

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**Exploration of the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes
at eThekweni Municipality**

by

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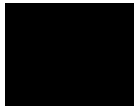
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

- God, the author, and the finisher of my being, for His grace over my life, and for granting me the strength and perseverance.
- My late mother Juliet Ntombi Khumalo and my late Ouma Khunjuziwe Francisca Ngcobo, the woman substance who raised me.
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ABSTRACT

eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality is a metropolitan municipality established in 2000, that includes the city of Durban, South Africa, and surrounding towns. The vision of the eThekwini Municipality is that by 2030, eThekwini will enjoy the reputation of being Africa's most caring and liveable City, where all citizens live in harmony. eThekwini Municipality is operating under unprecedented conditions of competition and turbulence in which it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain talented employees and scarce skills positions with a resulting impact on service delivery. Capacity constraints within the Municipality could hamper economic growth. Therefore, effective talent management is a business imperative as a lack of necessary skills could have serious consequences for the City's economy. The objective of the study was to understand the impact of talent management on organisational performance from each participant's point of view. This study was not intended to make any truth claims about the research topic, but rather to understand the impact of the phenomenon under investigation. The qualitative research methodology was selected as a preferred approach because it reinforces an understanding and interpretation of meaning as well as intentions underlying human interactions. This approach was suitable for this study as it allows for data collection through interviews for an in-depth investigation of a problem in one or more real life settings.

The study reviewed and utilised the integrated talent management framework which assists organisations to understand the impact of talent management on organisational performance better. In today's world of global trade, talent can guarantee the success and excellence of organisations against competitors, especially at the managerial level. The major findings of the study indicate that eThekwini Municipality has significantly high levels of an aging workforce in leadership and critical positions leading to capacity constraints. There is a clear misalignment between people and organisational performance which needs to be corrected. The study recommends that eThekwini Municipality reviews the implementation of talent management initiatives with clearly stated success measures that drive organisational performance and talent retention strategies.

Keyword: Talent Acquisition, People Performance, Talent Development, Talent management, and Service Delivery or Organisational Performance.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A-G:	Auditor-General
CIDB:	Construction Industry Development Board
CoGTA:	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DPSA:	Department of Public Service and Administration
DPLG:	The Department of Provincial and Local Government
EE:	Employment Equity
EEA:	Employment Equity Act
FEWS:	Forecast Early Warning System
FY:	Financial Year
GDP:	Growth Domestic Product
HSET:	Human Settlement, Engineering and Transport Cluster
IDP:	Integrated Development Plan
IPP:	Individual Performance Plan
JD:	Job Description
KPAs:	Key Performance Areas
KPIs:	Key Performance Indicators
LRA:	Labour Relations Act
MDB:	Municipal Demarcation Board
MIE:	Measured Integrity Evaluation
MSR:	Municipal Staff Regulations
NDP:	The National Development Plan
OECD:	Organisation Economic Co-operation & Development
PM:	Performance Management
RET:	Radical Economic Transformation
SALGA:	South Africa Local Government Association
SAIRR:	South African Institute of Race Relations
SCM:	Supply Chain Management
SDBIP:	Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan
SWOT:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TM:	Talent Management

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

eThekwini will enjoy the reputation of being Africa's most caring and liveable City, where all citizens live in harmony by 2030. This is the single strategic statement the vision provides the which all line departments should be working towards. The vision is developed along the principles of Outcomes Based Planning and is aligned with the visions of the National Planning Vision as well as the KZN Provincial Growth and Development Strategy.

At the heart of this vision is developing talent for service excellence which drives all talent related initiatives within eThekwini Municipality. The vision will be translated into measurable means of achieving growth in organisational talent. eThekwini Municipality is operating under unprecedented conditions of competition and turbulence, it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain talented employees and scarce skills positions with a resulting impact on service delivery. It is therefore imperative that during these times, the municipality develop a purposeful process for sourcing, attracting, engaging, managing, developing, and retaining key talent (Pandita, 2018).

Critical talent is becoming increasingly scarce due to rapid economic growth on the one hand and a growing skills shortage on the other. To achieve the objectives of the Integrated development plan (IDP, 2021), the eThekwini Municipality must cultivate and retain existing talent and grow new talent rather than rely on recruitment alone. A Talent Management Strategy must be employed to create a pool of managers/leaders and technical specialists in all fields where there is a critical shortage of skills (Pandita, 2018).

1.2. BACKGROUND

eThekweni Municipality has identified areas where there has been regression in terms of service delivery. The eThekweni Municipal Services and Living Conditions survey (2019/2020) mentioned in the IDP indicates that poor service delivery and poor provision of basic services are the highest rated reasons for dissatisfaction with municipal services at 29.3 percent. Other reasons given are municipal employees are unprofessional and the municipality does not provide basic services such as, refuse collection, water, electricity, and grass cutting. Capacity constraints within the municipality could hamper economic growth; therefore, effective talent management is a business imperative because deficiencies in leadership and technical competencies skills could have profound consequences for the City.

Talent management is a broad phrase with no universal definition. Its definition depends on the context and purpose in which it is used. The interchangeable use of the term talent management with succession planning and human resources planning triggers further controversies. Tetik (2016) explains talent management through various approaches, including competency, individual strength, giftedness, high potential, and high performers whereas Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen, and Scullion (2020) describe talent management as all activities that include planning, identification, engagement, retention, deployment, and developing the individual (staff) training, development, and education needs systematically. Talent management is essential for attracting, motivating, and retaining productive employees in the public sector (Mehale, Govender and Mabaso, 2021).

Therefore, talent management should be institutionalised in municipal planning to enhance efficiency in public service delivery. Nevertheless, the chronic shortage of skills has been a barrier to effective service delivery in South African municipalities (Majola, 2018). There has, however, been a slow implementation of talent management programmes to improve the competence of officials to accelerate service delivery in communities. Gibson and McKenzie (2011) hold that skills shortages emanate from poor talent management that triggers brain drain in South Africa on a massive scale. This study is undertaken at a time when the local government sector is facing constant protests, natural disasters, and riots, which indicate dissatisfaction about service delivery, poor governance, and widespread resentment towards the failure of municipalities to act (South Africa Local Government Authority [SALGA], 2020).

There is no doubt that that this situation has eroded and continues to erode the sector's reputation, seriously affecting not only service delivery to the community, but also organisations' capacity to employee and retain the right talent. The sector is suffering from reputational crisis, incompetency, and is "disorganised, and riddled with corruption (SALGA, 2018). The study further suggests that political factors such as "interference in the recruitment process, policy and legislative framework, inadequate relevant HR policies, poor accountability systems, such as poor oversight and lack of or, failure to apply performance management systems plus lack of capacity and skills (SALGA, 2018) are resulting in the inferior performance by municipalities.

The Municipal Staff Regulations (2021) provides for the implementation of performance management for all employees to ensure effective service delivery. The municipality currently has a performance management system in place for all its employees. The final performance assessments score of all employees for the fiscal year 2019/2020 indicated that at least 90 percent of the municipality's workforces is meeting performance expectations, whilst five percent is exceeding expectations. Despite having a performance management system in place there is a clear misalignment between people performance and organisational performance because of the increase in customer complaints and the exceptionally low customer net promoter score in the eThekwini Municipality Services and Living Conditions Survey (2019/2020).

1.3.RESEARCH PROBLEM

eThekwini Municipality continues to have a high concentration of an aging workforce within its management and leadership occupational levels which poses a risk on business continuity (CoGTA, 2018). Poor recruitment practices linked to political interference have led to the appointment of inadequate leaders in key positions thus stifling leadership potential and service delivery outcomes (CoGTA, 2018). A shortage of management and technical skills requires an organisation wide talent management framework and competency management process to address leadership and technical skills. This strategy will also assist in meeting diversity and inclusion requirements through accelerated development of successors for Senior Management and technical positions (Mehale, Govender and Mabaso, 2021).

Performance management is a foundation of talent management practices. There is strong continuous misalignment between people performance and organisational performance within the city. Talent management flows from performance management practices and, if these are not corrected, the city runs the risk of identifying, developing, and promoting incompetent people into high impact positions with a direct impact on service delivery (Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2018).

Most organisations focus on talent management and development processes forgetting that talented employees do not like to wait” too long for management positions due to a lack of talent management practices that address their mobility requirements (Ahmed, 2016). Thus, the municipality could lose key talent due to lack of mobility and the current practice that sometimes rewards undeserving employees at the peril of service delivery and organisational performance (Van Zalk, 2017).

1.4. AIM OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of organisational talent management practices on service delivery outcomes. This study seeks to propose a model for the evaluation of the effectiveness of talent management within eThekwin Municipality. The problem with the current trend is that few managers of municipal organisations are aware of HR approaches like talent management, and, even when attempts have been made to include talent management in policy, there is a lack of competence to implement it. Furthermore, there is a knowledge vacuum in this field because, so little is known about talent management as a strategic enabler in a municipal context (CoGTA, 2018). The theoretical tenets of this study are based on the most recent literature and, thus, this study should provide managers with the knowledge they require to conduct talent management practices effectively and offer a model for the evaluation of the effectiveness of talent management that can be used within organisations.

