agenda, designed and adopted. The study seeks to further critically examine whether the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) is in line with the relevant national frameworks and whether its proposed implementation strategy is likely to be successful.

2.1 Public Policy

For a policy to be "public policy" it must, to some extent, have been generated or processed within the framework of government's guiding principles and influences (Cloete and Wissink, 2000:12). Hanekom (1987: 7) defines public policy as a 'formally articulated goal, the legislator intends pursuing', through its echelons, with business or society. This definition views public policy as being mandated and driven by the government.

Anderson (1984: 10) defines public policy as "a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern." This definition indicates that policies are created by key actors to address certain problems. It further indicates the relationship between a problem, actors and relative actions in the public policy process. William Jenkins (cited in Howlett and Ramesh, 1995: 5) emphasizes the notion of public policy as it often engages a set of actors, rather than a single actor. He defines public policy as "a set of interrelated decisions taken by political actors or groups of actors concerning the selection of goals and means of achieving them within a specified situation where those decisions should in principle, be within the power of those to achieve."

According to Hanekom (1987: 7) “policy is indicative of a goal, specific purpose, and a programme of action that has been decided upon; a mechanism employed to realise societal goals and to allocate resources.” This means, public policy can be what the government decides to do for society. Policy is often presented as a formal policy statement, for instance, a White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service (Cloete and Wissink, 2000, 4). Indeed, Renney (cited in Cloete and Wissink, 2000, 11) defines policy as “a declaration and implementation of intent.” Thus, a policy can be what the government or any organisation has decided to do or not to do.

Public policy is not a single decision but rather, “consists of a web of decisions and actions that allocate values” (David Easton cited in Hill, 1997: 7). This set of interrelated decisions “concerns the selection of goals and means of achieving them within a specified situation” (Jenkins cited in Hill 1997:7). This “web of decisions” may take place over a long period of time as issues or problems at hand evolve over time. As a result, policies themselves change over time due to changes in the environment as resources become scarce or the problem stabilises (Hill, 1997: 7). Policies often evolve more in the implementation stage than in the design or formulation stage. Some critical issues may be overlooked at the formulation stage and affect the programme on its actual implementation stage. The nature of the problem may demand the budget to be doubled or programme’s targets be altered. Feedbacks from the evaluation and implementation of the policy may demand the refinement of the policy. This indicates that policies are not static in nature but rather they are dynamic and evolve over time (Hill, 1997:8).

Public policies are representatives of the intentions of the legislator and they therefore have political and administrative dimensions. Public policies are then outputs of a political process and require input from the administration dimensions in terms of implementation (Hanekom, 1987: 2). This means that the political authority decides on a policy and transmits it downward to the administrative level to implement. Thus public policies can be viewed as a mirror the image of the political ideology of the government in power. In other words, whatever is decided and acted upon by government is embedded in its political ideologies or developmental agenda.

Parliament is not the sole public policy maker (Hanekom, 1987: 2). Labour unions, business, academics, consultants, public officials, relevant committees and institutions are also role players in the process. These participants propose policies and debate on the outcomes and get involved in the design or formulation of the policies (Colebatch, 2002: 22; Dye, 1981: 354). The debates and deliberations on a policy problem result in a first draft of the policy (entitled Green Paper in a South African context) which is further debated and if it succeeds results in a final document (known as a White Paper in a South African context).

The policy process itself is not a simple and straightforward process and there is no universal agreement on how it should be done (Hanekom, 1987: 3). However, Colebatch (2000: 110) and Kingdon (1995: 2) argue that for a policy process to be useful it should be organized around at least, problem identification, agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of outcomes.

Public policies are not made to keep the policy makers, labour unions and politicians active and occupied but rather to bring about change in the society they serve (Hanekom, 1987: 3). These changes are manifested in the implementation stage of the policy, which will determine whether the policy was well-designed and important issues were carefully considered and incorporated for the successful implementation of policies (Hessing & Howlett et al, 1997: 172). Examples of such important issues include the accumulation of human and financial resources, devising clear objectives, constituency building, legitimisation, persuasion, and co-optation (Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2000: 6, 24). Hanekom (1987: 3) argues that well designed policies may also fail due to the lack resources and administrative constraints. He further asserts that public policies are dependent upon their appropriateness and the manner in which they are implemented. Policies can be also terminated at any stage, due to the lack of resources, ambiguous objectives, unrealistic targets etc. The policy may fail because its objectives are not clear and achievable and the targets were not clearly defined in the policy. Thus a sound policy must have clear and attainable objectives and clearly defined targets.

For the purpose of this study public policy is conceived of as a desired purpose or course of action taken by the government in order to achieve specific goals. In

addition public policy is a government functional obligation to enhance growth and efficacy in all its spheres or organs for improved service delivery to the community it serves.

Given the nature of this study (a policy analysis study), it is important to define the term “policy analysis”. Dunn in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 13) defines policy analysis as “an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and argument to produce and transform policy-relevant information that may be utilised in political settings to resolve policy problem.” Policy analysis can be done at any stage of the policy process to examine, for instance, the policy impact before or after the policy is implemented. An assessment done before the policy is implemented is called formative evaluation and a summative evaluation is embarked upon when the policy has been implemented. Policy evaluations are conducted to examine whether the policy will be able to achieve the desired objectives (Weis, 1998).

2.2 Policy Making Process

In public policy-making, theories are used to explain the policy-making process. Such theories include classical, liberal, elite and systems theories. Classical theory is also referred to as institutional theory. It acknowledges that the interests groups represented in government should be taken into account or involved in the policy process. These interests groups include the parliament, legislature, and the committee of government. In the liberalistic theory, the leading political party constitute the majority in the legislature and therefore drives the public policy objectives and direction. On the other hand the elite theory sees small elite groups as leaders of large groups of followers. This may resemble the business class or association, which may also include the academics and many high profile professionals. Systems theory focuses on the contributions of the interested and affected individuals or groups to the policymaking. It involves the government, labour unions, business, social groups etc. In actual policy-making process, no single theory is predominant but all theories tend to work together depending on the nature of the problem at hand (Hanekom, 1987: 3-4).

The public policy process can be considered to be organised around the succession of the following stages (Colebatch, 2000: 110; Kingdon 1995: 2):

- Problem identification
- Agenda setting
- Policy formulation
- Decision making
- Implementation,
- Evaluating outcomes.

This study will focus on the three first stages of the policy making process: policy issue or problem, formulation or design, decision-making and implementation.

2.3 Policy Problem Identification

The first stage of the policy process is problem identification. This stage focuses on the problem(s) that demand the government's attention and deliberate action. Problem identification has two aspects: perceptions and definitions (Rushefsky, 1990: 3). Perception is the "registering or receiving of an event" that has consequences for people or groups. It is entirely based on how one view the situation or condition (Kingdon, 1995: 90; Rushefsky, 1990: 3). Kingdon (1965) calls this a condition that is normal and people perceive and define it as a problem in order to prompt and attract the government's attention to respond on the matter. People may spend their resources because they are expecting benefits in return or the successful consideration and adoption of their proposals.

Definition, therefore, is the "interpretation of those events, giving meaning to them" (Rushefsky, 1990: 4), making them clear and sensitising others to see it as a problem that need a policy intervention. There are individuals, groups and organisations behind every problem definition. People define problems and propose policy solutions or interventions that will serve their purpose or achieve their goals. Kingdon (1995: 204) refers to these individuals as policy entrepreneurs. Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), for instance, championed, the "lack of jobs,

mobility and career progression” in the public sector and then proposed a career management system with career pathing, career planning and career development as its components. Thus COSATU pointed out that this problem existed and proposed policy solutions (Seidman-Maketla, 2004).

One group may identify a problem and other individuals or groups furnish policy interventions as solutions to the problems. The labour unions may identify a labour related problem and the academics and experts in labour relations can furnish their policy proposals as solutions to the problem.

It is important to note what influences people in perceiving some conditions as problems. Such influences include life experiences; media; religious beliefs; political or organisational ideological values; personal or professional values; statistical numbers; and understanding of the underlying problem (Rushefsky, 1990: 4-5).

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 72) argue that individuals outside the government may identify some problems that are the government’s responsibility. The government then will have to delegate its experts and officials to explore the nature of the problem and suggest possible policy interventions. This process consist of a “problem-structuring phase, defining alternative solutions to the policy problem and forecasting their individual effects and impact” (Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 73). This policy-making stage provides the basis for choosing the most cost effective policy.

Dye (1992: 330) argues that policy issues can also be identified by the public opinion which can emerge in two forms. First, people can identify issues that they perceive to be in line with the government political ideology (constitution) or speeches made by the government officials. On the other hand people can identify policy issues that will bring about the change in the government political ideology. This aspect of public opinion exemplifies the ANC and its alliances contending against the injustices of the apartheid regime and proposed equity policies. Dye further contends that in most cases the public opinion does not represent the ordinary citizens but rather elites. He disputes the notion that the media reports represent the public opinion, but rather of the upper-class bias which includes business, labour unions consultants, policy makers, influential leaders, political parties and civic groups. The elite’s opinion and

preferences are more likely to constitute public policies because they have broad understanding of the government processes and legislative frameworks than the ordinary citizens (Dye, 1992: 332). Some authors like Hanekom (1987: 30) dispute the notion of the public opinion. He argues that it is impossible to have “**the** public opinion” but rather “**a** public opinion” which may represent groups or sectors of the society. He refers to “the public opinion” as collective similar views of the citizens and refers to “a public opinion” as collective views of specific groups or sectors of the citizens.

2.4 Policy Design / Formulation

After the problem has been identified and defined as a problem that needs or qualifies for a policy intervention, the design or formulation stage follows. The identification of a problem is meaningless if clear goals and objectives cannot be identified and formulated. Policy formulation is about devising policy goals and objectives; anticipating the future events; cost-benefit analysis of policy alternatives; and examining the best approaches for achieving the desired outcomes (Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 116). They further argue that the past and current conditions related to the policy problem should be considered before the policy could be formulated. This would help to mark the past and current causes of the problem and assess whether the policy strategy will not be impinged by the very same causes. Ambiguous and vague goals may affect the actual policy implementation.

Budgetary constraints, organisational structure, adequate trained staff, work processes and political constraints or dynamics should be considered in the policy design or formulation. Cloete and Wissink (2000: 135) suggest that the goal/objectives hierarchy of the policy should at least follow this format: mission, goals, prime objectives and sub-objectives. Goals here are defined as long term planning and objectives as short term planning.

Policy makers are not individuals or groups who are experts in public policy, but policies are made by a variety of people, agents, representatives, public officials, managers, unions, research and policy institutes and all those who are interested and

affected by the problem and the policy (Colebatch, 2002: 22; Dye, 1981: 354; Hanekom, 1987: 21).

Public policy formulation may be initiated by the legislative institutions, public officials and interests groups (Hanekom, 1987: 20). Public officials may, due to research findings or feedbacks from the implementation process, propose policy refinement or other policy alternatives. Interests groups may also pressure the public officials or political office bearers to consider the proposed policies for addressing particular issues. Dye (1992: 341) add that proposals may be formulated by government department's specialised areas in all three spheres for the city mayor, municipal manger, and the executive committee, for instance, to approve it.

Interests groups may formulate their own policy proposals in association with government officials, members of parliament, legislator or government's tasked committees. Within these interests groups and government 'representatives' there are experts to advise on various issues relevant to the policy being proposed or formulated. The president or minister can appoint commissions to formulate the policy on behalf of the government; such commissions are represented by specialists relevant to the policy being proposed (Dye, 1992: 341). Legislative, departmental and municipal staffs become powerful policy makers by engaging with the interests groups and advising their leaders on the developments of the policy being formulated (Dye, 1992: 342).

Policy planning organisations often act as the coordinating agents in policy formulation by coordinating interest groups, conduct research and organise meetings with all the stakeholders and liaise and report to the relevant government structures. A South African example of such an organisation is National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), which coordinates the policy until it is made into law (Dye, 1992: 342; Hanekom, 1987: 21).

The public policy formulation process involves a degree of bargaining, competition, persuasion and compromise among interest groups and government officials about a matter being proposed. This process continues until the policy is finally made into law (Dye, 1992: 345). Dye (1992: 340) argues that "policy formulation is the development

of policy alternatives for dealing with problems on the public agenda; ... it occurs in government bureaucracies, interest groups offices, legislative committee rooms, meetings of special commissions, and policy planning organisations.” He further argues that policy proposals are formulated by the staff members who may be experts in specialised areas, not top leaders. Leaders then give the direction to the policy.

Hanekom (1987: 23-24) and Hill (1997: 109) differ with Dye on viewing political office bearers as the supreme policy makers i.e. telling their staff what to do. Instead the staffs are experts in their areas and they advise the political bearers what to advise them. Hanekom (1987: 24) further argues that the public policy functions of the public officials are sevenfold. They act as policy innovators, advisors, formulators, implementers, monitors, analysts and evaluators. The middle-level officials as opposed to the top officials are the ones involved in the actual drafting of the policy documents.

Stone (1988) cited in Rushefsky (1990: 9) outlines five types of policy solutions to the problems. These include the set of encouragements to influence or change behaviours (e.g. tax incentives or prison terms for particular crimes committed); rules that limit access to certain goods or services (e.g. purchase of tobacco); based on facts; rights that gives certain people privileges or duties; and powers on who and how to make decisions.

There can be considered to be vertical and horizontal dimensions of policy formation. The vertical dimension sees policy as a rule: it is concerned with the downwards transmission of authorized decision. The authorized decision makers select objectives which are based on the values they hold and transmit these to their subordinates to implement. The horizontal dimension sees policy in terms of the structuring of action. It is concerned with the strong cross participation of various participants in the formation of policy at hand without being given hierarchical orders (Colebatch, 2002: 23; Hanekom, 1987: 21- 22). Furthermore, these dimensions are not alternatives but, rather, each tends to assume the other. After the vertical authorized decision-maker has completed, the horizontal dimension may commence. The elements of policy formation include authority, expertise, order and coordination, stability and change (Colebatch, 2002: 112).

This stage of the policy process is relevant for this study because it will assist in analysing the policy formation processes that were undertaken, key role players, and problems encountered in formulating the Career Pathing Policy (2006) at the Msunduzi Municipality.

2.5 Policy Decision-Making

After the proposals have been formulated and considered the final preferred one would be adopted as the policy decision by the relevant persons, committees, and head of departments (Rushefsky, 1990: 9). However it may still need refinement until it can be deemed to be able to effectively serve the purpose or solve the problem at hand.

Dye (1992: 346) defines the policy decision-making phase as “the readiness of the government to adopt new programs or policies.” This decision is often determined by factors like availability of resources and timing (e.g. political mood). According to Cornell (1980: 9) a decision “is a settlement, a fixed intention, used to bring a conclusive result.” Cornell further views a decision as “the act” and “a judgement” or “a conclusion” which settles a question. So “a decision is the act of deciding or settling a dispute or quarrel by giving a judgement or conclusion reached or given” (Cornell, 1980: 9).

Hill (1997: 99) defines decision making as “a choice between alternatives which are conducive to the achievement of goals or objectives within organisations.” He further argues that selected alternative’s consequences are carefully examined. Hanekom (1987: 13) argues that policy decision-making is not a single decision but a web of decisions and involves tasks such as evaluating factual information, values and interrelating values with facts. Cloete and Wissink (2000: 152) add that policy decision making is based on facts and values. Such values include organisational values, professional values, policy values, ideological values; political party affiliation; and deference (Anderson, 1997: 141).

Decisions can be either passive or active. A passive decision is to decide not to accept or adopt the policy whilst an active decision is to decide to do something or accept the policy (Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 152).

John Dewey in Cornell (2002: 10) and Cloete & Wissink (2000: 152) lists procedural decisions to be made in adopting a policy:

- What is the problem?
- What are the alternatives?
- Which alternative is best?

A policy decision involves an act by officials or committees to adopt, modify, or reject a preferred policy alternative. What is actually involved in the decision stage is not to choose one best policy among others but to make a decision about the already selected one (Anderson, 1997: 134).

Policy adoption constitutes a lot of bargaining, constituency building, persuasion, command and legitimisation (Anderson, 1997: 152; Rushefsky, 1990: 10). Public policy adoption also requires agreement among the executive branch, the legislative branch, and public opinion. Failure to reach consensus may cause the policy at hand to fail. Some policies may be approved or rejected in courts, more especially if there are major differences or consequences perceived by the interested and affected parties (Rushefsky, 1990: 10). Budgeting is the most important component of this stage, because in order to achieve policy goals and objectives the program requires funding. Availability of funds determines whether the program will achieve its goals and objectives. However some administrative, personnel, political and environmental factors can be potential constraints.

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 153) categorise decisions into five types: impulsive, intuitive, programmed, un-programmed and single-choice decision making. An impulsive decision occurs in a moment without discretion, value judgement or other alternatives being taken into account. Intuitive decision-making is based on a high degree of rationality or clarity of thought by providing more detailed information

relevant to the policy at hand. Programmed decision-making are guidelines that guide public managers in making routine work related decisions. These include broad organisation objectives stipulated in the IDPs, standards, procedures, methods, and policies. Un-programmed decision-making is based on a large measure of creativity and discretion for making a decision on programmes, strategies budgets. Single choice-decisions are about accepting or rejecting policy proposal (s).

Human factors also play some role in decision making. These factors include personal values, perceptions, lack of exposure to the issue, and influence of political power (Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 157).

2.6 Policy Implementation

Pressman and Wildasky cited in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 166) define implementation as the means to carry out, accomplish, produce and fulfil the objectives of the policy. Implementation in simple terms is the actual means of working towards the goals stipulated in the policy by carrying out policy objectives. It is the stage where the budget is used for the achievement of the desired outcomes.

Hanekom (1987: 54) argues that policy implementation is more than carrying out objectives but it involves determining the intentions of the legislature, adequate resource allocation and critically examining whether the activities are deviating or still in line with the policy maker's objectives. Rushefsky (1990: 13) adds that policy implementation also involves interpretation and application. The policy may fail to achieve its objectives because it was misinterpreted. Then what will be applied or executed will be according to the misinterpretation of the policy implementers.

Smith cited in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 170) argues that at the policy implementation stage, tensions between the policy itself, its formulators, its implementers and its targets, manifest and may feedback and/or demand the review of the policy implementation process or the whole policy refinement. The tensions and conflicts in the implementation process emanates from the interaction between five components:

- the idealised policy and the desired change or item for consumption;

- the targets behaviour the policy is trying to change;
- the organisation's structure;
- leadership and capacity;
- and the organisational culture.

Organisational culture is what people have been doing for a long period of time and have taken it as the norm and the way the organisation should work. The targets or beneficiaries may also be unrealistic; with too many beneficiaries as compared to the financial and personnel capacity of the organization.

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 171) suggest six clusters of variables that need to be considered for the successful policy implementation:

- the relevance of the policy standards and objectives;
- policy resources; intergovernmental relations;
- enforcement activities;
- the characteristics of the implementing units;
- the economic, social and political environment affecting the implementing jurisdiction.

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 171) further argue that the policy standards and objectives should be supported by the relevant legislative frameworks like the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), White Papers or Acts and Integrated Development Plans (IDP). The policy may be precisely in line with the relevant frameworks but if the resources to implement the policy are not adequate it is destined to fail. For a policy that has to be implemented across different institutions, interdepartmental relations have to be fully strengthened to ensure cooperation in executing the policy objectives.

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981) cited in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 179) contend that the principal variables that affect implementation include the lack of policy formulators to fully understand the problem at hand and the political dynamics in order to structure effective policy solution. Some problems may be more complicated than perceived by policy formulators. Other variable or factors include the content of

the policy itself and commitment of implementers to the policy goals and objectives. In terms of the policy content, the staff development policy for instance may not provide resources for capacity building. Lack of commitment may be also due to ambiguous roles and responsibilities. However some other factors should not be overlooked like conflicts of interests and organisational politics.

Hessing and Howlett et al (1997: 172) contend that the implementation stage of the policy process translates policy decisions into action; such actions require funding to be allocated, personnel assigned, and rules of procedure developed. Furthermore, there are general factors affecting policy implementation, such as the nature of the problem, technical difficulties, technological aspects, political mood and political organizations, resources available and issues such as lack of funding, bureaucratic obstacles to communication and administrative redundancy or omissions (Hessing and Howlett et al, 1997: 173- 174).

Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2000: 23) argue that policy implementation is not an individual's task but requires concerted actions of multiple agencies and groups, both within government and outside, from civil society and the private sector. Hessing and Howlett et al (1997: 172) further argue that "implementation is a complex process that involves not only the bureaucratic execution of political decisions but also the utilization of a gamut of governing tools or policy instruments in the effort to urge, bribe, coerce, or otherwise convince policy targets to adhere to the wishes of the governments". Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2000: 6, 24-30) suggested key strategic policy implementation management tasks that could be used to improve policy implementation. These key strategic tasks include policy legitimization, constituency building, resource accumulation, organizational design and modification, mobilizing resources and actions, and monitoring progress and impact.

There are two basic approaches to policy implementation. These are the "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches. The "top-down" approach puts much emphasis on the definitions of goals by the top rather than the roles of workers on the line. It excludes any consideration of how real people actually behave or may interpret the goals at the bottom (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973 in 467). The "bottom-up" approach considers the involvement of the lower levels of government and other agencies in the

formulation and implementation stage of the policy (Pressman and Wildavsky (1973 in 469). Lipsky (1971) in Hessing and Howlett et al (1997: 467) argue that the “bottom-up” approach allows the street-level bureaucrats (professionals like nurses, doctors, engineers etc.) to participate and give input on policy formulation and implementation, as they are the ones who will deal with the actual implementation in various environments. Parsons (1997) views implementation as involving negotiations and consensus building.

This study will critically relate this approach to the Career Pathing Policy (2006) required by Section 13.1 of the South African White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995); the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (1997); and the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998) and examine whether it is likely to be able to meet these national objectives by its implementation strategy, targets, objectives and the resources allocated to it.

2.7 Policy Monitoring and Evaluation

Worthan et al (1997:5) views monitoring and evaluation as the assessment of the extent to which specific objectives of a program or policy have been attained; it uses both inquiry and judgments mechanisms which include determining standards for judging quality, collecting relevant information, and applying the standards to determine value, quality, utility effectiveness or significance. Worthan (1997: 5) further argues that monitoring and evaluation has been referred to as the act of collecting and providing relevant information to enable decision makers to make more-informed decisions.

“The design and implementation of evaluations depend on the specific purposes they are to serve. Evaluations differ according to the type of questions being asked, the stage the program is in, whether it is a new or established program, and the type of decision the evaluation is intended to inform” (Rossi & Freeman, 1989: 65-66). Evaluations are often conducted for a client who has a decision to make and wants to base such a decision to the information furnished by that evaluation (Weiss, 1998: 15).

Weiss (1998: 18) further argues that “evaluation can also be a tool of accountability”, which could be in the form of a conducted audit or evaluation results that assessed whether the program or policy followed the processes stipulated in its design procedures and objectives. Policy evaluations can also play an integral role in improving policy operations and can contribute to more informed or enlightened policy making both on public and private sector (Herman et al, 1987). According to Cloete and Wissink (2000: 211), the purpose of evaluations is to measure the progress towards the achievement of policy objectives; and help “to learn lessons from the project/program for future policy review, design or implementation strategies.”

Cloete & Wissink (2000: 212) further argue that “policy evaluation is used to test the feasibility of an assumption, principle, model, theory, proposal or strategy.” Evaluations can be conducted to assess whether the proposed implementation strategy of a programme will likely achieve its objective. A theory failure occurs when the policy was implemented as intended, but failed to have the desired effect whereas an implementation failure occurs when the policy was not implemented as intended.

Evaluation is an ‘expert’ activity that needs specific skills and experience. It could be undertaken superficially or in depth. The more comprehensive the evaluation, the more the time and money would be spent (Cloete &Wissink et al, 2000). According to (Cloete & Wissink, 2000 and Worthan et al, 1998) evaluations could be conducted internally, externally or multidisciplinary. Monitoring and evaluations can be conducted internally by the staff members who are familiar with the programme or by external specialists hired to do the monitoring and evaluation exercise. The advantages of the internal evaluation are that it is cheaper, quick and more effective because it is conducted by people who are familiar with the overall program and its objectives. The disadvantages would be that they may be biased since this is their programme, and they may not be critical as possible (Cloete & Wissink et al, 200; Worthan et al, 1998). The external specialists can work together with the internal staff members who are familiar with the operations of the programme.

Evaluations can be conducted at the planning, implementation, or post-implementation phase of the programme or policy. The evaluation conducted at the planning stage is called impact assessment; formative evaluation is conducted while

the programme is ongoing and seeks to provide information to managers, programme directors and staff about how the programme is operating and how it could be improved; summative evaluation is conducted after the programme has been running for a period of time, to evaluate its outcome, effectiveness or impacts to the target population. The results of evaluation will determine whether or not to continue with the programme or expand it to other locations. The evaluator should remain independent to enable the report to be critical as possible and be able to report negative findings (Herman et al, 1997; Worthan et al, 1998 and UNFPA, 2000). Monitoring and evaluation exercises could take many forms including special surveys of program services, ethnographic studies, interview studies, or analyses of administrative records to determine how the program actually operates; progress testing to monitor its effects; or management studies to see how administrative arrangements may be functioning (Herman et al, 1997: 12).

The criteria for conducting monitoring and evaluation may involve assessing the effectiveness, relevance, impact, sustainability, progress and related indicators of the programme or policy (Rubin, 1995; UNFPA, 2000). Monitoring and evaluation is important to this study, as its principles are used to critically analyse the proposed monitoring and evaluation strategy of the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

Within the realm of research, there are two main research techniques: quantitative and qualitative (Powell, 1999: 3). Quantitative studies measure phenomena using numbers in conjunction with statistical procedures to process data and summarise results (Terre Blanche and Durheim 1999:42), whereas qualitative studies attempt to study human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 270). Babbie and Mouton further argue that the qualitative studies' primary objective is in describing and understanding rather than in explaining human behaviours. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999: 42) "qualitative methods allow the researcher to study selected issues in depth, openness and detail as they identify and attempt to understand the categories of information that emerge from the data."

Qualitative research was appropriate for this study because it attempts to explore and understand the local government processes in policy making, occurring in the natural setting of the social actors. This study thus employed a qualitative research approach to investigate whether the Career Pathing Policy (2006) of the Msunduzi Municipality incorporates the sentiments of national career pathing frameworks.

3.1 Data Collection Methods

According to Babbie & Mouton (2001: 270) qualitative methods of data collection include observation, semi-structured interviewing, in-depth interviews and literature reviews. This study used a qualitative research design that was primarily based on an extensive literature review and in-depth interviews with open-ended questionnaires. The literature review included international literature on career pathing, the Msunduzi Municipality's documents like the Draft of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) and other relevant documents, and the national frameworks mandating the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). Neuman (2000: 112) argues that in-depth interviews involve a number of face-to-face, detailed discussions with selected people who represent different subgroups or sections of a wider community. One of the advantages of in-depth interviews is that respondents can express their opinions in a

more free and relaxed manner and can stress areas they perceive as important. One of the disadvantages of in-depth interviews is that it is time consuming and often difficult to transcribe and interpret the collected data.

3.2 Sample

According to Neuman (2000: 216) “population” refers to the specific pool of objects that a researcher wants to study. Considering the nature, context, time and cost factors of this study, the purposive sampling method was employed based on the fact that purposive sampling allows the researcher to use his/her discretion about which respondents are more relevant and appropriate for the research topic (Patton, 2002: 230). Therefore the participants were selected on the basis of their relevance and virtue of being informed about the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) at the Msunduzi Municipality.

The management structure of the Msunduzi Municipality is headed by the Municipal Manager assisted by six Strategic Executive Managers (SEMs) heading six Business Units and responsible for strategic planning. Business Units are further divided into Process Units headed by Process Managers (PMs) who are responsible for operational processes. Six Human Resources Support Managers are responsible for assisting PMs and junior managers in terms of personnel policies and related procedures, and they report directly to the Sound Governance and Human Resource SEM. These managers are the ones responsible for policy initiatives and processes in the Msunduzi Municipality and were thus interviewed given their involvement in the creation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). However, the Process Managers were not interviewed due to their limited involvement in the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). In addition, three managers and two Staff Personnel and Development Officers from Human Resources Management and Employee Relations were interviewed. Their relevance to this study lies in the fact that they deal with employee’s relations’ policies like promotion, progression planning and remunerations, which are relevant for career pathing policy.

One representative from each of two labour unions (South African Municipal Workers Union- SAMWU and Independent Municipal Allied Trade Unions- IMATU) in the

Msunduzi Municipality were also interviewed. These were included because of their insight into the views of the workers in general. According to the nature of the study all the managers and shop stewards from both labour unions at the Msunduzi Municipality should have been interviewed but due to time and cost factors and the limited involvement of some respondents to the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006), only the most relevant and informed participants were selected to participate in the study. The total population of managers (including staff development and personnel officers) and the labour union’s shop stewards that could have been interviewed is seventy-three; comprising thirty-four shop stewards and thirty-nine managers. The study sample is reflected in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Sample size

Strata	Sample Size	
	Target	Actual
Strategic Executive Managers	6	3
Human Resources Development Managing Committee	5	5
Human Resources Support Services Managers	6	2
Human Resources Management and Employment Relations Managers and Staff Development and Personnel Officers	5	4
Labour Unions (representatives)	2	2
TOTAL	24	16

The target sample size refers to the number of respondents that were intended to be interviewed and the actual sample size refers to the number of respondents that were interviewed.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to “identifying patterns and themes in the data and drawing certain conclusions from them” (Mouton, 1996: 111). Qualitative data analysis includes grounded theory approach, analytical induction, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis and content analysis (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 270). Content analysis was used in this study to interpret the in-depth interviews and literature. Content analysis involves collecting and organising information systematically in a

standard format that enables the researcher to draw conclusions about the research topic (Babbie and Mouton, 2003: 491). Babbie and Mouton further argue that in qualitative data analysis, data is interpreted in various ways and there is no universal orderly manner that should be followed; nonetheless, general procedures are offered. In this study, the data was organised according to the themes with relevant questionnaires and responses. The responses were organised and interpreted around the following themes:

- **Perceptions** of career pathing and issues that prompted its development
- **Influences/challenges** of the policy making process
- Necessary **resources** for implementation
- **Potential limitations** of the proposed Career Pathing Policy
- The role of the **monitoring and evaluation**
- **Recommendations**

The data collected through the in-depth interviews and the literature review was analyzed to determine whether the Career Pathing Policy (2006) of the Msunduzi Municipality echoes the sentiments of the international and national career pathing frameworks and suggests an implementation strategy that is likely to be effective and sustainable.