1.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this study is to understand the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes within the eThekwin Metro Municipality. The study will explore

variables such as compliance with regulatory provisions, talent acquisition, talent development, employee performance, succession planning, and organisational results.

The objectives include the following:

- i. To understand the rational for the implementation of talent management within eThekwini Municipality.
- ii. To examine how talent acquisition practices impact service delivery outcomes.
- iii. To explore how talent management practices contribute to capacity development and employee performance within eThekwini Municipality.
- iv. To determine if employee performance translates into organisational performance; and
- v. To explore the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes at eThekwini Municipality and develop a model for monitoring the effectiveness of such practices.

1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

After the development of research objectives, four research questions have been developed to address these objectives:

- i. What was the rational for the implementation of talent management within eThekwini Municipality?
- ii. How do talent acquisition practices impact service delivery outcomes?
- iii. To what extent do talent management practices contribute to capacity development and employee performance within eThekwini Municipality?
- iv. Does employee performance translate into organisational performance in the Municipality?
- v. What is impact the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes and how can the effectiveness of these practices be monitored?

1.7. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Vision of eThekwini Municipality is that by 2030, eThekwini will enjoy the reputation of being Africa's most caring and liveable City, where all citizens live in harmony. The Vision provides the city with a single strategic statement which all Line Departments should be working towards. The Vision is developed along the principles of Outcome Based Planning

and is aligned to the Visions of National Planning as well as the KZN Provincial Growth and Development Strategy eThekweni Municipality Integrated Development Plan (2020/2021). At the heart of eThekweni Municipality Vision, is developing talent for service excellence. This goal drives all talent related initiatives within the organisation. The vision will be translated by eThekweni Municipality into measurable means of achieving talent growth and contribution in organisational.

eThekweni Municipality is operating under unprecedented political conditions and economic turbulence. It is increasingly difficult to attract and retain talented employees with scarce and critical skills leading to an adverse impact on service delivery. It is, therefore, imperative that during these tough times, the municipality develops a purposeful process for sourcing, attracting, engaging, managing, developing, and retaining key talent (eThekweni Municipality Integrated Development Plan, 2020/2021).

The South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA) (2018), reporting on the state of local government in South Africa, also shows how human resource management (HRM) has become critical in municipal governance in ensuring that municipalities achieve their objectives as stipulated in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). It points out that Human Resources (HR) practices as part of HR strategy can have an impact on HR outcomes such as, engagement, motivation, commitment, and skills, which together, can affect organisational outputs in terms of high service delivery, quality, and community satisfaction.

Critical talent is becoming increasingly scarce due to rapid economic growth alongside a growing skills shortage. To achieve the objectives of the IDP, eThekweni Municipality must cultivate, retain existing talent, and grow new talent rather than rely on recruitment alone. Although HR practices are a subject of controversy, a Talent Management Strategy must be employed to provide a pool of managers/leaders and technical specialists in all fields where there is a critical shortage of skills (SALGA, 2020).

1.7.1. Talent management

Talent management is a systematic process conducted by a company to find, select, improve, and maintain the best talents of its employees in meeting the needs of the company in the present and future. Talent management requires the identification of talented employees who work in the organisation. The purpose of talent management is to improve employee

performance, enable the company to make the best fits between talent and position, and avoid mismatch between employee and job in the face of increasingly fierce competition (Mitosis, Lamnisos and Talias, 2021). Talent management is an integrated approach that includes personnel planning and forecasting accurate numbers for future employee requirements. This involves succession planning including acquiring skills, professionally developing talents, managing employees' performance, retaining talent, and developing strategies for employees' future promotion and career development (Shah, Memon and Tunio, 2021).

Talent management, which has gradually increased in importance in recent years, can be used to find talented employees using techniques such as career planning, career development, and training. It can provide a significant and sustainable competitive advantage, creating both operational and strategic advantages for entities (Setyawan and Nelson, 2020).

The fundamental components of successful talent management are basic approaches related to the employment of strategic personnel, including human resource applications, performance evaluations, reward systems, training and development, positioning, efforts to become an agent of change, and leadership development and applications. Efficient talent management provides opportunities to increase the value created by employees by improving workforce productivity (Nicholas, 2021). Several areas of research must be pursued for talent management to grow to maturity and to gain a firm position in the field of human resource management. To enrich literature on this area of study, empirical research should be conducted that focuses on talent management in public and non-profit organisations, and in small and medium enterprises (Charles and Onouha, 2020). A successful talent management application is not only a means of measuring performance but also provides benefits by increasing the behavioural competence of employees. Getting the right people in pivotal roles at the right time is a key factor in achieving organisational success (Shaikh, 2021).

In today's world of global trade, talent can guarantee success and excellence of organisations against competitors, especially at the managerial level (Zainee, 2020). Currently, there is a lack of knowledge about and competent implementation of HR practices like talent management from managers of municipal organisations. Furthermore, there is still a knowledge vacuum in this field because, so little is known about talent management as a strategic enabler in a municipal context (CoGTA, 2018). According to McDonnell Joos and Scullion (2020) talent consists of those individuals who contribute to organisational performance, either through their

immediate contribution or in the longer-term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential. In the broadest possible terms, talent management is the strategic and tactical management of the flow of talent through an organisation (Senona, 2017). This emphasis on staffing and recruiting is more appropriately called the talent acquisition phase of the talent management cycle which is an important but preliminary step in the overall process (Shipena, 2019).

1.7.2. Talent management from an international perspective

Managing talent is a challenge to all organisations in the context of globalisation, irrespective of the country (Adero and Odiyo, 2020). Moreover, the concern about the scarcity of talent is almost universal. Organisations around the world are competing for the same pool of talents in a global labour market of talents. The trend of global integration shows organisations' standardisations in talent recruitment, development, and management, to ensure their competitive position and consistency in the global labour market. Therefore, organisations must adopt global best practices for talent management and at the same time adapt the local requirements and local labour market (Chan et al., 2020). The organisations that are most successful worldwide tend to maintain local recruitment strategies but combine these with a more global transfer of information and best practices (Abdel et al., 2021).

1.7.3. Talent management strategy

Talent management strategies must, most importantly, be articulated and, in addition, integrated into organisational strategies. Talent management is related to the culture and people in an organisation. The recruitment of members from a talent pool is the first task of a talent management strategy (Sottile, 2021). The talent pool is a group of employees with special traits who are the source of future senior executives (Dalayga, Baskaran and Mahadi, 2021). The sources of talented employees can be internal or external. The best way to create a talent pool is from internal sources since the employees already have knowledge of business processes and can be incorporated directly into new positions, uplifting the morale of the workforce (Almatrooshi, Singh and Farouk, 2016).

1.7.4. Talent development

Talent development is the process of changing an organisation, its employees, its stakeholders, and groups of people within it, using planned and unplanned learning, to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage for the organisation (Almohtaseb et al., 2020). As businesses

continually apply modern technologies, new business growth models, new market strategies, and the workforce's up-skilling are constant and continuous. In this way, organisations identify employees who need learning and development, the level of learning and development they need, and the duration during which learning should take place (Dalayga, Baskaran and Mahadi, 2021).

1.7.5. Career management

There are several elements of career management including career development and planning which focus on planning employee growth and progression; career pathing which involves creating established career paths and families of jobs within a given area that allow employees to have a vision of progression as well as goals and expectations; employee development consisting of programmes and initiatives; learning and development initiatives; management coaching; competitive reward systems; career centres; succession planning; performance management/feedback; and cross-functional development programmes (Jang et al., 2019). Career management consists of both formal and informal activities including employee workshops, job rotation, job enrichment, succession planning, and career progression ladders, for example organisationally planned programmes and developmental stage theories. Organisations may also contribute to career identity by providing abundant opportunities for self-development, opportunities for advancement, and mentors (Kusi, Opoku-Danso and Afum, 2020).

1.7.6. Talent retention

To date, research indicates that talent retention practices are one of the most underutilised methods in the talent management process (Shaikh, 2021). Most government institutions lack retention practices, or management fails to have frequent talent retention conversations with employees. Dalayga, Baskaran and Mahadi (2021) believe that management should prioritise the design and implementation of employee retention strategies. According to Chan et al. (2020), additional factors such as recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation packages, working environment, recognition and rewards, and leadership are significantly related to an institution's employee retention policies. Shipena (2019) discovered that government institutions where employees have fewer opportunities for advancement have a weaker application of talent retention practices.

Talent retention aims to encourage employees to stay with an organisation for as long as possible. Because the costs of attracting new employees are high, talent turnover is detrimental to a company's productivity. Direct costs include turnover, replacement, and transition costs, while indirect costs include lost production, lower performance levels, unnecessary overtime, and low morale (Liu, 2021).

1.7.7. Talent as employee potential

Talented employees are people who show abilities and achievements and have the potential for promotion to higher career paths to become leaders in a company (Shipena, 2019). They are not only trained and knowledgeable about their work, but also able to solve every potential situation within an organisation (Zainee, 2020). Saurombe, Barkhuizen and Schutte (2017) argue that talent can be defined as top performers, employees with high potential, senior managers qualified for directorships, or other individuals qualified for critical roles within an organisation. Taking a more analytical approach, Masri and Suliman (2019) contend that talent is the accumulation of an individual's competence, commitment to the work, the organisation, and contribution by creating meaning and purpose for the work.

Modern technologies and innovations can be easily replicated by competitors and generate only temporary competitive advantages, whereas talent management practices can generate the most permanent competitive advantages (Maurya and Agarwal, 2018). Sustained competitive advantages come from talent management practices; in other words, how the organisation attracts, develops, retains, motivates, manages, and rewards its talent (Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen, and Scullion, 2020). The collective skills of the talent employed in an organisation comprise the organisation's core capabilities. An organisation's talent injects capabilities that are difficult for competitors to benchmark and replicate (Kamal and Lukman, 2017). More than any other asset, talent provides the potential for long-term competitive advantages. Talent management is important when the organisation would like to build high performing teams which are formed by talented people (Liu, 2021).

1.7.8. Talent performance evaluation

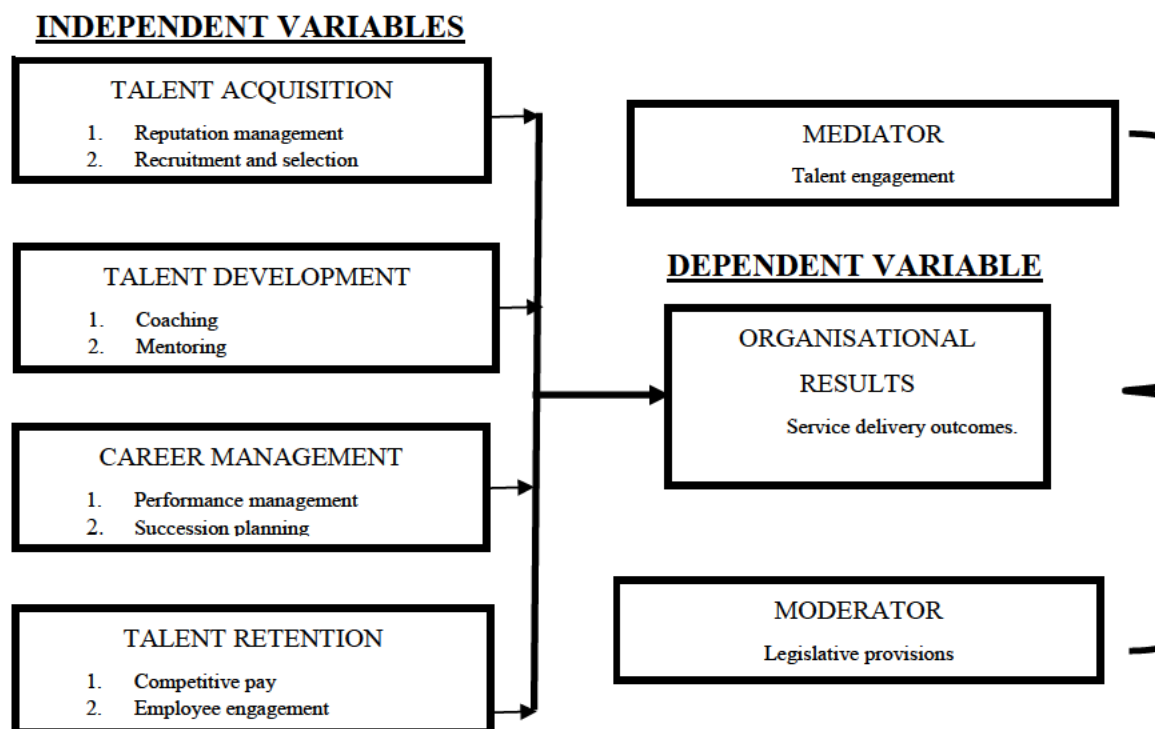
Few jobs allow for purely objective performance evaluations; most jobs require subjective evaluations. Concerns about disparity aversion, manifested as leniency and centrality biases, may collaborate to reduce heterogeneity in performance evaluations (Al Aina and Atan, 2020). It is difficult to pinpoint which strategic jobs need exceptional individual performance to have

a positive effect on the company's overall performance (Dixit and Arrawatia, 2018). Organisations have attempted to address the difficulty of recognising top performers caused by performance appraisal prejudices through competency modelling. Work performance can be evaluated more clearly using competencies (Al Aina and Atan, 2020). By being more precise about the qualities in question, competencies can also make it easier to distinguish between average and top performers (Pang and Lu, 2018).

1.8. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study uses the talent management conceptual framework which has the potential to assist eThekweni Municipality to understand the impact of talent management on service delivery outcomes better.

Figure 1.1: Talent Management Conceptual Framework



Source: adapted from Areily (2003).

The conceptual framework for the proposed study includes pro-active analysis and planning to assure long-term strategic development and deployment of critical leadership and other resources through systematic identification, assessment, planning, and developmental action.

The following essential elements of the framework will be explored to better understand the phenomena under investigation (Mzezewa, 2019).

- i. Talent Acquisition: Proactively recruiting world-class, diverse leadership talent and providing on-boarding support for them to accelerate their assimilation into their roles.
- ii. Talent Development: Developing and executing learning and development programmes, processes, and assessment tools to grow current and future leaders (Dalayga, Baskaran and Mahadi, 2021).
- iii. Career Management: The process of creating a work environment in which people can deliver results effectively, grow, and be recognised for their contribution (Charles and Onouha, 2020).
- iv. Talent Retention: This is critical to developing a leadership pipeline through thoughtful consideration of the availability, readiness, and development of internal talent to assume critical leadership roles (Al Aina and Atan, 2020).
- v. Organisational Results: Achieving favourable and desired results is the ultimate outcome expected out of any effective integrated talent management system (Almatrooshi, Singh and Farouk, 2016).

The flow of effective communication, legislative environment, and systems of recognition and rewards are an integral part of the climate which influences a talent's performance effecting productivity and creativity as well as driving results with the right impact (Ahmed, 2016). eThekwini Municipality's risks include talent-related risks which are frequently identified in the risk register as the most critical issue facing the City. These risks extend to poor talent planning to support the City's service delivery strategy, for example, limited leadership bench strength, reputational risk exposure, productivity risk, and inability to execute due to lack of workforce planning (SALGA, 2020). The proposed study identifies talent acquisition, talent development, career management, and talent performance as independent variables and organisational performance as the dependent variable. The review of the talent management conceptual framework will assist the researcher to clarify relationships among the research variables.

1.9. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH STUDY

Research on talent management and its value to organisational performance is still developing. This study contributes to existing literature on talent management by providing in-depth self-reported data on employee's experiences as well as the statistics behind those experiences. This

combining of qualitative and quantitative data enables employees' personal and organisational experiences of talent management to be compared to the measurable performance outcomes of these experiences. his study is driven by the desire to assist the municipality employ talent management practices to draw in, keep, and develop their personnel. The study is therefore important from a theoretical and practical point of view in that it will contribute to the understanding of the impact of talent management practices on eThekwin service delivery outcomes and develop a model for monitoring of such practices.

As a result, the research's findings will contribute to the body of knowledge on talent management from the viewpoint of local government and serve as a resource for scholars, practitioners, and students. The research will push the boundaries of understanding in the areas of talent acquisition, talent performance, succession planning, and organisational performance. The research aims to create a model to support the evaluation of talent management's practices, which will aid in addressing issues such as institutional memory loss, poor employee development, and inferior performance in the municipality. The outcomes of the model will assist in the evaluating the impact of talent management practices within the organisational setting.

1.10. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The research study will allow investigation into emerging phenomenon of interest and if not done eThekwin Municipality will continue to have talent-related risks which include lack of succession planning; planned or sudden loss of key personnel; lack of return on leadership investment or senior external hires; and failure to attract, develop, and retain talent which will ultimately impact organisational performance. The goal of the study is to develop a model that will enable the municipality to understand the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes. The study will ensure adherence to the best practises and relevant laws that regulate the application of talent management techniques within local government. Furthermore, this project is important because it will apply talent management techniques to enhance fundamental municipal operations thereby impacting service delivery outcomes. Lastly, the study will describe the challenges and obstacles that the municipality must overcome to ensure successful talent management that will enable positive service delivery outcomes.