3.4 Shortcomings of the Study

A few difficulties were encountered during this research project. First, locating senior managers due to their tight schedules and the short time allocated for this study (six months) proved problematic. The investigations conducted by the National Prosecuting Authority (Scorpions) within the Msunduzi Municipality targeting mainly the senior managers also disturbed the appointment schedules with the senior managers. As a result only one Strategic Executive Manager could be interviewed; two referred me to their Process Managers. These managers were not well informed with the Career Pathing Policy (2006) making process.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The findings will be presented according to the groups of the respondents presented in Table 1. The responses of each and every group will be presented separately under the following themes: perceptions, influences/challenges, resources, potential limitations, the role of monitoring and evaluation, and recommendations. The responses have been grouped under these themes in order to effectively capture various responses under the same issue rather than dealing with one question at a time.

4.1 SAMWU and IMATU Secretary-Generals at the Msunduzi Municipality

Perceptions of Career Pathing and issues that prompted its development

From the union's perspective, the Career Pathing Policy (2006) is viewed as a positive initiative which the Msunduzi Municipality has embarked upon towards training and developing its employees. In that way, employees, more particularly those on the lower levels (e.g. street sweepers) will be afforded an opportunity to progress to better jobs. One respondent gave an example of a general worker who came to the municipality without any skills, but studied Human Resources Management part-time because "he had a passion for it", but has never been given a chance to do an HRM related job. The respondent emphasized that this employee has acquired all the necessary skills to become an HR manager but he has never been given a chance to progress and use these skills for service delivery. Career pathing is also viewed as a system that will help to address the long time complaints about a link between Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and the employees' careers within the Msunduzi Municipality. Many employees have been encouraged to enrol for the (ABET) programme which starts from level one to level four, but there is no further established system that links ABET level 4 and employees' careers. Thus career pathing is believed to bridge this gap.

Therefore issues that prompted the creation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) within the Msunduzi Municipality from the union's perspective was, firstly, the fact that lower level employees were discouraged to participate in the ABET programme because it "led them nowhere". Also there were no provisions that linked participation

in the ABET programme with their careers. Secondly, some employees had acquired all necessary skills for better jobs within the municipality but were never given a chance to apply those skills accordingly.

Influences/challenges of the policy making process

Asked to describe the process that was undertaken when the Career Pathing Policy (2006) was being created and their role in it, both respondents asserted that they were properly contacted and invited to participate and contribute to the development of the aforementioned policy. Theoretically unions were supposed to be part of the whole policy making process to represent the views and interests of the employees on the ground. One respondent contended that they did in fact fully participate and contribute to the process through responding to the emails and attending workshops, and reiterated *“our contribution was to ensure that whatever that the HRD came up with was in the interests of the employees and to monitor whatever process and we raised various issues during the process- workshops”* (SAMWU Secretary, 27/09/2006). The other respondent admitted to have not fully participated in terms of responding to the emails and participating in the workshops. She did attend one workshop meeting which never materialised due to low attendance. The respondent further admitted to have not been involved in the initial drafting of the document. She did review the final draft but was not familiar with its content and objectives. In terms of consultation, the respondent felt that the process did not involve the majority of the employees, more especially those on the ground and reiterated *“to me you have to do it from ground-level-up, middle and top because we have talent at the bottom, you need to actually personally go down and interview those people and get their opinions, they are part of us, we need to do it with them”* (IMATU Secretary, 03/10/2006). The respondent further argued that it is important to engage all stakeholders to better understand the policy issue so as to formulate a well-informed policy.

On the issue of whether their views were taken seriously by the management, one respondent believed so, but the other did not. Both respondents felt that the main role player in the whole policy process was the HRD which drafted the document and coordinated the whole process. All other stakeholders had to provide further inputs to the document itself.

When asked about the processes used to ensure that the views of the unskilled employees were adequately represented in the development of the policy, both respondents asserted that there were no means tried to involve them. One respondent assumed that the employees' views would be represented through the involvement of the labour unions representatives (shop stewards), but expressed that such representation was not adequate since only few shop stewards attended the workshops. These shop stewards are expected to cascade the information down to the employees in all Business Units (refer to Appendix 6). The respondent further stated that the whole policy process was a top-down approach and was not communicated to the majority of the employees of the Msunduzi Municipality. Like the other union representative, the respondent believed that any policy development initiative should be adequately communicated with the employees because they are the ones who better understand the organisation.

Two views surfaced regarding the employees' understanding of the concept of career pathing. One respondent expressed that it is viewed as a means to progress further after completing ABET level 4 and further raises expectations of the possibility of more advanced training and development activities coupled with rewards system. The other respondent said the unskilled employees do not understand career pathing at all. Thus it needs to be clearly explained.

In terms of the policy-making process one respondent emphasized that all employees including the unskilled should be involved in face to face interactions. Asked who are the main targets and beneficiaries of the policy, both respondents asserted that it is all the employees of the Msunduzi Municipality and not exclusive levels or categories. Both respondents were not sure which national policy frameworks were considered in the creation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006).

Necessary Resources for implementation

In terms of the resources required for the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) both respondents suggested that adequately trained staff from HRD must be available to champion the workshops and consultations in making all

the employees aware of this policy and its objectives. Respondents also identified policies that need to be developed and refined to accommodate the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). Such policies included progression policy and remuneration policy. The progression policy was viewed to be important because after people's career paths have been determined and all necessary skills for that particular job acquired, they should progress to better jobs or levels. One respondent claimed that in the past, salaries increased when employees had completed their studies but argued that, that practice is not happening anymore. The other respondent suggested that remuneration policy should be developed and be linked to the Career Pathing Policy (2006). It was also suggested that the Employment Policy needs to be linked to the Career Pathing Policy (2006); so that the employee's potential career path should be apparent from the first day of employment.

Potential Limitations of the Proposed Career Pathing Policy

The potential limitations of the proposed Career Pathing Policy (2006) that were raised included lack of effective communication with stakeholders especially labour unions, who are regarded as “watchdogs” of the processes within the municipality and represent the employees interests in all levels. It was further argued that unless the policy is communicated effectively with the unions, it will be challenged in the Local Labour Forum and be rejected. To avoid that, the respondents suggested that the policy objectives and intentions be communicated with all the stakeholders within the municipality so that it can achieve “buy-in”.

The prevention, by their supervisors, of employees from pursuing careers and studies of their choice because they did not align with their duties or job descriptions, was raised as another limitation. The recommendation was that the HRD should take a final decision on this matter and the supervisors should simply be responsible for “sending the employees applications to the HRD”. The HRD should use the report back from the employees and unions to monitor the policy and devise effective interventions.

Asked whether the management and the labour unions have got the capacity to deal with issues such as career pathing practices, one respondent was doubtful, but

contended *“the unions have got the capacity, its just that most shop stewards are new and training means are still being organized”* (SAMWU Secretary, 27/09/2006). The respondent further argued that the management has capacity, but it will be their first dealing with career pathing. The other respondent confirmed that unions had sufficient capacity but could not comment about the management’s capacity.

The Role of the Monitoring and Evaluation

Both respondents firmly asserted that monitoring and evaluation are very important in helping to check if the policy is working as intended. It was suggested that the policy would be monitored and evaluated through the monthly meetings the unions normally hold with the employees. The employees would be asked to submit reports on the policy progress and all the gaps identified would be discussed with the HRD and the Local Labour Forum in trying to improve its practices and benefits. Both respondents reserved their comments about the challenges that could be expected with the monitoring and evaluation of the policy. They said they could only comment after the policy has been implemented.

Recommendations

In terms of the policy process and the policy document itself, one respondent recommended that more shop stewards should have been involved. Another respondent said *“I wish this Policy should have been developed and implemented twenty years ago”* (IMATU Secretary, 03/10/2006).

4.2 Human Resources Services Support Managers

Perceptions of career pathing and issues that prompted its development

From the Human Resources Services Support Manager’s point of view, career pathing is viewed as a system that will provide a direction in terms of the employee’s career development and boost employee’s morale. In terms of the issues that prompted its development, various explanations surfaced. Firstly, some employees are believed to have been wrongly placed during the placement process that took place in 2004 in the

municipality³. So career pathing seeks to align employees' career aspirations with the organizations objectives. Secondly, it is asserted that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) is mandated by the Skills Development Act (1998). Thirdly, employees lacked a direction in terms of what to do in terms of their careers. Fourthly, it was asserted that the political and administrative nature of the municipality makes the processes more complicated. Thus career pathing is viewed as the policy that will provide a direction in terms of employee's career development.

In terms of who the policy should be targeting, both respondents believed that it should be all the employees of the Msunduzi Municipality but differed in terms of who the main priority should be. One respondent asserted that it should start with the section heads and supervisors. The other respondent argued that it should be people who have relevant qualifications but who are not placed in the relevant sections or jobs.

Influences/challenges of the Policy Making Process

In terms of the process that was undertaken in developing the career pathing policy, the respondent asserted that the HRD process unit came up with a draft document and then sent it to all relevant stakeholders including HRM Services Support Managers, SEMs and the labour unions to critically engage with the document and forward their comments back to the HRD. According to one respondent, the SEMs were not invited to come to the career pathing policy workshops but to respond only through emails. The respondent doubted whether the SEMs responded to these emails. Both respondents emphasized that they were involved in the policy making process and contributed effectively through emails and the workshops together with the unions who had to also give their inputs before the document could be finalized and taken to the relevant committees.

In terms of whether their views were taken seriously by the HRD and the unions, the respondents had different views. One respondent asserted that their views were taken seriously by the other stakeholders because several meetings were organized to further

³ Organisational restructuring was undertaken by the Msunduzi Municipality in 2004; putting employees in higher positions depending on the individual's qualifications and experience.

discuss the comments made previously and to agree on the next policy draft. The other respondent stated that the career pathing policy was not within their domain or duties but just attended the workshops to give comments as per request *“I did not take it as one of my tools, you know since we have HRD, some of the things we just respond and comment and contribute on whatever they want us to contribute”* (HR Services Support Manager, 28/09/2006). HRD process unit was viewed as the main role player as it was mainly responsible for the whole coordination of the career pathing policy making process.

In terms of challenges that were encountered during the career pathing policy making process, three issues were established. Firstly, the stakeholders not being on the same level in terms of understanding the concept and meaning of career pathing was the first challenge that was encountered. Secondly, the lack of attendance at the workshops and responding to the emails that requested comments and contributions to the policy draft; one respondent reiterated that; *“people were invited and did not pitch up. There was also a lack of input and I’m not sure whether people were not interested or what. People did not attend”* (HR Services Support Manager, 11/10/2006). Thirdly, one respondent argued that it was not within their line of duties, as HRM representatives, to fully engage with HRD policies based on the understanding that each process unit should deal with its own policies. Information could be shared in terms of what policies they have but not to fully engage with the policies themselves.

Asked whether the unskilled employee’s views were adequately represented in the development of the career pathing policy, both respondents asserted that they could not recall any of such initiatives from HRD, which was responsible for contacting all the relevant stakeholders in the consultation phase of the policy making process. In terms of how the unskilled employees understood the concept of career pathing, both respondents asserted that they did not think that the employees understood until it was presented to them during staff induction workshops and other general staff meetings. One respondent said, *“I can’t tell how much do they know down there, even myself I’m still going to read it”* (HR Services Support Manager, 28/09/2006).

In terms of what national policy frameworks were considered in formulating the career pathing policy, both respondents were certain that the Skills Development Act, 1998 was the guiding framework.

Necessary Resources for Implementation

Various issues were raised in terms of the requirements for a successful implementation of the policy. Conducting workshops and training personnel to champion and present the policy to the whole organization was the first necessary activity that was recommended. This workshop was recommended to even extend to the councillors, and the HR committee given their involvement with HR issues. It was further recommended that hard copies of the final approved policy document be distributed to all employees for reference purposes. However that was acknowledged to have financial implications and the respondent was not sure whether funds would actually be available. Secondly, it was suggested that peoples' career paths should be linked with the organization's objectives. Thus each Business Unit should embark on understanding the broad objectives of the organization and align peoples' career paths with them. Thirdly, the skills audit was highly recommended to be conducted before people's career paths could be determined in order to identify skills available among the Msunduzi Municipality employees.

Other policies that were suggested to be developed or refined to accommodate the successful implementation of the career pathing policy included the performance management system, succession planning, Affirmative Action Policy (2000), progression and promotion policies. Of these policies it was only the Affirmative Action Policy (2000) that exists but it was also deemed to be outdated and needed to be reviewed. It was also raised that some Business Units do have their own progression policy, but not for the whole organization and it was therefore recommended that one should be developed to guide the whole organization. In terms of the promotion policy, one respondent raised a concern that it is not viewed as a policy that is applicable at local government level but applicable at other government levels. Thus promotion is likely to face major resistance at the Msunduzi Municipality.

Potential Limitations of the Proposed Career Pathing Policy

The perceived potential limitations of the career pathing policy included the lack of a skills audit i.e. developing people's career paths without knowing and mapping the skills available within the organization. It was therefore recommended that the skills audit being piloted in Infrastructure Services and Facilities (ISF) should be extended to the whole organization. It was further recommended that "buy-in" from all Business Units and other relevant stakeholders, such as labour unions, should be ensured for the successful implementation of the policy. It was suggested that the policy be thoroughly discussed with all stakeholders before it can be implemented.

Two different views surfaced concerning the time by which the policy should start operating. One respondent argued that it should start to operate immediately throughout the whole organization, after it has been adopted. The other respondent argued that it should start with one Business Unit - ideally the ISF where the skills audit has already been conducted. Lessons learnt here can then be shared with the whole organization.

In terms of whether management and labour unions have the capacity to deal with issues such as career pathing practices, the respondent argued that the management has the capacity but is overworked. In terms of the labour union, one respondent declined to comment and the other respondent bluntly said, "*this time, labour is dead, maybe it will rise after some time*" (HR Services Support Manager, 11/10/2006). The implication is that the labour unions lack adequate capacity at this stage to deal with HR issues.

The Role of the Monitoring and Evaluation

The role of monitoring and evaluation was viewed as very important as it shows progress of the policy and its practices. In terms of who should be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the policy, two views emerged. The first one was that the HRD Process Unit should be responsible, with some assistance from the HR Services Support Managers and the section heads (see Appendix 6). The other respondent said, HR Services Support Managers cannot be responsible for monitoring

“how can I monitor it, I don’t see my self monitoring it, HRD is the monitor” (HR Services Support Manager, 11/10/2006). The involvement of the employees in the monitoring and evaluation of the policy was deemed unfeasible, but potentially possible through their affiliated labour unions representatives and line managers in providing reports.

Both respondents did not know what the Career Pathing Policy (2006) required in terms of how the monitoring and evaluation process was going to take place within the municipality, but knew how monitoring and evaluation operates in general. The main anticipated challenge that was raised was the issue of the career pathing not being thoroughly discussed so its objectives are clear. Without this clarity, monitoring would potentially be a futile exercise.