1.11. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology describes the methodology and procedures used to identify, collect, and analyse data in a study. It is a process by which a study is designed to achieve the research objectives using selected research instruments. It includes all the important aspects of research such as, research design, data collection methods, data analysis methods, and the overall framework within which the research is conducted. The research methodology of this study will be discussed in detail below.

1.11.1. Research approaches.

Interviews will be used as the primary data collection method. Secondary data will also be collected from existing organisational data reports such as, annual talent review reports, employee performance reports, and the service delivery budget implementation reports accessible to HR. The study process is required to enable participation and allow participants to generate meaning from the context. Hence, the research design will adopt an inductive approach. It will examine how talent management practices affect the individuals exposed to the talent management system in favour of service delivery outcomes. The phenomenological research approach will be adopted for this study because of its ability and flexibility to consider participants' subjective views while suspending the researchers' preconceived assumptions about the phenomenon (Lindlof and Taylor, 2017). This approach reviews the phenomenon under study as it manifests in the participants experience and the perceptions, understanding, and meaning of the phenomenon to their experience.

Using a qualitative approach will allow for better comprehension of the fundamental challenges that hinder the effective utilisation of talent management practices. This is because a qualitative approach captures the genuine experience of respondents within the research context (Sheehan, Grant and Garavan, 2018). Qualitative research does not come without criticism as it is often charged with being too subjective. In the case of this study, however, subjectivity is essential because, with the help of interviews, the researcher will be able to learn more about the respondents' perspectives on the identified organisational problem under investigation. The additional benefit of interviews is that the participants' justifications for their responses can be questioned, whereas other methods, such as questionnaires, do not give the researcher the chance to engage further if needed (Kusi, Opoku-Danso and Afum, 2020).

1.11.2. Study site.

The study will be conducted at the eThekweni Municipality offices which are in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

1.11.3. Target population

A target population is the collection of units or people with specific characteristics the researcher is interested in (Lindlof and Taylor, 2017). Lindlof et al. (2017) argues that when selecting workplace participants, it is critical to consider their characteristics in relation to the subject, as well as the inclusion of subject matter experts. During the participant identification process, the researcher considers the characteristics that pique the participant's interest in the phenomenon (Pernecky, 2016). This study's population will consist of eThekweni Municipality employees within defined grades of the Engineering, Human Settlements, and Transport Cluster, including management, human resources practitioners, executives, and scarce and critical skills employees. This population was selected based on the reasoning that talent management in the Municipality only covers employees at TASK Grade 14 to TASK Grade 25 which is entry to management level all, the way to executive management.

1.11.4. Sampling strategies

This study will use purposive sampling to select the sample. Sampling is a process of selecting a small portion of the population to represent the entire or target population in a research study (Afum et al., 2020). This strategy is most appropriate to the study because it focusses on characteristics of a population that are of interest. In this case, the characteristic of interest is being employed at TASK grade fourteen and above as this will best enable participants to answer the research questions. The sample that will be studied is not representative of the population, but for researchers pursuing qualitative or mixed methods research designs, this is not considered to be a weakness (Pandita and Ray, 2018). Rather, it is a choice as purposive sampling considers the researcher's judgement as to who is the most appropriate respondent to answer the research question (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). The purpose of the sampling varies depending on the type of purposive sampling technique used. This study will use homogeneous sampling in which units will be selected based on having similar characteristics because such characteristics are of interest to the researcher (Nicholas, 2021).

1.11.5. Sample and sample size.

Baškarada (2014) defines a sample as a subset of the entire population from which data is collected for a research study. Sample size refers to the total number of persons or units selected to participate in the study (Mzezewa, 2019). In this study, the sample will be chosen based on their experience with the organisation's talent management system. The sample size will be twenty research participants drawn from the Engineering, Human Settlements and Transport Cluster. The research participants will be selected from various levels of management including Line Management, HR Management, and scarce and critical skills employees from TASK Grade 14 and above.

The targeted research participants have primary accountability for the development of talent management policies and procedures and for the implementation of those policies and procedures. Thus, their input will provide valuable insights into their understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The general employees as well as the scarce and critical skills employees are the beneficiaries of talent management practices.

1.11.6. Data collection

Since this study will employ the qualitative research approach, primary data will be collected through semi-structured interviews. In addition, secondary data will be gathered from other sources such as the municipal performance data, annual talent review reports, employee performance reports, and the service delivery budget implementation reports accessible to HR. Semi structured interviews are suitable because they allow rich and detailed information to be collected that gives the context of the phenomenon under study (Pernecky, 2016).

1.12. DATA QUALITY CONTROL

This qualitative research will address the overall trustworthiness of data through credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. These are the equivalents of validity and reliability in another research. Research findings should be as trustworthy as possible, and every research study must be evaluated in relation to the procedures used to generate its findings. To eliminate the threat to quality and ensure trustworthiness, this qualitative research will be measured against the four criteria presented as defined below.

a) Credibility

Will deal with the focus of the research and interrogate the level to which data and processes of analysis address the intended focus (Banerjee, 2007).

b) Transferability

Will assess the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups. To facilitate transferability, the study will provide a clear and distinct description of the context, selection, and characteristics of participants, data collection, and data analysis procedures (Marshall and Rossman, 2011).

c) Dependability

Will address the context of the study. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011) dependability emphasises the need for the researcher to account for the ever-changing context within which research occurs.

d) Conformability

Will assess the degree of neutrality of the study or the extent to which the findings are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest. The concept of confirmability is the qualitative investigator's equivalent to objectivity (Marshall and Rossman, 2011).

1.13. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a practice in which raw data is ordered and organised so that useful information can be extracted from it. Fundamentally, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis revolve around summarising, describing, and analysing masses of data (Scullion, 2020). This study will use thematic data analysis and content analysis to analyse primary data sourced through interviews. Content analysis will assist in the analysis and organisation of texts, audio recordings, and videos from interviews (Braun and Clarke, 2016). Content analysis will also be used to process secondary data obtained from organisational reports.

Although deductive and inductive processes can be combined in a single study, an inductive process will be used to aid the analysis of data in this study. The inductive method will be

utilised to allow research questions to be more exploratory and broader in scope in terms of understanding the subject matter under investigation (Khan, 2018). Furthermore, the inductive analysis process was chosen because it encourages researchers to move beyond simple descriptions of participants' experiences and toward interpretive conceptualisation and abstraction.

1.14. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Grady (2010) claims that informed consent can only be given by participants provided they have a holistic understanding of the nature of the study and full understanding of their requested contribution to the research project. The researcher must also ensure that written permission from the selected organisation/company from which data will be collected is obtained (Sheehan, Grant and Garavan, 2018). Written consent, confidentiality, bias, privacy, anonymity, and incentives are among the ethical concerns addressed in this study. In terms of informed consent, the Municipality and the research participants will be requested to provide written consent. A written informed consent form containing valuable information such as research methods, investigation procedures, participant categories, and study benefits will be attached to the research instruments. Participants will be requested to sign the form to indicate their participation agreement (Khan, 2018). The University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Ethics committee received and reviewed an application for ethical clearance for this study. The committee granted ethical clearance for this study which is valid until October 2024.

1.15. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to the eThekwin Municipality, in Durban. The results of the study cannot be generalised and applied to other contexts or groups. The scope of the research can be extended to ensure that results obtained from the study can be generalised to a wider population.

1.16. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Career discussion: Annual discussion between an employee and their direct supervisor that precedes a Talent Management Committee Meeting to align career aspirations with readiness for future potential positions and to assess competency gaps for development in their current job and future potential career paths.

Nine box matrices: A diagnostic tool used by leadership to assess their direct reports on both performance and potential criteria using evidence from the work environment.

Coaching: A formal process entered by ‘contract’ between an employee and a third party through which new skills, behaviours, and attitudes are learned to enable the employee to step into his / her role more effectively.

Competency: A specific category of knowledge, skills, and behaviours which need to be demonstrated to show a person meets the required standard of competence at the defined proficiency level.

Competency dictionary: A list of all the competencies required for all leadership/managerial levels, or for a specific function, including categories, competency areas, definitions, and criteria.

Competency analysis: The process of comparing the required competence proficiency level (standard) for a role with the actual competency proficiency level of the employee to establish the gap.

Engagement: Where employees are involved and committed to a work goal and have a stake in its outcome. This includes finding personal meaning and motivation in their work, receiving positive interpersonal support, and functioning in a meaningful work environment.

Evidence: A collection of tangible examples of performance or competence, which can include business results, measures, reports, survey results, customer, or colleague feedback, etc,

Exit interviews: Interviews conducted by HR prior to an individual’s exit from the organisation. These are designed to understand employees’ reasons for leaving and improve retention going forward.

Leadership and technical pipeline: A Leadership Development model used by organisations to grow their own talent at all levels that focuses on the unique requirements necessary for effective leadership at each level.

Mission critical positions: Those positions that are critical to the ongoing sustainability and operations of the business, and impact productivity, delivery, and cost substantially. Mission critical positions can occur at senior levels and at other levels in an organisation.

Performance and competency standard: A generic defined standard of performance and competency at a specific organisational level as per the leadership/technical pipeline. The performance and competency standards include descriptions of the guiding principles, the key performance areas and outputs, the key competencies/role behaviours, and warning signs of leading at the wrong level.

Performance review: Annual formal discussion between employee and their direct supervisor to provide feedback and review performance, determine performance rewards and develop individual learning plans. Also known as performance discussion or performance development discussion.

Potential: Ability of an individual to perform work at the next level of the organisation, based on accumulated skills and experience as evidenced by past achievement; ability to learn new skills and willingness to tackle bigger, more complex, or higher-quality assignments.

Readiness: The amount of time it will take for someone to develop to the required proficiency level of competence for a future potential role.

Scarce skills: Those skills that are critical to the business and in short supply either internally in the company or externally in the labour market.

Succession planning: Succession planning involves matching identified talented individuals with future potential positions and creating talent pools for certain key levels and disciplines to ensure all roles are filled timeously to avoid business risk.

1.17. STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation is structured into seven chapters. Each chapter comprises an introduction and conclusion. These chapters are set out as follows:

e) Chapter One

This chapter outlines the introduction of the study and presents the background to the study, research problem, aim of the study, research objectives, research questions, a brief literature review, an outline of the conceptual framework, the significance of the study, the rationale, research methodology, the ethical consideration, limitations of the study, a brief definition of terms, and the proposed structure of chapters. The goal of this chapter is to give the reader an understanding of the study's focus, context, importance, and methodology.

f) Chapter Two

This chapter presents and discusses literature relevant to the impact of talent management on organisational performance from a local government context and perspective. Literature on the construct and theory of talent management and organisational performance which underpin the study is discussed in detail. The chapter expands on the talent management conceptual framework and on elements such as recruitment, employee development, performance management, succession planning, and organisational performance.

g) Chapter Three

This chapter presents a discussion of literature relevant to the impact of talent management on organisational performance from an international perspective guided by the talent management framework that underpins the study.

h) Chapter Four

This chapter presents the research methodology used in the study. The chapter explains the research design, research approach, study site, target population, sampling, research strategy, sample size, sampling method, data collection methods, and data quality control and measurements.

i) Chapter Five

This chapter presents data collected from participants in the study. The presentation of data in this chapter sets a foundation for chapters five and six.

j) Chapter Six

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of results. This chapter indicates whether the study has met the objectives, and if the research questions are answered.

k) Chapter Seven

This chapter presents a summary of the study and its findings. The chapter also offers recommendations and suggestions for future research.

1.18. CONCLUSION

Chapter one introduced the study providing its background, research problem, aim, research objectives, research question, conceptual framework, significance, rationale, research methodology, limitations, and proposed structure. The next chapter will discuss the literature relevant to the focus, aim, and objectives of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON TALENT MANAGEMENT

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Studies have shown that the demand for talented employees in the coming years is going to increase, while the supply will drop (Khan, 2018). There is no doubt that technology and globalisation have changed our lives, as they have led to increased competition for talent. Thus, the potential growth of organisations worldwide depends on their ability to ensure that the right people with the right skills are in the right place at the right time and focused on the right activities. For these reasons, talent management has been elevated to the top of strategic human resources management challenges, acquiring the highest priority across all organisations (Schuler, 2017). This chapter explores the body of knowledge on the impact of talent management on organisational performance within eThekweni Municipality, as well as succession planning, talent development, and people performance. The chapter will outline and review talent management definitions, the talent management framework, drivers of organisational performance, succession planning, and employee retention.

2.2. TALENT

According to Liu, (2021), talent refers to the unique characteristics, qualities, traits, or abilities of people in organisations which are utilised to reach the objectives of the organisations. Martin, (2019), on the other hand, sees talent as the sum of an individual's abilities, including his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character, and drive, independent of an organisation. Talent also incorporates the individual's ability to learn and grow (Nafei, 2015). This study defines talent as the inherent ability of an individual to do a task in a way that enhances the performance of an organisation.

Institutions are increasingly looking at talent as a unique asset that can provide sustainable competitive advantages and superior performance (Rop, 2015). All modern organisations have realised the importance of attracting, developing, and retaining their talent to survive in the competitive market. Companies compete for talent to ensure employee engagement, commitment, retention, and value addition leads to improved organisational performance (Agarwal, 2018).

2.3. INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Talent management is a strategic priority for many organisations in the private sector. Limited research has been conducted on the theoretical development of talent management. The need for talent management is triggered by a need to align people management practices with those of an organisation and integrate these into an organisation's practices to achieve strategic execution and operational excellence. Martin, Siebert, and Robson, (2018) assert that since a group of McKinsey consultants coined the phrase 'war for talent' in 1997, the topic of talent management has received a remarkable degree of practitioner and academic interest.

2.4. BUSINESS AND TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Talent management originates from the strategic management of talent flow in an organisation. Its main goal is to provide an accessible source of talents to link individuals with the right job positions at the appropriate time based on strategic drivers of the business (McDonnell, Joos, and Scullion, 2020). Talent management must be understood in the context of a firm's strategic capability as it has the potential to add value by improving strategy; thus, strategic capabilities stand with talent management in order to affect a firm's financial performance (Agarwal, 2018). Moreover, talent management is the additional management processes and opportunities that are made available to people in an organisation who are the 'talent' (Ashridge Consulting, 2007).

Liu, (2021) emphasises the importance of aligning talent management strategies with the overall organisational strategies. Sinclair, (2019) view strategy as an organisation's long-term direction and scope to achieve advantage in the changing environment through its configuration of resources and competencies with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations. A firm needs to have the ability to deliver a holistic talent management strategy which supports the overall business strategy, and in turn allows the firm to perform strongly in the market. According to Johnson, Scholes, and Whittington (2011), this means that a firm has one coherent plan that brings all areas together in a consistent manner. Internal alignment in areas of information technology, communication, finance, legal, marketing, human resources, and talent management is critical to sending clear, reliable, and consistent messages to employees. A talent strategy only emerges from a firm knowledge of the overall business strategy, to ensure alignment.

It is only once an organisation has articulated which markets, products, and services it needs to pursue, that a decision can be made about the type of skills, capabilities, and core competencies required in order to drive organisational strategy. As a planning tool for human resource management, talent management looks very similar to workforce planning, although in the latter, HR personnel have a real opportunity to contribute to the organisation in the sense of the quality of the implementation supporting the plan (Johnson, Scholes, and Whittington, 2011).

2.5. TALENT ACQUISITION

The aim of talent acquisition is to interest external candidates and motivate them to join an organisation, while creating long-term retention of talent and encouraging their intention to stay with the organisation. The same rigour that is applied to marketing and selling products and services must be applied in marketing and advertising the employer brand and value proposition for current and future employees. Social media may be utilised as a tool to communicate, market, and build the employer branding concept (Mabaso, 2021). There is a big opportunity for companies to use the internet and social media for sourcing talent and managing the recruitment processes of job profiling, advertising of vacancies, and managing of job applications. Technology tools are now readily available to remove and eliminate tedious, old, and lengthy paper-driven processes of recruitment.

According to Sexton, (2018) talent management is the implementation of integrated strategies designed to raise employees' productivity by developing processes for attracting, developing, retaining, and utilising people with the required skills and aptitude to meet the current and the future business needs. Attracting and retaining top talents is a major concern for human capital management practitioners' today. Tracking talents and attracting them must be integrated into management's overall strategies.

Most organisations, however, are not able to attract talented individuals as new members; this lack of talents is the main obstacle to growth, and compensation for this lack offers a major strategic advantage (Suliman, 2019). An organisation needs a talent attraction programme that functions as a marketing plan to advertise current opportunities within an organisation in a way that best showcases what the organisation has to offer potential recruits such as wages, benefits, and growth opportunities (Mabaso, 2021). Talent attraction programmes aim to pull desired talents into an organisation (Ebraheem, 2021).

Remuneration plays a significant role in attracting knowledgeable people, and the best way to attract such an asset is by following what is called “employer branding.” This type of branding involves organisational endeavours to build a strong and unique image and install it in the minds of its employees and desired talented candidates to attract and retain talent (James, 2020).

Successful onboarding of new talents is an integral aspect of any talent management strategy. With the high cost of attracting talent, business leaders must realise that effective integration of new hires into an organisation is an important step to guarantee their success (Mzezewa, 2019,). Talent attraction programmes are designed to provide an organisation with the desired talent pool that is aligned with its strategy. This plays a crucial role in gauging employees’ potential and adding a rigorous structure for employee’s future performance (Ray, 2018). Robust and progressive talent attraction programmes will help organisations to fill positions with suitable people in a way that improves both people and organisational performance (Swanepoel, 2018). Identifying and attracting competent talents helps companies choose people who not only possess the required skills, but also exhibit the attitude, personality traits, and behaviour that ensure organisational fit and promote commitment.