Recommendations

One respondent said the policy document was user-friendly but suggested that it should be translated into isiZulu since the majority of the employees are isiZulu speakers.

4.3 Strategic Executive Managers

Perceptions of Career Pathing Policy

From a strategic executive management point of view career pathing was viewed as means firstly, to motivate the employees by introducing career based capacity building interventions; secondly, to use limited resources to retain knowledge and skills within the organization. One respondent further reiterated that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) was mainly developed in order to increase an employee’s capacity and expand job scope within the organization, rather than employing new staff.

On the other hand some contended that the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) was prompted by the placement process that took place in 2004, where some people were placed in positions for which they did not have adequate experience or

relevant qualifications. Thus career pathing was developed to capacitate such employees and provide direction in terms of their careers and multiskilling. On the other hand, career pathing was viewed as means to address the long time progression problem, where people who have acquired all relevant skills for certain jobs but have to wait for someone to pass away, retire or resign before they can assume that position. The respondent further argued that a person's death, resignation or retirement does not guarantee that the most qualified person will get that job; other factors like organisational politics play a major role. Given this issue, one respondent raised doubt if the policy will ever work.

All respondents contended that the policy should target all the employees within the municipality but differed in terms of who should be the first priority. One respondent said more emphasis should be on professional staff because they are the "brain of the organization" and the lower levels employees should be second on the rank. Lower levels employees like street sweepers can only progress to the level of street sweeper supervisor and thus it was suggested that opportunities should be created for them to move to higher positions in the organization. Professional staffs were viewed as primary recipients of development because of the trend professional staff have of leaving for better positions elsewhere.

Influences of the Policy Making Process

The Strategic Executive Managers could not describe the whole process undertaken when the Career Pathing Policy (2006) was being created and argued that HRD was the main custodian of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). Their roles as SEMs were thus only to contribute to the policy process through the emailed comments.

All the respondents were unsure about which national policy frameworks were considered in the creation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) because, they argued, they were not fully involved in the whole process. They suggested that frameworks like the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, Employment Equity Act 1997, Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996, and the Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995 should have been considered because the nature of the career pathing itself demands that all these

policies must be considered. One respondent strongly recommended that Labour Relations Act should be carefully considered because failure to do so may hamper the whole policy because the labour unions may challenge the policy if this Act is overlooked.

Necessary Resources for Implementation

The primary issue raised regarding the necessary resources required for the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006), was the training of the senior managers in order to understand HR issues in general and career pathing in particular. This is because the placement process previously placed candidates who could not effectively execute their duties in higher positions. Secondly, it was further suggested that an audit of employee's career aspirations should be conducted. The municipality could then devise a corporate strategy on how it anticipates meeting the employee's expectations. It was acknowledged that it was not feasible for the organization to meet all employees' career expectation and therefore the organization's broad objectives should be used as a guiding principle. Some strategies that were suggested in trying to bridge the gap included recruitment of new staff.

It was further pointed out that in order for the Career Pathing Policy (2006) to be implemented successfully it needed to be thoroughly discussed with the labour unions in order to get initial approval and "buy-in" and then be taken to all the employees of the municipality. It was also suggested that there should be a person who should champion the policy to the whole organization and make sure that it is implemented accordingly.

Two respondents did not view finances as one of the resources required for the implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) because its intention is not to create new jobs but an enabling environment for people to progress. One respondent viewed, finances as very important for this policy in terms of providing continuous training and development because developing somebody's career path means providing training. Human resources were viewed by all respondents as the main resource required for the implementation of this policy. It was further suggested that the organisation should be prepared to allow employees to attend workshops or

training related to the development of their approved career paths. Time-off was viewed as one of the necessary resources for the effective implementation of the policy. One respondent argued that time allowances meant that the organization had to be prepared in order to ensure that service delivery is not hampered as a result of the training.

Regarding policies that needed to be developed or refined to accommodate the proper functioning of the Career Pathing Policy (2006), various policies were suggested. Policies to be reviewed included the Staff Training and Development Policy (2005) and Recruitment and Employment Policy (2003) which had to incorporate psychometric tests in order to match the person and the job; policies to be developed included succession planning policy and knowledge management policy. The knowledge management policy was viewed to have a potential in unlocking the knowledge from those who are well experienced and sharing it with the new employees. In that regard the culture of writing articles or reports within the organization was encouraged for knowledge sharing purposes.

Potential Limitations of the Policy

Potential limitations that were raised included:

- A lack of support in terms of training and development after employees' career paths have been determined;
- The fact this policy will create a lot of expectations among the employees which will be difficult to meet.
- The fact that the municipality operates in a political context was anticipated to complicate the processes.
- The lack of a champion to drive the policy in terms of implementation and monitoring;
- Lack of "buy-in" and support from all the stakeholders including labour unions
- The organisational structure was also raised as one of the potential limitations. It was recommended that it should be reviewed since it was restructured by

the former municipal manager and has never been revisited again, and there are already gaps that are hampering the effectiveness of the organization. The organisational structure must then be reflective of the career pathing policy.

- Managers who are supposed to champion the Career Pathing Policy (2006) being on five year contract.

The SEMs and PMs being on a five year contract become a potential limitation because they are supposed to oversee the whole policy process and there is no career path for them within the organization and consequently they will be reluctant to assist their employees. It was cautioned that they may ignore career pathing and focus on other duties stipulated in the performance contract from which their bonuses are calculated.

Senior manager's capacity in dealing with issues like career pathing was also raised as one of the potential limiting factors. This view was based on the perception that some people who occupy high positions were wrongly placed during the placement process and were said to be the primary group in need of serious training. As one respondent said, "*Some senior managers are excited about their new positions but they do not know what these positions are all about*" (Strategic Executive Manager, 09/10/2006).

The issue of commitment and the fact that the organization is short staffed was also raised as one of the major limiting factors that could affect the implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). Lack of funds for multiskilling where some employees can be rotated to various sections within the organization were also raised as one of the limiting factors. It was further suggested that the system of moving employees to the sections that link with their skills and experience should be developed and was deemed to play a major role in developing employee's career paths.

All respondents strongly felt that unless the Career Pathing Policy (2006) and all its objectives and benefits are made clear to the unions and employees at large, it will never succeed. They further argued that unions need to know how the policy will benefit the employees. Indeed the councillors also need to know how it will contribute in improving service delivery. The unions need to know that the policy will benefit the employees in terms of training and development. It was further suggested that all

the consequences of not having such a policy should be presented together with statistics of staff turnover, resignations and evidence of low staff morale and the consequential impact on the service delivery.

It was also cautioned that employees might interpret career pathing as a promotion policy and it was recommended that confusion will need to be clarified and a promotion policy will then need to be developed with clear guidelines on who gets promoted at what stage and on what grounds. Regarding the capacity of management, two respondents believed that the management had capacity to deal with career pathing practices; on the other hand one respondent argued "*I do not think that the management has the capacity to deal with career pathing*" (Strategic Executive Manager, 09/10/2006). Most respondents doubted the union's capacity in dealing with issues like career pathing. One respondent argued that the unions lack an understanding of many simple policy issues and if they do not understand the issue being discussed, they often resolute simply walk out of the meeting.

The Role of the Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation were viewed as a very important component that should be undertaken to fast track the progress of the policy. It was further acknowledged that SEMs, PMs and line managers should be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme; and that line managers should submit comprehensive reports to their PMs and SEMs who will then present it to the relevant committees like EXCO (Executive Committee). It was suggested that such reports should clearly outline policy failures and successes and provide effective strategies to improve those failures.

One respondent suggested that that a special committee should be established to deal with career pathing related issues and be represented by management and labour unions. Some suggested that committees must be established within all Business Units and liaise with the HRD process unit in dealing with all training and development issues including the monitoring and evaluation of the career pathing practices. It was also suggested that the performance management system should be developed and linked to the monitoring and evaluation of career pathing.

Recommendations

One respondent recommended that in future, policies like career pathing should be developed with a broad consultation process because employees on the ground and professional staff were never consulted in the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). Instead, only managers who do not understand problems on the ground level were consulted. It was also recommended that the employee's career path expectations should be audited first before the policy could be implemented.

It was also recommended that the people who will champion the policy must not be those on contract like SEMs and PMs; rather, must be those who will stay and drive the process for a long period. It was further suggested that the system of moving employees to the sections that link with their skills and experience should be developed.

4.4 Human Resources and Employee Relations

Perceptions of Career Pathing Policy

Two of the respondents who were not managers contended that they were not involved in the policy making process and thus their views would be based on their general understanding. One respondent said "*I do not know anything about career pathing policy*" (Staff Development Officer, 12/10/2006). Four of the respondents viewed the career pathing policy as means to address the progression problem within the municipality. One respondent said "*we need career pathing because the existing progression structure does not cover everybody, it covers nurses, traffic officers and others*" (Personnel Officer, 19/10/2006). Two of the respondents contended that career pathing was developed in order to address the issue of scarce skills and the development of the employees within the organization and the fact that the municipality did not have a system that motivated the employees in terms of their careers because, "*when you come to a new organization you need to know where you are going to in terms of your career*" one respondent said (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006).

Another two respondents asserted that in most cases you find that when people leave the organization there is no-one within the organization to take their positions. The municipality then has to look outside the organization. And due to the scarce resources, it takes time to recruit and train people from “outside” for the job. To emphasize the point, one respondent said *“we have the long term serving employees who have the skills and knowledge and when they leave the organization they are not any people that are equipped to take those positions”* (Employee Relations Manager, 18/10/2006). Most respondents maintained that this policy would be critical in terms of addressing the scarce skills within the organization. As one respondent said *“what we found in this organization is that we do have a lack of skills, people need to be trained in specific areas like IT and engineering related fields”* (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006).

Regarding whom the policy should target, various views surfaced. One respondent said it should be all the employees, not only specific levels. Two respondent said, it should be the employees on the lower levels *“who normally come to the municipality and work for many years and leave the organization as they came”* (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006). Another two respondents said the policy should target the previously disadvantaged group first, the black and lower levels employees. One respondent argued that besides the lower levels employees, priority should be also given to the positions that are regarded as scarce skills like engineering fields.

Influences/Challenges of the Policy Making Process

Two of the respondents maintained that they were not involved in the policy process - only their managers were involved. They claimed it was through rumours that they heard a policy of this nature was being developed. Nonetheless one of these managers claimed not to have been involved in the policy making process and did not even know that the policy existed. One of these managers admitted to have been involved in the policy making process. She further explained that the career pathing policy was developed by the HRD and then circulated the draft policy to all the managers within the Sound Governance and Human Resources (SG & HR) to have their inputs before

it could be finalized. She further emphasized that *“so everybody had a chance to input to the policy”* (Employee Relations Manager, 18/10/2006).

Various concerns were raised in terms of the policy making process. One of the concerns was about the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) without a promotion policy because it was felt that Career Pathing Policy (2006) could not function effectively without an existing promotion policy. Other concerns were about the culture of creating policies for the sake of having them within the organization, and not for the real development of the employees. It was also mentioned that many employees are sent to courses and workshops but those skills are not utilised within the organization. To emphasize the point one respondent said *“a lot of money goes to skills and development but all that is not used for the benefit of the employees and the organization”* (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006).

In terms of the national frameworks that influenced the career pathing policy, most respondents were clear which policies were relevant but did not know which ones were actually considered since they were not engaged in the policy making process. The relevant national frameworks that were raised included the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998, Employment Equity Act 1997, Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995, Affirmative Action Act No. 55 of 1998, HR Strategy (White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service, 1998) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997.

Necessary Resources for Implementation

In terms of the necessary resources required for implementation, all respondents said there must be broad and extensive consultation with all stakeholders including managers, labour unions and the employees in the form of workshops and other possible means decided by the HRD process unit. Finances were also raised as one of the crucial resources in terms of training people to drive the whole implementation process forward. Commitment was also highlighted as an issue that may affect implementation if all the relevant stakeholders are not well informed and systems put in place. As one respondent reiterated *“it must be checked and corrected not just be implemented and be left like that”* (Personnel Development Officer, 19/10/2006).

One respondent also suggested that the skills audit should be conducted within the organization before the policy could be implemented, claiming “*we need to know what skills we have within the organization*” (Employee Relations Manager, 18/10/2006). Some suggested that this policy needs a lot of training of staff, as one respondent claimed “*so we need good trainers, we need good human resource management in this*” (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006). This means that training will be a primary activity in developing employees’ career paths which relies on good human resources management. Finances were also viewed as necessary for progression in terms of remuneration as employee salary packages increase when they move up a grade. It was further recommended that for the Career Pathing Policy (2006) to succeed it must be a joint venture between Human Resources Management and Human Resources Development because issues like promotion, succession planning and remuneration packages are dealt with under Human Resources Management (HRM). According to the HRM, the main policy to be developed and linked with the Career Pathing Policy (2006) was the promotion policy and it was further maintained that career pathing will not work without this policy.

Potential Limitations of the Career Pathing Policy

Unless strict control measures are put in place to guide, for instance, the identification of people to be trained, the policy will be abused. One respondent asserted that agreement standards and disciplinary measures should be developed and adhered to, for the successful implementation of the policy. The respondent further maintained that “*these are labour issues but are not applied in this municipality*” (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006). One respondent said the main potential limitation is the “*rigid management*” which may be a constraint in ensuring that this policy is implemented (Staff Development Officer, 12/10/2006). Commitment was also raised as one of the potential limitations to the implementation of the policy, with key role players possibly ignoring the Career Pathing Policy (2006) and focuses on other issues.

It was also maintained that unless a promotion policy is developed career pathing will fail. Regarding the strategic location of the career pathing policy most respondents said it is rightly placed in HRD because HRD is responsible for training and

development and HRM will act as a support system with policies like promotion and progression. One respondent raised the issue of favouritism and discrimination as one of the issues that can be a major potential limitation to the policy, where certain individuals are allowed to progress and the others sabotaged. One respondent alluded *“we do not want to see what has happened in Traffic Section where people complained about favouritism and discrimination in terms of progression”* (Personnel Development Officer, 19/10/2006). The same respondent further suggested that it be ensured that the policy implementation process must be transparent to prevent any favouritism and discrimination.

All four respondents said without the buy-in and support of the labour unions the policy will be rejected in the Local Labour Forum and thus consequently fail. In terms of the capacity of the unions and management in dealing with issues like career pathing practices, most respondents believed that both the management and the labour unions lacked capacity and needed proper training regarding career pathing. To emphasize, one respondent said *“at this stage no! I think though the policy is there, there still need to be a lot of workshoping especially to the management so that they could understand what it means and how it will be applied”* (Employee Relations Manager, 18/10/2006). Regarding the unions, one respondent said *“our labour tend to take sides and get swayed by the management”* (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006).

The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation

Three respondents felt that HRD should be responsible for monitoring and evaluation but HRM (Personnel and Employment Relations) should also play a major role because career pathing policy links with most HRM issues (like, for example, employment equity, HR Plan for the municipality, conditions of service, grievances and disciplinary measures). One respondent said unless these Process Units (HRM and HRD) work together in the monitoring and evaluation process, many problems will arise and result in policy failure. It was further suggested that HRD and HRM should work together in ensuring that the right people are selected for training and development. However, some suggested that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) should be coordinated by HRM because most of its related policies fall under HRM, *“so we*

have to make sure that the process runs smooth although HRD is in charge” (Employee Relations Manager, 18/10/2006). One respondent was not sure of her role as a manager in monitoring and evaluation, claiming to have not read the policy yet.