After determining the requirements of an organisation, high-performing companies develop a profile of the ideal candidate, aiming to hire only the top 10 to 15 percent of the available talent (Mzezewa, 2019). When a selection process starts, success factors identified previously for a job can help as a basis for an interviewing strategy to assess the candidate's organisational fit. Another strategy that can be used to ensure success is to integrate behavioural-based questions that are designed to extract examples from candidates in their work history and the way they behaved in previous job situations. The third significant strategy of ensuring the best fit is through competency-based management, which can be described as an organisation’s understanding and perception of its needs and requirements (Robson, 2018).

2.6. STAFF REGULATION ON ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF STAFF

The attraction and retention of competent staff must form part of the municipality’s talent management framework and strategy. Effective talent management will ensure the operational continuity and sustainability of the municipality by ensuring that the appropriate people, with the appropriate skills, are in the appropriate job at the right time.

The municipal manager must ensure that the municipality develops and implements an effective staff attraction and retention strategy and plan. A committee of the municipal council established in terms of section 79 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) must monitor the implementation of an approved staff attraction and retention strategy and plan (Municipal Systems Act, 2000).

2.6.1. Attraction of competent staff

In developing a staff attraction strategy and plan, the municipality must consider the following:

- l) The municipality's staff value proposition (the concise description of what the municipality has to offer potential staff which should be inspirational, motivational, attractive, and distinctive),
- m) The employee value proposition (a message designed to persuade sought after professional and technical skills candidates to consider employment by the municipality),
- n) The municipality's long-term and current strategic organisational requirements in respect of leadership competencies, technical skills, and public service imperatives, and
- o) The municipality's ability as an employer to provide a favourable work environment for staff (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2021).

2.6.2. Identification of competent staff

The identification of scarce, critical, and high-risk skills must form the basis of any talent management intervention. The manager responsible for human resources must develop a framework for the identification of competent staff that identifies leadership groups and technical talent in the municipality. Supervisors, in consultation with the manager responsible for human resources, must identify competent staff members (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2021).

2.6.3. Retention strategy

The manager responsible for human resources must oversee the retention strategy and ensure that there is consistency in the way in which competent staff are managed and engaged. This must be achieved by ensuring that systems and processes are structured to provide flexibility within the legal framework of the organisation so that staff can be managed effectively and differently, if necessary.

The strategy must provide supervisors with the authority to act in this regard, whilst also offering strategic advice and support, and reviewing policies and procedures to ensure that they provide the measure of flexibility necessary to accommodate competent staff members (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2021).

2.6.4. Actions to retain staff.

Each supervisor must engage on an individual basis with those staff identified as competent staff members to understand both their tangible and intangible motivations and aspirations. This engagement may be integrated into the performance management cycle and the formulation of personal development plans. The manager responsible for human resources and other human resources staff should support supervisors by providing them with the methodology and instruments to undertake this engagement. The engagement with a staff member should consider the staff member's interests, values, skills, and development needs, as well as the various options available to the staff member (Staff Regulation Guidelines, 2021). Supervisors, in consultation with staff employed in a human resources function, must identify those tangible and intangible motivations that are not feasible and should consult with the staff member to find a satisfactory solution. The engagement must result in a plan that is signed off by both the staff member and the relevant supervisor and ratified by the manager responsible for human resources.

The plan should contain both tangible and intangible actions, timelines, targets, and conditional requirements. The plan should become the basis for the development, engagement, and retention of competent staff members. The manager responsible for human resources, together with the relevant supervisors, must develop and apply a talent exposure programme for new talent entering the municipality or entering a specific level within the municipality (Staff Regulation Guidelines, 2021). The exposure programme should aim at providing competent talent with structured exposure to fields of work and roles. The manager responsible for human resources, or the person to whom this function is delegated, must ensure that the programme defines the roles that talent on the programme will perform so that their skills and development requirements are optimised during the exposure, and expectations are managed (Mokgojwa, 2019).

Supervisors should engage with competent staff members in a discussion regarding their plan on an ongoing basis. The talent management plan must be reviewed annually, and the review should coincide with the performance management cycle of the municipality. The review should consider the steps that have been completed in the plan, what is still required to be done, performance, next steps, amendments, and support needed. The plan should be updated and sent to the manager responsible for human resources for ratification (Staff Regulation Guidelines, 2021).

2.6.5. Diversity and inclusion in the public sector

Significant legislative directives were put in place to address and fast track the discriminatory practices that occurred within the public sector labour force. These directives take into consideration disadvantages experienced by designated groups, such as policies that led to grossly unequal educational opportunities that disadvantaged African people in the country, discriminatory laws that reserved specific jobs for White people, as well as discriminatory recruitment, employment, and advancement practices (Mokgojwa, 2019). It can be argued, however, that finding suitably qualified individuals from previously disadvantaged groups in South Africa is complex.

Problems further emanate from the lack of expertise, skills, and knowledge. Lack of service delivery in some municipalities is linked causally to appointments in which managers lack skills, qualifications, and knowledge in their areas of work. Previous discriminatory policies did not only create a knowledge gap between Black and white South Africans, but at the same time widened the skills gap in the sense that it would take decades for people from a designated group to achieve the knowledge and skills comparable to their previously advantaged counterparts (Mokgojwa, 2019).

In addressing the gaps, it is important to consider the lack of those skills and allow them to be developed in the process to overcome past injustices. Thus far, the implementation of legislative directives addressing employment equity has been meant to benefit the majority of South Africans. At the same time, there is an expectation that those who benefited from the previous policies will understand that it is time that previously disadvantaged groups enjoy greater benefit from policies (Mello, 2004).

While, in fact, people with disabilities and women across colour lines in the country are benefiting from current policies, there is a false impression that beneficiaries of the policy are only Black people in the country, both Black men and women (McGregor, 2003). This is often cited as a disadvantage of these policies. Suliman, (2019) indicates that there is nothing wrong with the concept of addressing past inequalities in principle, but it is wrong when employment equity ignores economic realities in favour of vote-winning social tinkering. Balancing the South African labour force demographics through incompetent candidates is not only a threat to the development and progress of the South African society, but also an insult to the democracy fought for by South Africans.

In ensuring that the administrations of municipalities are representative, municipal councils have to apply the provisions of the Constitution (McGregor, 2003). In the Republic of South Africa, public administration should be achieved in the most effective and efficient manner. The achievement of such administration should be through measures that ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and that they are represented in all occupational categories and at all levels in the workplace.

2.7. MUNICIPAL STAFF REGULATIONS ON RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The recruitment and selection of staff forms part of the municipality's staff attraction strategy and its broader talent management framework. The recruitment and selection of staff should support and enable the municipality's capacity needs. Recruitment strategies should be designed to attract and retain diverse, qualified applicants, including persons with scarce skills and talent (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2021).

2.7.1. Request to fill a vacant or new post.

When a vacancy occurs or an unfilled new post has been created, the supervisor within whose delegated authority the post falls must:

- i. Confirm with the manager responsible for human resources that the post is approved and funded.
- ii. Develop the required job description in collaboration with human resources.
- iii. Complete a written request and motivation to fill the vacant or new post.
- iv. Ensure that the specified inherent requirements of the job are reasonable and necessary to perform the duties associated with the post and are non-discriminatory.

2.7.2. Advertising a vacant post

On approval being granted to fill a vacant post, human resources should develop a job advertisement for the post to be circulated within the municipality and externally, where appropriate. The following criteria must be met in the process of advertising a vacant or new post:

- i. The job advert must at least specify those requirements as set out in regulation 14(2).
- ii. Advertisements should be placed to reach, as efficiently and effectively as possible, the widest pool of internal and external potential applicants.
- iii. The municipal manager must determine whether a recruitment agency or head-hunting process is to be used for any recruitment process.
- iv. The manager responsible for human resources or the staff member to whom this is delegated is responsible for simultaneously placing internal and external advertisements in the most appropriate forums or publications.
- v. The manager responsible for human resources or the staff member to whom this function is designated must record all internal and external applications and must update the information as the selection process unfolds; and
- vi. The record must be maintained and comply with regulations.

2.7.3. Shortlisting

Shortlisting refers to the process of reducing the number of applicants to be considered for the vacant post. This involves the following regulations:

- i. A set of selection criteria must be determined and applied to ensure that the process is fair and non-discriminatory.
- ii. The selection panel appointed to recommend the appointment of persons to the vacant post must perform the shortlisting and develop the shortlist.
- iii. The appointment of the selection panel must comply with regulation 16 of the regulations.
- iv. The selection criteria must be objective and relate to the requirements of the job as well as the future needs of the municipality.
- v. The appointed selection panel must determine the criteria according to —
 - a. the specific competencies, skills, and abilities required for satisfactory performance in the job; and
 - b. the key performance areas of the vacant post.