Most Human Resources Management and Employment Relation’s (HRM and ER) staff felt that the employees would be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the policy, through their labour unions representatives. They further acknowledged that employees have the right to launch grievances through their shop stewards or HR Services Support Managers. One respondent suggested that a special committee should be established to specifically deal with issues such as career pathing, progression and promotion (Personnel Development Officer, 19/10/2006).

Recommendations

It was recommended that promotion and progression polices be developed immediately for the successful implementation of the career pathing policy. It was also recommended that for implementation, consultation with all stakeholders must be extensive. As one respondent commented, *“yes there should have been more consultation, broad consultation; employees should be workshoped on this whole thing of career pathing. You and I may know but I do not think that everybody understand it”* (Personnel Officer, 19/10/2006).

4.5 Human Resources Development Managing Committee

Perceptions of Career Pathing

All the respondents viewed career pathing as a system that is going to guide the municipality in ensuring that the employee’s career paths are developed immediately after joining the organization. One manager reiterated that *“Besides all the interventions we offer in terms of skills development, there must be a framework or policy that is going to force the municipality to make sure that the employees move up the hierarchy within the municipality depending on where they are based”* (HRD Process Manager, 27/09/2006). Taking the same view, one respondent said, *“Career pathing process means to move from one job to a higher position over a period of*

time. That will entirely depend on the type of the function the person does and the competencies for the job” (Skills Development Manager, 26/09/2006). For others career pathing was viewed as a means of boosting employees’ morale.

One respondent differed from this general view claiming that career pathing facilitates exploration of other fields available within and beyond the organization. He further argued that study schemes and learnerships limit people to study what is related to their jobs only. Thus career pathing has been developed so that people can develop their own careers and study something that is beyond their jobs and increase opportunities of being employed in other fields within the municipality. Indeed *“career pathing for me at the Msunduzi Municipality means offering an opportunity to workers across the board in terms of their careers... and study something that is beyond their jobs that they are employed to do so that they would be able to be employed in the other fields within the municipality”* (Organisational Development Manager, 22/09/2006).

In terms of who the policy should target, three respondents said it should target lower level employees because they have been neglected in terms of training and development; two of them believed that preferences should be given to previously disadvantaged groups; one believed that it should be scarce skills employees because it takes time to recruit and train them. One respondent said *“it will help to develop their career paths so that they know that there is a possibility of progression and then they will stay within the organization”* (HRD Process Manager, 27/09/2006). Another respondent contended that the municipality largely relied on external expertise in scarce skills jobs, therefore the municipality decided to develop this policy in trying to develop people from within the municipality. Another two respondents believed that the policy should target all the employees of the municipality.

Various issues were raised regarding the problems/issues that prompted the development of Career Pathing Policy. These issues included a lack of progression and demotivated workforce within the municipality; loss of scarce skills and the need to retain them. Regarding progression one respondent said that *“the most sad scenario is that we have people in this municipality, who were employed from 1979 but still on the same positions”* (HRD Executive Secretary, 29/09/2006). Two respondents felt

that the policy was developed to motivate lower levels employees who were involved in ABET but never progressed any further because there was no link between ABET and their careers. Another respondent said *“the municipality did not offer an opportunity for individuals to do something that is beyond what they are employed to do. If you were employed to be Clerk or Committee Development Officer it would mean you remain a clerk or committee officer for the rest of your life because what you will be studying is relevant to that”* (Organisational Development Manager, 22/09/2006). He further argued that *“only people who had progression are people like technicians and these people who are in technical fields, which means that the rest of the staff within the municipality because that opportunity does not exist they remain what they are”* (Organisational Development Manager, 22/09/2006). The proposals for the development of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) from different Business Units are said to date back from 1990, indicating that the need for this policy was identified fifteen years ago.

Influences/Challenges in the Policy Making Process

In terms of the process that was undertaken in the creation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006), all respondents referred to the related research initially conducted by HRD in trying to understand the current status/nature of the problem at the Msunduzi Municipality. Most respondents said that their first input in the process was at the preliminary research stage and then on discussing the first policy draft document. Various stakeholders were then invited to discuss the policy draft. These included unions, HR Services Support Managers, Process Managers (PMs), junior managers (known as Level 4 and Level 5 managers) and the Strategic Executive Managers (SEMs).

The SEMs and PMs contributed through email responses to the policy. Other junior managers and labour unions had to attend a series of workshops until the final draft was sent to the Sound Governance and Human Resources (SG & HR) Committee for recommendations and then to the Executive Committee (EXCO) for final approval. All respondents asserted that the consultation process ensured that no single person's views were dominant and it was only after broad consultation and discussion that agreements were reached. All felt that their views were taken seriously by other

stakeholders. One respondent said, *“yes my views were taken seriously because one of the areas I did bring up was in showing that for the employee to be involved in career pathing programme or policy had to have a basic qualification or education and I think that was put in the policy”* (Skills Development Manager, 26/09/2006).

Three of the respondents argued that the main role players in the policy process were managers, while one added that labour unions also assisted in shaping the policy. Another one asserted that everybody contributed equally to the policy making process and no one's views dominated.

In terms of the challenges encountered during the policy making process, two respondents asserted that people had a problem with differentiating between career pathing, promotion and progression. Career pathing was perceived as incorporating all these issues. This perception was viewed as having the potential to generate problems in the implementation stage. To avoid this, one manager said *“I am not rushing for it to be approved because once it's there people would demand that it should be implemented and it cannot without promotion, progression and other HRM policies and commitment from HRM”* (HRD Process Manager, 27/09/2006).

Two of the respondents said one of the challenges was the fact that there were no career pathing policies (in local government context) to refer to. Another two respondents were also concerned that not many people participated in the policy making process (consultation) in the form of emails and attendance at workshops. This delayed the finalization of the process. As one respondent said *“people did not respond in time and when it comes to meetings again to discuss whatever has been suggested to reach an agreement, people did not pitch up and it had to be postponed again and again and it takes time to get people together again because they have got other commitments”* (Organisational Development Manager, 22/09/2006).

Responding to the question of how these challenges encountered in the policy making process may affect the final draft, various responses surfaced. One respondent argued that the confusion between career pathing, promotion and progression helped to identify the need for these policies for the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006). One respondent said *“I do not know how it affected the final*

draft, only the person who created the policy knows that, my role was to make inputs,” (Skills Development Manager, 26/09/2006). This may mean that he only participated because he had to, not because he was concerned about the policy itself.

In terms of whether the employee’s views on the ground were adequately considered in the policy making process, all respondents admitted that the employees were not involved. Their assumption was however that the labour unions would cascade the information down to them. However, it was also acknowledged that not all employees are affiliated with the unions.

Most respondents were not sure about all the national policy frameworks considered for the formulation of the career pathing policy as that was perceived to be the role of the researcher. However, all respondents mentioned the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995, and the Employment Equity Act 1997.

Necessary Resources for Implementation

Regarding resources required for implementation, various issues raised included finances, and awareness programmes throughout the municipality. It was suggested that the workshops on the policy should be conducted for the structures like HR Committees and all Business Units within the municipality. Training and development resources were regarded as the essential. In terms of workshops and awareness programmes one respondent said *“we need intensive training to make everybody understand what this policy is about because it can have issues of subjectivity and people may be selected because they are liked by their supervisors or managers”* (HRD Process Manager, 27/09/2006). It was further recommended that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) should be linked to policies and programmes like Staff Assistance Policy (2005), Work Skills Plan (2005), Employment and Recruitment policy (2003) and should not be implemented in isolation. It was also established that great support was needed from HRM in terms of aligning their policies with the Career Pathing Policy (2006). One manager maintained that the “manpower” or personnel to drive the policy practices throughout the organization was enough it was just a matter of training them. The Skills Development Team was advised to strengthen its training arm and provide guidance because the demands from

the employees were expected to be very high since it was everyone's anticipation of this policy.

The skills audit was also raised as one of the necessary activities that should be done before the policy could be implemented. Some suggested that implementation should start in one Business Unit (as a pilot project) and monitor its progress. Necessary changes will be done and then be implemented within all the Business Units of the organization.

The main resources that were considered from the HRD side were finances. However these have not been allocated because the policy has not been formally approved, waiting upon the development of supporting policies like promotion and succession planning. One respondent maintained that once the policy has been approved and the suggested policies from HRM developed and approved the budget will then be allocated. Partnerships with the external expertises were also recommended for the skills transfer especially on the scarce skills in developing employee's career paths. It was recommended that policies on progression, promotion, succession planning, rotations would need to be developed for the successful implementation of the career pathing policy. And the existing policies especially Employment Policy (no date), Recruitment and Selection Policy (no date) had to be refined.

Potential Limitations

Various issues were raised as potential limitations to the implementation of the policy, including:

- Lack of support and commitment from HRM where all the key policies to support the career pathing policy come from.
- Lack of well trained personnel to champion the policy was also raised as one of the potential limitations.
- Lack of "buy-in" from labour unions, managers, all Business Units and the employees at large. Career pathing was viewed as a very critical policy that needed a lot of awareness programmes and workshops to make people

understand what it is all about, so without adequate support and “buy-in” the policy was deemed to fail.

- Favouritism was also raised as one of the potential limitations as some employees would be neglected and supervisors and managers will select their friends and relatives for certain career paths and training.
- Finances - for training and bursaries
- Management and labour union’s capacity in dealing with HR issues.

Three respondents believed that the labour unions needed serious training in order to fully engage with such career pathing practices. One respondent claimed *“This is because most shop-stewards are new and they have not been trained yet”* one respondent said (HRD Process Manager, 27/09/2006). Two respondents believed that the labour had the capacity but tend to take sides on some issues.

Asked when they think the policy should start operating, most respondents felt that it should start very soon but were concerned that the organizational environment seemed not to be ready for such a policy. One manager said *“the only time this policy can start operating is when the HRM policies are in place. If those policies are not in place this policy may take long, but we need to have those policies in place because they have to talk to each other”* (Skills Development Manager, 26/09/2006).

The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation

The role of monitoring and evaluation was seen as the most important part of the policy because it measures how the policy is operating and whether it achieves its intended objectives. The HRD Process Unit was regarded as to be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation process and the Skills Development Section to ensure that training and development processes like the Work Skills Plan (WSP) (2005), Personal Development Plan (PDP) and all other issues related to the career pathing policy are running smoothly. In addition, the Skills Development Manager will have to closely work with the HRD Process Manager in communicating all the issues about the operation of the career pathing policy. In terms of how the employees were to be

involved in the monitoring and evaluation process, it was suggested that through their labour unions representatives, Strategic Business Units (SBU) Committees, HR Services Support Managers or come directly to HRD and raise any issue related to career pathing.

All respondents were not sure about what the policy actually said about the process of monitoring and evaluation but all knew that the HRD will be in charge of the whole process.

Recommendations

The most prominent recommendation that was raised was the issue of awareness programmes and workshops to make the whole organization know about the policy. And for HRM to fully cooperate in terms of developing policies like promotion, progression, succession planning; and align their existing policies with the career pathing policy.

It was also suggested that during the awareness programmes or workshops all career pathing related policies should be discussed so that people may clearly understand how they differ and complement each other. Managers were suggested to be the first to be targeted for these awareness programmes because they often assumed to know about policies and only to find the contrary. One respondent said *“I think my main concern is people who do not turn up for the meetings and do not participate and contribute to the meetings and the policy and they will be the first people in the future when the policy is being used to start questioning some things”* (DM, 22/09/2006).

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This section will analyse and interpret the findings presented in the previous chapters with the aim of determining the extent to which the Career Pathing Policy (2006) of the Msunduzi Municipality reflects the requirements of national government's frameworks. The analysis will explore how the policy was created and assess the likelihood of its failure or success in the light of its proposed implementation strategy, organisational context and the public policy theories discussed in Chapter Two and the national government's legislative requirements for career pathing. The international career pathing experience will be further used to explore similarities and differences with a view to drawing conclusions about the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) potential for success.

5.1 Policy Purpose/Objective

The international experience shows that most organizations develop career pathing by being influenced by, amongst other things, technological advancement, which then creates scarce skills within the organizations (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 1999). Indeed, as the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (1999) has pointed out, technological skills scarcity is particularly bad in the public service. The Msunduzi Municipality echoes this with its Career Pathing Policy (2006); a response to significant resignations of employees in specifically the engineering and IT fields. These employees leave the organization for better jobs elsewhere because there appear to be no advanced career opportunities for them. These resignations have thus exposed the scarcity of skills within the municipality. The Msunduzi Municipality has thus sought to retain these scarce skills through career pathing. This is supported by one of the HRM managers who reiterates *"what we found in this organization is that we do have a lack of skills, people need to be trained in specific areas like IT and engineering related fields"* (Job Evaluation Manager, 04/10/2006).

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 6.7.2) further argued that due to the acceleration of technology employees are often expected to use new forms of information technology in executing their duties. Therefore the government must ensure that it provides adequate training for the IT and engineering fields in order to

cope with the private sector demands. In this regard the research findings show that IT and engineering skills are one of the main targets of the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006).

As discussed earlier, in 1996, the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) in Canada established a career pathing project for the health sector and the health labour force. This project was prompted by the fact that the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) had an aging workforce with a significant number of employees nearing retirement, (1, 400 nurses eligible to retire by year 2007); and difficulties in recruitment and retaining skilled employees in the health sector (SAHO, 2004: 3). Similarly, the Msunduzi Municipality developed its Career Pathing Policy (2006) motivated by such problems. The findings reveal that the organization has experienced problems in filling certain positions from within the organization because the skills and the experience did not exist. The municipality then relied on the hiring of external skills which is a timely process that often requires in-house training. One HRM manager reiterated "*we have the long term serving employees who have the skills and knowledge and when they leave the organization there are not any people that are equipped to take those positions*" (Employee Relations Manager, 18/10/2006). The Career Pathing Policy (2006) has therefore been created to potentially ensure that when people retire, pass away or resign, there are well equipped individuals to assume their positions.

In 2000, the state legislature of Massachusetts, USA embarked on its national career pathing project for nursing and invested \$ 10 million for the two phase project. The project was in response to the high turnover of professionals in long-term care, which created instability and threatened the quality and access to health care (2001: 5). The research findings of this study show that the Msunduzi Municipality seeks to reduce the staff turnover and keep the staff motivated with their jobs and the organization itself.

As Stone and Meltz, (1993) and Cascio and Thacker, (1994) argued, organizations engage in career development activities motivated by the need to develop and promote employees from within the organization; shortage of promotable staff and; employee turnover. Gringle (1979: 79) adds that strengthening human resources and

career development is key in enhancing capacity building in the public service. The findings of this study within the Msunduzi Municipality reflect these motivations and further emphasize the need to develop skills and promotable talent from within the organization as being the most desired one. In support of this, one HRD manager said *“Besides all the interventions we offer in terms of skills development, there must be a framework or policy that is going to force the municipality to make sure that the employees move up the hierarchy within the municipality depending on where they are based”* (HRD Process Manager, 27/09/2006).

Hanekom (1987: 2) argues that public policies are the representatives of the legislature and they therefore have political and administrative dimensions. The political wing decides on a policy and transmits it downward to the administrative wing to implement. The Msunduzi Municipality’s Career Pathing Policy (2006) enjoys legislative support as it is mandated by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) itself and other national policy frameworks, discussed above. Therefore it should enjoy support from the national government, unlike when a policy is developed at local government level – potentially without support from the national government level. Thus this policy is the mirror image of the political ideology of the government in power (Hanekom, 1987: 2). However, national support does not mean it will automatically be successfully implemented; strategic arrangements have to be put in place within the municipality to ensure that the policy is implemented accordingly. As Hanekom (1987: 3) states policies are not made to keep policy-makers, labour unions and politicians active and occupied, but rather to bring about change. The Msunduzi municipality Career Pathing Policy (2006) shows that it has very good intentions of developing its employees within the organization so that they could effectively execute their job and hence improved service delivery. However, this can only be achieved through the commitment of the management, employees, labour unions and all other relevant stakeholders.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, Section (195 (1) (h)) states that good human resource management and career development guidelines and practices must be cultivated in order to maximize human potential in the public service. Furthermore, public servants must be trained and allowed to acquire adequate skills relevant to their jobs and future careers. The Skills Development Act (1998)

also provides for the creation of organisational frameworks that promote and improve the skills of the South African workforce aligned to National Qualifications Framework stipulated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996: Section 195 (2) (a) (b) (c) further states that all these principles (including human resources development and career development) must be practised by administrations in every sphere, level and organs of government. This means all government levels and organs including local governments (like the Msunduzi Municipality) are obliged to develop, implement and maintain a career pathing policy as part of their career management system. Msunduzi Municipality has thus acted on this legislative obligation by developing a Career Pathing Policy (2006) with the aim of giving its employees opportunities for further training and development, relevant to their career aspirations and not limited by the jobs they are currently employed to do.

As the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 provides, public servants should not be limited to acquiring skills relevant only to their jobs but should be provided the opportunity to acquire skills relevant to their career aspirations. This was, however, not the reality within the Msunduzi Municipality. The findings show that the main aim of developing this policy was to develop skills within the municipality in order to improve the capacity of the employees and the organization and hence provide for efficient execution of government objectives and improved service delivery. One of the HRD managers reiterated *“Career pathing for me at the Msunduzi Municipality means offering an opportunity to workers across the board in terms of their careers... and study something that is beyond their jobs that they are employed to do so that they would be able to be employed in the other fields within the municipality”* (Organisational Development Manager, 22/09/10).

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), Section 195 (1) (i) states that public administration must be representative of the South African citizens and address the imbalances of the past. Therefore personnel management practices must consider Affirmative Action enshrined in the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 and must be based on ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past. This obligation which is also mandated by the Skills Development Act (1998) is not evident in the Msunduzi Municipality’s Career Pathing Policy (2006) in

developing employee's career paths, personal development plans (PDP) and Work Skills Plan (2005). Affirmative action emerged during the interviews, but it is not stipulated in the policy document. It is unclear why affirmative action was left out of the policy.

The Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 1.1) argues that the administration at local government level must have adequate capacity in order to effectively execute its responsibility. Human resources development strategies should maximize personnel potential. Indeed, the Msunduzi Municipality has recognized the need for improving the capacity of its staff in order to effectively execute its legislative duties and in delivering service to the community by developing a Career Pathing Policy, which is aiming at developing the skills within the organization.

Section 13.1 (b) (c) of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) further states that effective and life long career paths should be developed for all categories of the public servants and that promotion should be based on performance rather than on seniority and qualifications. This means, it is not only the managerial personnel that need to be capacitated but even employees at lower levels should have the opportunity to develop their skills and careers. Concurring with this obligation, the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006: 3) states that "the main targets of the policy are all the employees of the Msunduzi Municipality." However, it emerged from the interviews that lower level employees and the professional staff (including scarce skilled) are the main priority because they deal with the daily implementation of all policies. Thus, they require adequate training and development in order to cope with their work. Retaining scarce skills employees is stipulated in the national government's frameworks, and thus must be added in the Career Pathing Policy (2006) document.

Section 2 (1) (c) of the Skills Development Act (1998) mandates that all government levels should provide employees with an opportunity to acquire new skills and provide new employees with adequate experience. This links with the Msunduzi Municipality's strategy of allowing employees to study and get training that is relevant to their own career aspirations.

The Skills Development Act (1998) further states that the development of skills within the organization will assist in finding the best qualified candidates for specific positions. In this regard the research findings show that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) is also meant to develop employees within the organization in a way that when an employee resigns, retires or pass away, there will be someone well equipped for that job. The Career Pathing Policy (2006: 3) Sections 4.7 and 4.8 states that the municipality seeks to maintain an effective, efficient and stable workforce and develop more employees into professionals. The Msunduzi Municipality can also utilise the SETA provisions like learnerships in developing employee's career paths and link it with its Work Skills Plan (WSP).

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) also mandates what the Msunduzi Municipality has proposed; using ABET, RPL and in-service training which needs to be linked to NQF and Industry Boards for the lower levels employees who can not directly enrol for some training and development programmes.

The Career Pathing Policy (2006) receives broad acceptance within the Msunduzi Municipality. However workshops have to be conducted to ensure all the stakeholders understand the content, implications, and benefits of the policy.

5.2 Participation in Policy Making and Implementation Process

The first stage in the policy making process is problem identification and definition (Colebatch, 2000: 110; Kingdon, 1995: 2), which involves making a problem clear and sensitizing others to see it as a problem that needs a policy intervention. In terms of this case study, the problem was raised by the ISF Business Unit (formerly known as City Engineers) around 1992, being confronted by high rates of resignations. The staff left for better opportunities elsewhere because the organization did not employ career pathing and progression. Many attempts were made (without success) until the HRD Process Unit decided to embark upon developing a career pathing policy in 2006. The political atmosphere is conducive for this policy to be implemented as it is supported by the national government.

Hessing and Howlett (1997: 172) contend that the nature of policy implementation determines whether the policy was well designed and all the important issues (like devising clear objectives, legitimatization, persuasion and co-optation) were considered in the policy formulation process. The Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) objectives are clear. However the policy states that its targets are all the employees of the municipality and the research findings showed that previously disadvantaged groups, scarce skills (professional staff), and low level employees were the main priority. All these groups are mandated by the national government's frameworks to receive priority. However, the Msunduzi Municipality will need to stipulate in the policy document that, although all employees are entitled to Career Pathing Policy (2006) benefits according to the legislative requirements, priority should be given to these poorly skilled and previously disadvantaged groups. The Msunduzi Municipality must therefore devise a sound strategy to deal with potential internal resistance from those who are not regarded as a priority.

Like the SAHO, the Msunduzi Municipality seeks to involve unions, employees, external expertise in developing employee's career paths. The findings show that external expertise will play a very important role in transferring scarce skills to the Municipality. However, it is very important to note that the issue of external expertise is not included in the policy document even though its value was recognized by those interviewed. HRD and other stakeholders felt that there would be no need for external expertise since all the training would be in-house. Thus it is important that the HRD (who are the policy custodians) ensure that the involvement of the external expertise is stipulated in the policy document due to their role in transferring skills to the municipality. The external expertise will contribute in transferring the scarce skills to the Municipality in the form of learnerships, rotation on projects, and through offering short and long term courses; thus, improving the employee's capacity within the Municipality.

Like the SAHO and the Presidential Review Commission (1996) , the state legislature of Massachusetts (USA) formed partnerships with training and education providers, workforce development organizations including community based organizations, unions and institutions of higher learning (Wilson et al 2002: 5). The Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) also stipulates that the management

should liaise with the labour unions in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policy. Indeed, from the interviews with all levels of management and labour unions, it emerged that all the afore-mentioned stakeholders should be involved in the policy making and implementation stages. This emphasizes the value of involving all the relevant stakeholders for successful policy implementation as not a single group can successfully implement such a policy on its own.

The research findings further show that not enough constituency building and legitimization was done in order to get the support for the policy. Unless it is done, the policy will face resistance within the Msunduzi Municipality.

The research findings indicate that the policy will need to be workshopped with all the councillors and labour unions until they understand it and declare their support. As the public policy literature contends, policy makers are not individuals or groups who are experts in public policy, but policies are made by the variety of people and representatives (Colebatch, 2002: 22; Dye, 1981: 354; Hanekom, 1987: 21). The Career Pathing Policy (2006) at the Msunduzi Municipality was developed through an ineffective consultative process. The research findings suggest that some stakeholders (like the unions and the employees at large) felt that they were not adequately represented in the policy making process. It would be therefore advisable for the policy to be workshopped with all these stakeholders and necessary changes be made for its successful implementation.

The Skills Development Act (1998) further provides for the creation of qualifications linked to NQF and South African Qualifications Authority Act (1995), funded through a Levy Grant Scheme and National Skills Fund. The Skills Development Act (1998: Section 2.2.2 (b) (c)) further encourages the use of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in providing effective education and training for the workforce in all government spheres and organs. Therefore these provisions mandate that the Msunduzi Municipality use PPPs to provide training, learnerships and bursaries. The costs can be reimbursed through the aforementioned government financing schemes. Thus, the training and education elements of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) will be covered by the national government through a Levy Grant Scheme and a National Skills Fund. In fact, Section 13.1 of The White Paper on the Transformation of the

Public Service (1995) states that the development of the country and its workforce should not lie exclusively with the government but should involve public-private partnerships. It further states that PPPs must be promoted for effective training and education programmes. This further emphasizes that the Msunduzi Municipality should consider using private contractors, institutions of higher learning, and other training providers in developing employees' career paths, especially in retaining the scarce skills within the municipality.

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) states that the development of the employee's career paths must be conducted in close cooperation with the Public Sector trade unions. In fact the Career Pathing Policy (2006: 4) states that the Sound Governance and Human Resources (SG & HR) Strategic Business Unit should discuss with labour unions the career paths of the employees. The research findings also showed that the Msunduzi Municipality believes that without the close cooperation of the labour unions, the policy will fail.

The level of participation during the policy making process was not inclusive of all the stakeholders within the municipality. The labour unions viewed it as a top-down approach. However the custodians of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) (HRD) and the HR Support Managers claimed that the consultations were very inclusive because all the relevant stakeholders were invited, but did not participate adequately. To emphasize the point, one HRD Manager said *"people did not respond in time and when it comes to meetings again to discuss whatever has been suggested to reach an agreement, people did not pitch up and it had to be postponed again and again and it takes time to get people together again because they have got other commitments"* (Organisational Development Manager, 22/09/2006). One of the HR Support Services Managers said *"people were invited and did not pitch up. There was also a lack of input and I'm not sure whether people were not interested or what. People did not attend"* (HR Services Support Manager, 11/10/2006). This suggests that the labour unions may have expected a different approach of participation. However, it is evident that they were invited to the policy making process.

Nevertheless, the labour unions strongly maintained that their views were not adequately incorporated in the policy. It would therefore be advisable for the policy

custodians to allow for a second phase of policy refinement to incorporate all the issues raised in this study, and other issues that the labour unions feel were left out. Labour unions have a critical role in policy implementation, especially those strategies that concern the employees. Lack of participation indicated in the Career Pathing Policy (2006) making process may suggest that the importance of the policy was not understood. This leaves HRD with the task to make sure that the policy is understood and supported within the municipality.

5.3 Financing the policy

In 2000, the state legislature of Massachusetts (USA) embarked on its national career pathing project for nursing and invested \$ 10 million for the two phase project. Such financial clarity did not exist for Career Pathing Policy (2006) at the Msunduzi Municipality. About 60% percent of the managers felt that the policy implementation will require adequate funding for training and wages. Interestingly, the remaining 40% of the managers felt that the programme would not require much money because it's not actually creating new jobs. Considering the nature of the policy and the international experience, the Msunduzi Municipality will need to budget for the policy for it to work effectively. It is evident from the international experience and the national legislative requirements that career pathing requires necessary funding for training, organisational restructuring, promotion and related remuneration packages. The regrading of the employees grades to allow for the development of career paths comes with an increase in salaries.

Hessing and Howlett (1997: 172) contend that the nature of policy implementation determines whether the policy was well designed and all the important issues (like the accumulation of resources) were considered in the policy formulation process. The policy custodians did not view finances as a necessary resource for the implementation of the policy and yet the national policy frameworks showed that finances are the primary resource for career pathing policy to work effectively because it requires training, remuneration packages related to promotions and progression.

Hanekom (1987: 3) states that policies may fail even if they are well designed. Lack of resources and administrative constraints may affect the implementation of the policy. This is important in terms of this study because, in terms of resources, the policy will need adequate funding, firstly for training people to champion the policy and then for the development of the employees' career paths. Finances will also be required for the improved remuneration packages related to promotion and progression.

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995: 1.3) notes that the whole process of training public servants will have major financial implications, with costs being incurred by affirmative action system; career development; training of staff and new salaries and benefits; the upgrading of training systems; facilities and investment in IT. These provisions dispute the research findings which suggest that career pathing policy will not need finances because it is not creating new (jobs which will require an extra budget for new salaries). It is now clear that career pathing links with many issues which demands adequate funding. Thus the Msunduzi Municipality will have to have an adequate budget for the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006).

5.4 Potential Challenges of Policy Implementation

The potential challenges of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) implementation include, lack of leadership capacity, relevant policy resources, flawed interdepartmental relations, organisational structure, organisational politics and culture, and monitoring and evaluation. These issues will be discussed separately.

5.4.1 Leadership capacity

The public policy literature argues that budgetary constraints, organisational structure, adequate staff, work processes and political constraints should be considered in the policy formulation stage (Cloete and Wissink, 2000: 135). In terms of adequate staffing, it was suggested that there should be well trained people who will champion the policy since the organisation lacks capacity in HR issues. The findings further suggest that management and labour unions lack capacity in dealing with HR issues.

Thus training would be necessary for both the management and labour unions on HR issues and particularly in career pathing given the newness of the system in the public service. Therefore unless all these issues are adequately addressed the policy is unlikely to succeed.

According to Smith cited in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 170), tensions and conflicts in the implementation stage may emanate from the organizational structure, leadership capacity and the organisational culture⁴. The research findings revealed that the capacity of the management and labour unions in HR issues is inadequate and therefore serious training in this area was required particularly on Career Pathing Policy (2006) and should start with the management.

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1981) cited in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 179) contend that the inability of policy makers to fully understand the problem at hand and the political dynamics may affect the policy implementation. The research findings show that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) overlooked many issues like finances, grade restructuring, remunerations and rewriting of job descriptions. Mazmanian and Sabatier further add that some problems may be more complicated than perceived by policy makers. This further confirms that the policy cannot be implemented without all these issues being addressed. This indicates that public policy making in this particular local government context is perceived as purely drafting a document which often never get implemented because of the neglect of crucial issues ignored in the policy making process. However, the lack of competence in policy making is also evident.

5.4.2 Policy resources/other policies to be developed

The international experience illustrates that career pathing and promotion complement each other. However, international experience showed that training alone seldom resulted in promotion- instead training needed to be coupled with experience. Nevertheless, the research findings showed that Career Pathing Policy (2006) at the

⁴ Organisational culture refers to the style and learned ways that govern and shape the organisation's people relationships and it is an amalgamation of the values and beliefs of the people in an organisation (Bolton, 2006).