- vi. The supervisor and the manager responsible for human resources or the staff member to whom this is delegated must agree shortlisting methods before they are applied, which may include the screening of curriculum vitae, telephonic interviews, and competency-based evaluations.
- vii. The number of people on the shortlist should be restricted to those who show in their application that they clearly meet the minimum requirements, which are—
 - a. all the skills, knowledge, competencies, and abilities identified in the job description that the potential candidate must possess at the time of appointment, or which the candidate would be able to acquire in a reasonable period of time; and
 - b. all the qualifying criteria for the post.
- viii. The supervisor and the manager responsible for human resources or the staff member to whom this is delegated must consider formal qualifications, prior learning, relevant experience, and the capacity to acquire the necessary skills and competencies within a reasonable time period; and
- ix. If many applicants meet the minimum selection criteria, a further shortlisting process may be required.

2.7.4. Reference and personal credential verification

The manager responsible for human resources or the staff member to whom this function is delegated must conduct screening of the shortlisted candidates in compliance with regulation (19). The results of the screening process must be captured in writing for each shortlisted candidate and submitted to the selection panel, in line with the provisions of the Municipal Staff Regulations (2021). The manager responsible for human resources or the staff member to whom this function is designated must submit to the selection panel, within five days of the screening being completed, the following:

- a) the list of shortlisted candidates; and
- b) the results of the screening process.

2.7.5. Interviews

The Municipal Staff Regulations (2021) require all municipal management to adhere to the following processes when conducting interviews:

- 1) Each of the shortlisted candidates must be interviewed.

- 2) The purpose of the interview is to expand on information provided in the application, collect new information, further assess the applicant's degree of competence, and assess whether the applicant matches the requirements of the job.
- 3) Prior to the interviews, the panel should meet to confirm:
 - a) the process to be followed.
 - b) the selection criteria for the advertised post based on the relevant qualifications, experience, competencies, skills, and expertise required for the post; and
 - c) the questions to be asked.
- 4) During the interview the selection panel is responsible for ensuring that
 - a) the interview is structured.
 - b) consistent questioning techniques are used across interviews.
 - c) there is a competency-based focus on the requirements of the job; and
 - d) the interview is non-discriminatory in respect of race, gender, and disability.
- 5) During the interview, the panel must ensure that the applicant being interviewed has a reasonable opportunity to ask questions about the job and employment with the municipality.
- 6) The selection panel must keep a written record of their assessment of the candidates interviewed.
- 7) After considering all the relevant information, the selection panel must recommend at most three candidates in order of preference, or, if no candidate is found to be suitable, recommend that the post be re-advertised.
- 8) Adequate records of the entire selection process must be maintained including selection and shortlisting criteria; reasons for inclusion or exclusion of candidates; copies of other assessment results; notes on the interview assessments of each candidate; reference checks; and notes on the deliberations informing the selection decision. These records should be kept in a secure location on the municipality's premises.
- 9) After the interviews are finalised, the manager responsible for human resources, in collaboration with the chairperson of the selection panel, must prepare a written motivation for the municipal manager or the staff member to whom this function is designated, in the case of other staff. This written motivation must detail the following:
 - a) the selection processes.
 - b) the candidate screening outcomes.
 - c) the interview assessment outcomes; and
 - d) the recommendations of the selection panel; and

10) The appointment of the approved candidate must be finalised in compliance with regulation 20. The manager responsible for human resources or the staff member to whom this is designated must.

- a) submit an offer and letter of appointment to the approved candidate; and
- b) inform all other candidates interviewed that they were unsuccessful.

2.8. RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It is generally accepted that in both developing and developed countries, an efficient public service is crucial. As a result of this, Kusi, Opoku-Danso and Afum, (2020) observe that human resources divisions have become one of the most paramount units to ensure good governance and, by extension, efficient service delivery.

To this end, Maurya and Agarwal (2018), asserts that it is very important that a legal and fair system is used for recruitment to grant every candidate an opportunity and ensure that all potential candidates are treated fairly by the recruitment process. A poorly planned recruitment process can be detrimental because it may cost the department or organisation the best available talent and deprive candidates of an opportunity they would otherwise have had. As a result, suboptimal recruitment processes may give rise to complaints, disputes and, in some instances, legal actions taken against the department by an aggrieved candidate (Elhanafy and El Hessewi, 2021). Due to the secure nature of public sector employment, the relevant legislation in place to protect the rights of workers, and the attractive remuneration packages with a range of benefits, public sector employment is seen as both the ideal and relatively undemanding (Agarwal et al., 2018).

2.8.1. Patronage politics.

Patronage politics in South Africa has been on the increase, through the creation of networks that operate based on political connections to access state resources (Liu, 2021). Patronage politics occurs when private and public relationships are used to access public resources and, if available, to maintain political power to further expand the power networks created as a result (Friedman, 2014). The ruling African National Congress (ANC) has openly admitted that patronage, which in most cases leads to corruption, is rife within the party, and this has led to decay and reduced the capacity of government to provide for the needs of the public adequately (Nakato, Mazibuko and James, 2020).

Friedman (2014) further points out that economic exclusion may lead to patronage politics which is seen as a fast route towards economic emancipation, as the formal economy is not necessarily friendly to the previously excluded majority (Caldwell and Peters, 2018). According to Pang, (2018) during the political transition from the apartheid government to the Government of National Unity (GNU), there may have been a lack of skilled bureaucratic personnel to cater for the needs of the entire nation. As a result of this, patronage politics manifested itself. In addition, many of the skilled bureaucrats available were not loyal to the project of African nationalism (Uğural, Giritli and Urbański, 2020).

2.8.2. Cadre deployment

Another extension of the relationship between the state and the political party can be seen in cadre deployment in governance. Cadre deployment, according to Shipena (2019), involves training a small group of people to function in a particular unit, military, political or in business, so that they can be deployed to serve anywhere else the party chooses, regardless of skills and competence.

It is worth noting that debates around cadre deployment are not unique to South Africa but are a topic of general discussion in other democracies across the world. Shipena (2019) argues that cadre deployment practices in countries such as Uganda, Greece, and Spain have led to a collapse of service delivery and an economic crisis, due to the lack of accountability often associated with cadre deployment. In South Africa, the ruling party has argued that cadre deployment as a policy should exist in all areas of government and is intended to ensure that party loyalists are given an opportunity to serve in key positions. This, in turn, ensures that the political ideology of the party is passed through the ranks of all the respective spheres of government (Senona, 2017).

Cadre deployment has the potential to result in a lack of governmental accountability. This is because party leadership structures may have enormous influence over the state, with the consequence of relatively inexperienced candidates occupying key positions within government (Shipena, 2019). These political aspects of cronyism in cadre deployment can be detrimental to service delivery and the running of governmental departments.

McDonnell, Joos, and Scullion (2020) argue that the appointment of politically associated public officials in districts and public services is an obstacle to the improvement of public services. Neylon (2018) contends that, despite the increased system of political appointments, various local municipalities continue to strive for quality service provision in the communities they serve. In any event, circumstantial evidence points to the reality that the nation faces a daunting struggle to rid itself from inclinations towards cronyism and to focus on presenting a high quality of public services instead (Uğural, Giritli and Urbański, 2020).

2.8.3. Cadre deployment's influence on performance management

Ogony and Majola (2018) observe that South Africa's public services are dealing with poor performance issues as a direct result of the ANC's culture of cadre deployment. These authors criticise this policy by stating that the ANC's strategy methodically puts dependability before legitimacy and even ability and is in this way a genuine impediment to a proficient open administration (Ogony and Majola, 2018). It is perceived as common knowledge among present-day South Africans that those individuals who are politically well connected occupy senior positions in public service departments, despite them lacking the expertise and competency to manage their public offices efficiently (Paadi, Barkhuizen and Swanepoel, 2018). Senona, (2017) asserts that cadre deployment in the public service has become a route to upward mobility.

The policy has been widely abused by politicians and other corrupt public office bearers when the accumulation of personal wealth became their primary goal, which is contrary to the policy's original intentions. Criticism against the policy of cadre deployment is validated when no formal qualifications are considered in the recruiting of public servants, and when no assessments to evaluate the capacity or suitability of an individual for holding a public office are made (Senona, 2017). Such habits of inefficiency have contributed to poor performance management in various government departments in South Africa. Cadre deployment's influence on the accountability of Public Officials. Performance measurement in the South African government has been largely regarded as a process of refining the deliveries of public services. Mokgojwa (2019) emphasises that performance evaluation is obligatory in public affairs. Public officials must be accountable to their citizens on all issues pertaining to service delivery (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2017).