Msunduzi Municipality cannot be effectively implemented without a promotion policy and progression policy in place. After the employees have received necessary training, they have the potential to progress to higher relevant positions.

Rushefsky (1990: 9) contends that after the policy has been formulated it may still need refinement until it is deemed to effectively serve its purpose or solve the problem at hand. This is confirmed by the experience of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) at Msunduzi Municipality. This policy needs refinement as well as the codification of other supportive policies like, promotion, succession planning, progression, knowledge management, multi-skilling and job rotation policies.

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 171) suggest that policy standards and objectives and policy resources should be considered for successful policy implementation. Policy standards and objectives of the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) are all supported by the national policy frameworks. However, legislative support alone, without adequate resource allocation (finances and relevant policies) cannot lead to successful policy implementation. Currently, the Msunduzi Municipality needs to develop other supportive policies like promotion, succession planning, and progression for the Career Pathing Policy (2006) to be successfully implemented.

The Msunduzi Municipality should also ensure that its promotion policy, which Career Pathing Policy (2006) refers to, must be further developed and clearly stipulate that promotion must not be made according to particular qualifications or seniority but rather through proven performance on the job. The research findings showed that a lack of clear promotion guidelines within the municipality was the main cause of employees leaving the organization.

Section 7.2.2.5 of the Presidential Review Commission (1996) recommends that in developing succession planning and career paths for the lower level employees it would be critical to use linkages with NQF which incorporates Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006: 4) complied with this mandate. In fact Section 6.5 states that employees who are below NQF level must enrol for ABET in

order for their career paths to be developed; and Section 6.6 further states that “the policy shall consider recognition of prior learning (RPL).” The Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET, 2006) has been developed within the Msunduzi Municipality.

In addition, the proposed strategy of knowledge management policy links with providing new employees with experience in a way that the experienced employees will share and transfer their knowledge to new employees. This only emerged during the interviews. It would be necessary to be stipulated in the Career Pathing Policy (2006) document given its significance of transferring knowledge to new employees.

In addition, the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) mandates that training needs to be linked with policies on recruitment, promotion, career progression and remuneration in the public service; and to the development of career paths and restructuring of grading systems. In this regard the Msunduzi Municipality’s Career Pathing Policy (2006: 4) states that the policy itself should be informed by succession planning. Section 1.1 of the Msunduzi Municipality’s Career Pathing Policy (2006:2) states that “other personnel policies in areas such as staff development, assessment, promotion, and progression should be consistent with and be supportive of career pathing and visa versa.” The restructuring of grading systems should be embarked upon during the review of the organisational structure; which should be reviewed to accommodate the career pathing and its related policies, such as promotion and succession planning. The restructuring of grades will make career pathing work more effective in creating progression opportunities linked to higher remunerations within the Municipality. Therefore it is clear that without these policies, the Career Pathing Policy (2006) within the Msunduzi Municipality will be vague and obsolete.

The Msunduzi Municipality has embarked on a skills audit project which will help in multiskilling and developing employee’s career paths. The skills audit is being piloted with the Infrastructure Services and Facilities (ISF) Business Unit and will later expand to the whole organization. This strategy which the Msunduzi Municipality has embarked upon is required by the national government’s policy frameworks. In fact Section 14.1 (d) (e) (g) provides that grades in the public service will need to be reduced to promote competency and multiskilling approach and be negotiated with the

Bargaining Council. This further emphasizes that the Msunduzi Municipality should consider restructuring employees' grades in order to allow for the implementation of career pathing policy and multiskilling.

The White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service (1998) provides that all government administrations must provide opportunities and guidelines for career development and management. In addition, the removal of all barriers to promotion must be acted upon to promote competition for positions. It further states that opportunities should be opened for external or new candidates who may come with new skills that may be scarce in the public service.

Lastly the policy is going to raise the expectations of the employees, which the municipality may fail to fulfil. However that could be mitigated by conducting a skills audit and determining how far it wants to meet those career expectations based on its IDP objectives. The IDP objectives should be used as the guiding principle in responding to the employee's career aspirations.

5.4.3 Interdepartmental relations

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 171) suggest that interdepartmental relations should be considered for successful policy implementation. Supportive policies like promotion will have to be developed by other Business Units, which means interdepartmental relations must be strengthened. The interdepartmental relations are currently flawed since not a single person from HRM participated in the Career Pathing Policy (2006) making process. This is because HRM and HRD generally deal with their own issues separately. Thus, enforcement measures would be difficult under these relatively poor interdepartmental conditions.

Section 15 of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) mandates for the introduction of improved pay conditions, effective career paths, greater opportunities for staff training and development of all public servants and greater participatory management. Research findings illustrated that improving pay conditions was rejected by the majority of the management and only accepted by the labour unions. Thus, the management and the labour unions will have to negotiate and

work together in dealing with such differences. Colebatch (2002:23) notes that policy work takes place across and within agency or groups boundaries and it requires understanding and commitments among the participants. Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 23) argue that no single agency can manage policy implementation alone. Policy implementation thus needs inter-agency cooperation and commitment.

5.4.4 Organizational structure

Public policy literature argues that organisational structure and work processes should be considered in the policy formulation stage (Cloete and Wissink, 2000: 135). Organisational structure was one of the potential limiting factors for policy implementation, and the findings suggested that it should be reviewed. However, this was not realized in the policy formulation stage. Smith cited in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 170), contends that tensions and conflicts in the implementation stage may emanate from the organizational structure, leadership capacity and the organisational culture⁵. All these issues have been witnessed to be potential limitations in the implementation of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) in the Msunduzi Municipality.

Section 195 (5) (6) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) provides that since governments level and functions are not the same, career pathing policies in the public sector should be developed according to the particular structure and nature of the organization. This therefore allowed the Msunduzi Municipality to tailor its Career Pathing Policy (2006) according to its particular organisational structure and functions. Besides this freedom, the research findings show that the Msunduzi Municipality can not properly implement Career Pathing Policy (2006) unless its structure is reviewed. The research findings of this study showed that the current structure should be reviewed in order to accommodate and reflect the career pathing, progression and promotion. The “upward movement” being anticipated by the municipality employees cannot be achieved without the municipality’s structure being reviewed. To emphasize the need for organisation’s structure review to be reflective of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) and other policies like promotion and

⁵ Organisational culture refers to the style and learned ways that govern and shape the organisation’s people relationships and it is an amalgamation of the values and beliefs of the people in an organisation (Bolton, 2006).

progression, one HRD manager articulated *“only people who had progression are people like technicians and these people who are in technical fields, which means that the rest of the staff within the municipality because that opportunity does not exist, they remain what they are”* (Organisational Development Manager, 22/09/2006).

In fact, the Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 4.2.1) noted that organisational structures were the most limiting factors in many government departments, for the establishment of a career development system. National government’s legislative frameworks do not provide clear guidelines on how career pathing can be developed and implemented in different environments. Local government levels like the Msunduzi Municipality finds career pathing very complicated and demanding which may result in failure. This shows that there is a gap between national policy makers and local policy implementers (administrators like municipalities). In fact, Colebatch (2002) notes that the top-down approach is the norm in many governments and administrators are often treated as mere policy implementers.

5.4.5 Organizational culture and political dynamics

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 135) argue that work processes and political constraints should be considered in the policy formulation stage. Findings further showed that there were doubts if the policy will work due to the political dynamics within the organization. This is a critical issue which may involve favouritism and nepotism in developing employee’s career paths, and processes related to promotion, progression and salaries. However such issues could be effectively dealt with through the Human Resources Committee which involves Councillors, managers and the labour unions. This committee is chaired by one of the Municipality Executive Committee (EXCO) representative. The labour unions represent the interests of the employees, thus they are expected to act in favour of the employees. The Business Units can only send their recommendations to this committee, especially on sensitive matters like promotion and salaries. Nevertheless, the political dynamics in local government remains a challenge in public policy making because most policies are developed at national levels without considering the dynamics at local levels where actual implementation takes place.

According to Smith cited in Cloete and Wissink (2000: 170), tensions and conflicts in the implementation stage may emanate from the organisational culture⁶. The organisational culture seems to resist the job rotation system which could play a critical role in developing peoples' career paths.

The Msunduzi Municipality further complies with Section 5.5 of the White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service (1998) strategy by using job rotation and multiskilling in developing employee's career paths. However, due to the current organisational culture, this strategy may be resisted within the municipality unless the HRD, who are custodians of the Career Pathing Policy (2006), ensures (through workshops) that the organization fully understands its importance. The Msunduzi Municipality further concurs with this Act in ensuring that the employee's career paths are not limited by the jobs they do.

The Career Pathing Policy (2006) will face challenges in terms of the senior managers who are supposed to oversee the whole policy process being on five year contracts. Thus career pathing does not include them. They may choose to ignore it and focus on other issues (stipulated in their job descriptions) from which their bonuses are calculated.

Favouritism and discrimination is one of the potential limitations to policy implementation and could lead this policy to exclude some groups and only serve favoured individuals or groups.

5.4.6 Monitoring and evaluation (enforcement measures)

Lack of commitment due to ambiguous roles and responsibilities may also be one of the limiting factors to policy implementation (Mazmanian & Sabatier cited in Cloete & Wissink, 2000: 179). The roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) are clear, unambiguous and

⁶ Organisational culture refers to the style and learned ways that govern and shape the organisation's people relationships and it is an amalgamation of the values and beliefs of the people in an organisation (Boton, 2006).

inclusive of all the relevant stakeholders within the municipality- unions, managers, and the employees (as individuals) for the development, monitoring and evaluation of the policy.

Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2000: 25) suggest that monitoring progress and impact must be one of the policy management tasks that must be used to improve policy implementation. The Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) has included clear guidelines with roles and responsibilities in monitoring and evaluation as part of the implementation strategy. This strategy also involves the labour unions; top, middle, and junior level managers and the employees. It further state that "the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Career Pathing Policy activities will be monitored and evaluated by SEMs, Process Managers, assigned mentors, HRD and labour unions (Career Pathing Policy, 2006: 6, Section 9.2). Thus the Msunduzi Municipality has acted according to this obligation.

The Msunduzi Municipality has met the requirements enshrined in the White Paper on Human Resources Management in the Public Service (1998) and the White Paper on New Employment Policy for the Public Service (1997: Section 3.37; 3.38). These sections mandate that clear guidelines must be developed in ensuring commitment of both managers and the employees to career pathing development. The Msunduzi Municipality has incorporated a clear and inclusive monitoring and evaluation approach in its Career Pathing Policy (2006). This section of the policy clearly states the roles and responsibilities of all the role players. The stakeholders involved in this process include the top (Strategic Executive) managers, middle (Process) managers, junior managers, the labour unions and the employees as individuals in the development of their career paths.

The monitoring and evaluation of the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) mark a key management strategy that the municipality has devised to manage the policy progress and impacts. The stakeholders involved in the monitoring and evaluation process reflect an inclusive approach and attempt to ensure that training and development interventions are not biased.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This study attempted to critically analyze whether the Career Pathing Policy (2006) of the Msunduzi Municipality reflects the requirements of the national career pathing frameworks. The study further explored the parallels between the Msunduzi Municipality's experience of drafting a Career Pathing Policy (2006) and international experiences. Questions pertaining to whether its implementation is likely to be a success given the guidance offered by public policy theory and the organisational context itself have also been raised.

The international experience shows that career pathing is not a new phenomenon. Various organizations both in the public and private sector have embarked on career pathing projects, influenced by very similar issues experienced by the Msunduzi Municipality. These include technological advancement (which further created scarce skills within the municipality as employees left for better opportunities elsewhere); a need to develop and promote employees from within the organization; shortage of promotable staff; a need to reduce staff turnover and keep them motivated in their jobs and the municipality as an organization itself. The international experience, public policy theory and the national governments legislative frameworks show that funding is the primary resource for the successful implementation of career pathing projects. Funding is mainly required for training (learnerships, bursaries, facilities, and human resources), organisational restructuring, promotions and related improved remuneration packages. These issues are apparent for the successful implementation of the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006). Surprisingly, funding does not receive full support in the Msunduzi Municipality. Thus, the Msunduzi Municipality must consider budgeting for Career Pathing Policy (2006) as the primary step towards the implementation of this policy because research findings have shown that this policy will fail without adequate funding.

As the Presidential Review Commission (1996: Section 4.2.1) has noted, organisational structures were the most limiting factors in many government departments for the establishment and implementation of career development system. Likewise, the structure of the Msunduzi Municipality must be reviewed and involve restructuring of employee grades in order to be reflective of policies like career

pathing, progression, promotion, multiskilling, job rotation, and succession planning. Considering the research findings, it can be maintained that without adequate funding and the development of the aforementioned proposed policies, Career Pathing Policy (2006) will struggle to be successful. It is evident that the Msunduzi Municipality finds career pathing very complicated and demanding and most managers are doubtful of its success. This shows that there is a gap between policy makers in national government and policy implementers (administrators like municipalities).

The study established that the level of participation was minimal during the policy making process. As a result most key role players in the implementation stage of the policy do not even know the content of the policy because they were not involved. The key role players include all managers, labour unions and the private service providers like contractors and higher institutions of learning. Senior managers, who only participated through emailed responses, should have been part of the workshops due to their strategic positions and broad insight of the organisational processes. This approach jeopardised the final policy document. The interviews show that the senior managers had different views of career pathing. These could have been captured in the policy making process and incorporated in the Career Pathing Policy (2006) document. Private service providers like IT and engineering companies were not invited to participate in the policy making process because their role was deemed minimal. However international experience and national government's framework shows that public-private partnerships are essential in transferring skills to the public workforce. Thus, the Msunduzi Municipality should ensure that these agencies are part of Career Pathing Policy (2006) implementation.

Besides the lack of cooperation and participation in the policy making process, the Msunduzi Municipality's conceptual understanding of career pathing in general is evident and indicates a relatively good understanding of human resources development. However, a lack of understanding of the relevant legislative frameworks for career pathing was evident from most respondents. As a result, the Career Pathing Policy (2006) overlooked many important issues required by these policy documents. This further shows that there is a gap of information flow between the national government (policy makers) and the local government (policy implementers). Currently, the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) is flawed and

cannot be implemented without the consideration of all the issues raised in the previous chapter including finances/funding, development of policies like promotion, progression, organisational restructuring and succession planning.

The political dynamics within the Msunduzi Municipality remain a challenge for the implementation of this policy. This may not only be the Msunduzi Municipality's challenge; other municipalities may as well experience the same challenge. Although the framework to develop career pathing according to the specific organisational context of a local municipality is given, it still leaves local governments with significant amount of work for which they are ill equipped. Apparently, in 2000, the Public Service Commission reported that only three government departments have developed a career management system. These include South African Police Service, Department of Public Works and Department of Defence. By 2000 not a single municipality had managed to join these afore mentioned departments in developing a career management system. This may indicate that it is a very complicated policy and it is thus routinely sidelined.

Hanekom and Thornhill (1994:65) articulate that often “relatively few policies stipulate how and by whom they should be implemented”. Conversely, the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) objectives, roles and responsibilities and monitoring and evaluation strategies are clear. The monitoring and evaluation strategy include all the stakeholders within the municipality: the employees, managers, mentors, and the labour unions. However the policy still has to be reworked in order to incorporate all legislative requirements and the issues raised during the interviews. All role players need to understand the policy content in order to be effective participants in the implementation stage. Research findings further shows that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) has many serious potential limitations which may cause policy failure unless effectively dealt with. These include the management and labour union's lack of capacity on HR issues, poor interdepartmental relations and a lack of codified policies like promotion, progression, multiskilling and succession planning.

As Cloete and Wissink (2000: 171) have advised that interdepartmental relations should be considered for the successful policy implementation. The research findings show that the Msunduzi Municipality's departmental working relations are

fragmented. Departments focus on their own issues, failing to understand that they cannot implement policies separately. Thus, working relations have to be improved for successful policy implementation. Human Resources Management and Human Resources Development in particular should closely and continuously work together to ensure that the Career Pathing Policy (2006) is implemented accordingly because their policies complement each other.

In essence then, the Msunduzi Municipality's Career Pathing Policy (2006) has shown to be in line with the international experience and enjoys the full legislative support. However, it has overlooked some key issues necessary for the successful implementation of the policy. The policy also will thus face serious potential challenges within the municipality. Possible recommendations have been offered to mitigate these challenges. The study concludes that the implementation strategy of the Career Pathing Policy (2006) is weak in the light of public policy theory and cannot succeed unless all the recommended policies are developed, resources are allocated, interdepartmental relations are strengthened, and that all the stakeholders understand and declare their support for the policy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Anderson, J. E. 1997. Public Policy Making: An Introduction. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2001. The Practice of Social Research. South African Edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa.
- Babbie, E. 1995. The Practice of Social Research. 8th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Barsdorf, N. W. 2005. Notes for Research Design and Statistics 703: Ethical Issues in Research. Photocopied handout. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Sociology and Social Studies.
- Brinkerhoff, D.W & Crosby, B.L. 2002. Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-Makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries. Bloomfield. Kumarian.
- Colebatch, H.K. 2002. Policy: Concepts in the Social Sciences. 2nd ed. Buckingham. Open University Press.
- Cornell, A. 1980. The Decision-Makers Handbook. New Jersey. Englewood Cliffs.
- Dye, T.R. 1981. Understanding Public Policy. 4th ed. London. Prentice-Hall.
- Grindle, M. (ed.) 1997. Getting Good Government: Capacity building in the public sector of developing countries. Boston. Harvard University Press.
- Hanekom, S. X. 1987. Public Policy. Framework and Instrument for Action. Pretoria. Southern Book Publishers.
- Hessing, M & Howlett, M.1997. Canadian Natural Resource and Environmental Policy: Political economy and public policy. Toronto. UBC Press.
- Hill, M. & Hupe, P. 2002. Implementing Public Policy: Governance in Theory and in Practice. London. Sage.
- Hill, M. 1997. The Policy Process in the Modern State. 3rd ed. London. Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Howlett, M. & Ramesh, M. 2003. Agenda Setting: Policy Determinants, Policy Ideas, Policy Windows in Studying Public Policy. Oxford. Oxford University Press.
- Kingdon, J. 1995. Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies. 2nd ed. London. Harper Collins College.
- Neuman, W.L. 2000. Social Research Methods Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. 4th ed. Boston. Allyn and Bacon.

Parsons, W. 1995. Public Policy: An introduction to the Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis. Brookfield. Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

Pressman, J. & Wildavsky, A. 1973. Implementation. Berkeley. University of California Press.

Rushefsky, M. E. 1990. Public Policy in the United States: Towards the Twenty-First Century. California. Brooks/Cole.

Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K (eds). 1999. Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Weiner, D. & Vinning, A. 2005. Policy Analysis. Concepts and Practice. New Jersey. Pearson.

Weis, C. H. (1998). Planning and Evaluation. Evaluation Methods for Studying Programs and Policies Upper Saddle River. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

World Wide Web

Bolton, L. 2006. *Information Technology and Management*.
<http://opax.swin.edu.au/~388226/howto/it2/manage1.htm>> 27 January 2007.

Journal Articles

Cappellen, F. and Janssens, M. 2005. *Career Paths of Global Managers: Towards future research*. Journal of World Business. 40: 348- 360

Chertoff, J.D., Bird, C.E., Amick, B.C. and Sunshine, J.H. 1998. *Career Paths in Radiology: Scope and impact of part-time work*. Academic Radiology. 5 (10): 753

Duncan, J. & Oates, D. 1997. *Career Paths for the 21st century. How to Beat Job Insecurity*. Long Range Planning. 30 (4): 630- 632.

El-Sabaa, S. 2001. *The Skills and Career Path of an Effective Project Manager*. International Journal of Project Management. PERAMON. 19: 1-7.

Exworthy, M. & Powel, M. 2004. 'Big Windows and Little Windows: Implementation in the "Congested" State'. Public Administration. 82: 263-281.

Fieldman, D.C. 1995. *The Impact of Downsizing on Organizational Career Development Activities and Employee Career Development Opportunities*. Human Resource Management Review. 5 (3): 189 – 221.

Melero, E. 2004. *Evidence on Training and Career Paths: Human Capital, Information and incentives*. IZA Discussion Papers.

Seidman-Makgetla, N. 2000. A New Labour Policy for the Public Service. Indicator SA. 17 (4): 18 – 26.

Souder, E. 1983. *Planning a Career path from Engineering to Management*. Engineering Management International. 1 (4): 249-358.

Tremblay, M., Wils, T. and Proulx, C. 2002. *Determinants of Career Path Preferences among Canadian Engineers*. Journal of Engineering and Technology Management. 19: (1- 23)

Reports and Strategic Documents

Career Pathing Policy. 2006. Sound Governance and Human Resources. Draft. Msunduzi Municipality.

Public Service Commission .2000. Report on Career Management in the Public Service. Pretoria. Government Printing Works.

The Presidential Review Commission (1996). Developing the Culture of Good Governance: Reform and Transformation of the Public Service in South Africa. Government Printing Works.

Treasury Board of Canada. “*Career Development in the Federal Public Service-Building a World-Class Workforce*”. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. 08 Apr. 1999. Government of Canada. 08 Jul. 2006. http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/partners/workreport-PR_e.asp?printable=True.

Wilson, R., Eaton, S.C. and Kamanu, A. 2002. Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI) Round 2: Evaluation Report. Commonwealth Corporation.

Theses/dissertations

Ngulube, P. 2003. Preservation and Access to Public Records and Archives in South Africa. PhD thesis. Pietermaritzburg. University of Natal. Chapter Four.

South African Government Legislation

South Africa. Skills Development Act. 97, 1998. Government Gazette.

South Africa. The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service. 1997. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.

South Africa. The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service. 1995. Pretoria: Government Printing Works.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).

APPENDIX 1 (Human Resources Services Support Managers)

DRAFT INTERVIEW GUIDE

Policy Making Process

1. I've heard that you have developed a Career Pathing Policy in this Municipality; can you explain what is it?
2. Who are the main targets of the policy and why?
3. Can you explain what prompted the subject of career pathing in this municipality?
4. Please describe the process undertaken when the Career Pathing Policy was being created and what was your role in it.
5. Do you think your views were taken seriously by the HRD and the unions in the policy making process?
6. Who do you think were the main role players in the whole policy making process?
7. What challenges were encountered when formulating the Career Pathing Policy? And what were your main concerns about the process of policy making?
8. How did these challenges affect the processes of formulating the policy and the final draft?
9. What processes were used to ensure that employee's views on the ground were adequately represented in the development of the policy?
10. How do you think employees on the ground understand the concept of Career Pathing?
11. What National Policy frameworks were considered when formulating the Career Pathing Policy?

Implementation

12. What do you think it will take the Career Pathing Policy to be successfully implemented?
13. What resources you think are needed to successfully implement this policy? Have these resources been allocated?
14. What other policies that needs to be developed or refined to accommodate the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy?

15. What do you think are other the potential limitations of this policy and how do you think they will they affect the implementation of the policy?
16. What strategies have been developed to mitigate those potential limitations?
17. When do you think the Career Pathing Policy should start operating?
18. What do you think needs to be done to get the support of the employees?
19. What is the role of the Human Recourses Support Managers in the implementation of the process and do you think its valuable?
20. Do you think the management and labour unions in this municipality have got the capacity to deal with issues such as career pathing practices?
21. When do you think the policy should start operating and why?

Monitoring and Evaluation

22. Who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the career pathing policy programme? What is your role as a Human Resources Support Services Manager?
23. How will the employees be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the policy?
24. Please describe the monitoring and evaluation process.
25. Do you foresee any challenges that may occur in terms of the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and how do you think should be mitigated?

Conclusion

26. Is there anything that you wish would have been done differently, if so, what would you change?

APPENDIX 2 (Human Resources Development Management Committee)

Policy Making Process

1. I've heard that you have developed a Career Pathing Policy in this Municipality; can you explain what is it?
2. Who are the main targets of the policy and why?
3. Can you explain what prompted the subject of career pathing in this municipality?
4. Please describe the process undertaken when the Career Pathing Policy was being created and what was your role in it.
5. Do you think your views were taken seriously by other stakeholders in the policy making process?
6. Who do you think were the main role players in the whole policy making process?
7. What challenges were encountered when Career Pathing Policy was being formulated and what were your main concerns in particular?
8. How did these challenges affect the processes of formulation the policy and the final draft?
9. Do you think that employees were adequately consulted and involved in the policy making process?
10. What National Policy frameworks were considered when formulating the Career Pathing Policy?

Implementation

11. What do you think needs to happen for the Career Pathing Policy to be implemented successfully?
12. What resources do you think are needed to successfully implement this policy? Have these resources been allocated?
13. What other policies you think needs to be developed or refined to accommodate the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy?
14. What do you think are the potential limitations of this policy and how do they affect the implementation of the policy?
15. What strategies have been developed to mitigate those potential limitations?
16. What do you think needs to be done to get the support of the employees and other managers?

17. What is the role of the unions, HRD and HR Support Services Managers in the implementation of the process and do you think its valuable?
18. Do you think the management and labour unions in this municipality have got the capacity to deal with issues such as career pathing practices?
19. What effect do you think this relationship will have on the implementation of the policy?
20. When do you think the policy should start operating and why?

Monitoring and Evaluation

21. Who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the career pathing policy programme? What is your role as an HRD MANCO member?
22. How will the employees be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the policy?
23. Please describe the monitoring and evaluation process.

Conclusion

24. Is there anything that you wish would have been done differently in the policy making process and the content of the policy itself, if so, what would you change?

APPENDIX 3 (Strategic Executive Managers)

Policy Making Process

1. I've heard that you have developed a Career Pathing Policy in this Municipality; can you explain what is it for and what prompted its development?
2. Who are the main targets of the policy and why?
3. Please describe the process undertaken when the Career Pathing Policy was being created and what was your role in it as a Strategic Executive Manager.
4. What were your main concerns about the process undertaken in the creation of the Career Pathing Policy?
5. What National Policy frameworks were considered when formulating the Career Pathing Policy? And which ones you think should have been considered and were not?

Implementation

6. What do you think needs to happen for the policy to be implemented successfully?
7. What resources do you think are needed to successfully implement this policy? Have these resources been allocated?
8. What other policies that needs to be developed or refined to accommodate the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy?
9. What do you think are potential limitations of this policy and how will they affect the implementation of the policy?
10. What strategies have been/ will be developed to mitigate those potential limitations?
11. What do you think needs to be done to buy the support of the employees, other managers and the labour unions?
12. What is the role of the unions in the implementation process and do you think its valuable?
13. Do you think the management and labour unions in this municipality have got the capacity to deal with issues such as career pathing practices?

Monitoring and Evaluation

14. Who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the Career Pathing Policy programme? What is your role as a Strategic Executive Manager?

15. How will the employees be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the policy?

16. Please describe the monitoring and evaluation process.

17. Do you foresee any challenges that may occur in terms of the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and how do you think should be mitigated?

Conclusion

18. Is there anything that you wish would have been done differently in the policy making process and the policy strategy itself, if so, what would you change?

APPENDIX 4 (SAMWU and IMATU Secretary-Generals)

Policy Making Process

1. I've heard that you were involved in the development of a Career Pathing Policy in this Municipality; can you explain what is it?
2. Can you explain what prompted the subject of career pathing in this municipality?
3. Please describe the process undertaken when the Career Pathing Policy was being created and what was your role in it.
4. Do you think your views were taken seriously by the management? Please explain.
5. Who do you think were the main role players in the whole policy making process?
6. What processes were used to ensure that employee's views on the ground were adequately represented in the development of the policy?
7. How do you think employees on the ground understand the concept of Career Pathing?
8. What were your main concerns about the process of policy making?
9. In terms of the policy who are the main people to be targeted and why?
10. What National Policy frameworks were considered when formulating the Career Pathing Policy?

Implementation

11. What do you think needs to happen for the policy to be implemented successfully?
12. What resources you think are needed to successfully implement this policy? Have these resources been allocated?
13. What other policies that needs to be developed or refined to accommodate the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy?
14. What do you think are other potential limitations of this policy and how will they affect the implementation of the policy?
15. What strategies have been developed to mitigate those potential limitations?
16. What do you think needs to be done to get the support of the employees?
17. What is the role of the unions in the implementation of the process and do you think its valuable?

18. Do you think the management and labour unions in this municipality have got the capacity to deal with issues such as career pathing practices?

Monitoring and Evaluation

19. Who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the career pathing policy programme? What is your role as a shop steward?

20. How will the employees be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the policy?

21. Please describe the monitoring and evaluation process.

22. Do you foresee any challenges that may occur in terms of the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and how do you think they should be mitigated?

Conclusion

22. Is there anything that you wish would have been done differently in the policy making process and the policy strategy itself? If so, what would you change?

APPENDIX 5 (HRM and Employee Relations Officers and Managers)

Policy Making Process

1. I've heard that you have developed a Career Pathing Policy in this Municipality; can you explain what is it for and what prompted its development?
2. Who are the main targets of the policy and why?
3. Please describe the process undertaken when the Career Pathing Policy was being created and what was your role in it?
4. What were your main concerns about the process undertaken in the creation of the Career Pathing Policy?
5. What National Policy frameworks were considered when formulating the Career Pathing Policy? And which ones you think should have been considered and were not?

Implementation

6. What do you think needs to happen for the policy to be implemented successfully?
7. What resources do you think are needed to successfully implement this policy?
8. What other policies you think needs to be developed or refined to accommodate the successful implementation of the Career Pathing Policy?
9. What do you think are potential limitations of this policy and how will they affect the implementation of the policy?
10. What strategies you think should be developed to mitigate those potential limitations?
11. What do you think needs to be done to buy the support of the employees, other managers and the labour unions?
12. What is the role of the unions in the implementation process of the Career Pathing Policy and do you think its valuable?
13. Do you think the management and labour unions in this municipality have got the capacity to deal with issues such as career pathing practices?

Monitoring and Evaluation

14. Who is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the Career Pathing Policy programme? What is your role in it?

15. How will the employees be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the policy?

16. Do you foresee any challenges that may occur in terms of the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and how do you think they should be mitigated?

Conclusion

17. Is there anything that you wish would have been done differently in the policy making process and the policy strategy itself, if so, what would you change?

APPENDIX 6 (Msunduzi - Pietermaritzburg Municipality Organogram)