Furthermore, investigations into public officials' performances must be the main method (Mokgojwa, 2019). According to the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) (2018), various initiatives to address the effects of cadre deployment in the South African public sector were implemented to enhance performance and service delivery in local government (Mokgojwa, 2019).

The major initiatives that have been launched to this end include the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System, Single Public Service, Public Service Amendment Bill, African Peer Review Mechanism Programme of Action, Provincial Growth and Development Strategies, Integrated Developed Plans, and the Municipal staff Regulations of September 2021. These programmes are designed to improve the performances of civil servants, which, in turn, improves service provision to the public (Gharib, Kahwaji and Elrasheed, 2017).

In addition, the South African government introduced new reforms to curb cadre deployment in local government. The Reform Agenda was improved by legislature through the introduction of the Result Based Management programme. The goal was to enforce efficient and effective public sector management and to promote performance and service delivery (Kusi, Opoku-Danso and Afum, 2020). Moayed and Vaseghi, (2016) observe that the present strategy to broaden transparency and accountability is to showcase abilities, validate the future utilisation of resources, and render the use of performance measurement highly appealing.

According to Mehale, Govender and Mabaso (2021), it is critically important to guarantee that public officials have enough control over performance management, and measures should be taken to encourage innovation and rational experimentation with alternative modes of delivering public service (Nakato, Mazibuko and James, 2020). The development and growth of the twenty-first century public sector will be progressively dependent not only on the local government's capabilities of being efficient and producing competitive outputs, but also on their abilities to understand and manage the various links between local government processes and the external environment (Elhanafy and El Hessewi, 2021).

2.8.4. The effects of cadre deployment on accountability and transparency

Wherever corruption thrives, accountability and transparency disappear. This circumstance appears to be a common occurrence in South African local government. The PSC Report of

2020/2021 indicates that corruption manifests itself in the forms of bribery and fraud (approximately 1 511 instances), mismanagement of government funds (870), procurement irregularities (720), and appointment irregularities (627). Transgressions related to financial abuse have been rampant in the three spheres of government (national, provincial, local). A typical example is provided by the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Health Department in which 76 disciplinary cases involving fraudulent activity resulted in 17 dismissals, 13 resignations, and 14 written warnings (Kusi, Opoku-Danso and Afum, 2020).

These statistics clearly illustrate that corruption has become an accepted mode of operation in government circles, forsaking the *Batho Pele* principles of good governance. Public officials are still caught crossing ethical lines by their failures in transparency, honesty, integrity, and accountability. Recent publications suggest that the inability of various municipalities to train public officials prior to their appointment to public offices exposes them to high levels of bureaucratic corruption in local government (Jang et al., 2019). Such practices of corruption relate to the policy of cadre deployment, since the recruitment processes are tainted by nepotism and political patronage that, in the final analysis, demotivate all public officials in the execution of their duties to society (Moayed, and Vaseghi, 2016).

2.8.5. The effects of patronage and cadre deployment on municipal performance management.

Political patronage has obstructed human resources management in the public sector in South Africa. Recruitment processes are often marred by inconsistencies that affect the performance of handpicked cadres. Bussin, Mohamed-Padayachee and Serumaga-Zake (2019) claim that South Africa, in contrast to other democracies, possesses a unique relationship between political and public service management. One unique characteristic is the policy of cadre deployment whereby political leaders are tasked with the administrative functions of governance and management. It is imperative to note that most senior positions in government are appointed on political rather than academic merits (Bussin, Mohamed-Padayachee and Serumaga-Zake, 2019). Critics often question this type of recruitment as being obstructive to performance management and service delivery in various municipalities. Political convictions seem to occupy a central position in the matter of public appointments, resulting in poor performance and accountability problems in state institutions (Mitosis, et al., 2021).

Police formulation is also affected as the appointed cadres often wrestle to implement the decisions of their political patrons, which may be in direct conflict with the direction a municipality intends to take. Corruption usually thrives when conflicts, resulting from cadre deployment, exist between municipal administrations and political office bearers (Kwaeng, Barkhuizen and Du Plessis, 2018). Such conflicts and inconsistencies in municipal operations feed corrupt activities during the scramble for municipal resources and power (Mzezewa, 2019). King and Vaiman (2019) criticise the lack of clarity on legislation in relation to who should instigate progress in a municipality. At the same time Caldwell and Peters (2018) attempt to distinguish between political executive authorities and administration officials. Overlapping in these positions, however, is rife on account of cadre deployment, which affects the capacity of a municipality to deliver essential services. This means that communities often suffer the consequences of cadre deployment, since service delivery is often poor in municipal areas where incompetence and corruption have settled in (Vardi, 2019).

2.9. REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

A company's reputation is a very fragile entity that can be abruptly changed if past behaviour comes to light (Khan, 2018). Although there is little work done to present a theoretical framework surrounding the reputation phenomenon, Uğural, Giritli and Urbański (2020) observe that the number of books focusing on reputation management has increased, some with foundations in academic research influenced by current practices and issues that affect reputation. These factors cause reputation to modify, shift or even mutate from one form to another (Masri and Suliman, 2019). Kwaeng, Barkhuizen and Du Plessis (2018) refer to reputation as the "brand name". The developmental role for local government challenges municipalities to be more proactive, inventive, and effective in reputation management (Paadi, Barkhuizen and Swanepoel, 2018). Mokgojwa, (2019) indicates that reputation can be regarded as a precondition for people's willingness to do business with a company. Corporate reputation is crucial for stakeholders to determine their own support for the institution. According to Ogony and Majola (2018), reputation is a social construction that is based on observations of the consequences of actions as well as observations of the guides used to generate actions. Reputation develops from a firm's uniqueness and from identity shaping practices that lead its constituents to perceive the firm as reliable and trustworthy. In turn, a firm's corporate reputation helps to protect it from competitors who try to imitate its practices (Kusi, Opoku-Danso and Afum, 2020).

Observers will tend to give a net assessment of an organisation's reputation, which may include both normative and instrumental concerns. Organisations tend to have different reputations with different stakeholder groups. The evaluation criteria stakeholders use to judge an organisation's reputation will differ depending on the stakeholder's expectations of the organisation's role (Almohtaseb et al., 2020). While different stakeholders may hold varying views on an organisation's reputation, they nevertheless give an overall affective impression. How stakeholders perceive the organisation will influence their behaviour toward it for better or worse (Uğural, Giritli and Urbański, 2020).

According to Visser, Barkhuizen and Schutte (2018), a good corporate reputation is one which appeals to emotions and sells an organisation to potential employees as a good place to work. Organisations should therefore use internal corporate communication effectively to enhance their reputation among employees as stakeholders, since corporate reputation and values instilled through internal corporate communication reverberate beyond organisations (Mehdiabadi and Li, 2018).

A positive organisational reputation, therefore, is vital amongst employees because it affects decisions to engage, commit, stay, and work hard in the organisation. In turn, loyal and committed employees enhance an organisation's reputation in the market (Nakato, Mazibuko and James, 2020). Reputation management aims at creating shared interests with stakeholders (Thunnissen, Boselie and Fruytier, 2018). Reputation is managed to diagnose how constituents perceive an organisation. Corporate reputation management internationally is viewed as the capacity to configure an optimistic strategy for managing corporate reputation (Moayed and Vaseghi, 2016).

Reputation is thus considered in every decision-making process of an organisation and along all its different departments. The management of corporate reputation entails everything that an organisation does or does not do to communicate plans of action that affect both internal and external stakeholders. Elhanafy and El Hessewi, (2021) suggest that the importance of each stake holding group and the amount of attention that should be devoted to them depends on where they are positioned in the power/interest matrix. Tong-On, Siripipatthanakul and Phayaphrom (2021) argue, however, that just because a stake holding group appears not to have significant interest or power, does not mean that they are unimportant.

Gharib, Kahwaji and Elrasheed (2017) stress the importance of managing external reputation through internal reputation that involves staff in the process of building a reputation that resonates within the organisation. In the business world, risk reputation management relays to influencing or controlling the reputation of an organisation. Management of reputational risk is part of corporate reputation management (Lindlof and Taylor, 2017). It consists of providing the procedures and internal alignment necessary for detecting and minimising gaps that could compromise the fulfilment of a company's strategic goals (Sheehan, Grant and Garavan, 2018). In managing reputation, organisations assess their corporate reputation using benchmarking to understand their corporate reputation strength and weakness. They benchmark their reputation against both their competitors and other organisations with exceptional reputations (Scullion, 2020). Benchmarking helps organisations imitate good management practices as well as build valuable reputation capital (Adero and Odiyo, 2020).

In reputation management, Scott, and Walsham (2019) recommend a shift of attention from fixing the present-past to managing the present-future with reputable action. Their advice is that high-performance organisations should:

- i. Reconceptualise reputation as a strategic boundary object, which offers a lens through which to analyse tensions between local values, reputation, and the inputs and outputs needed to uphold coherence across intersecting communities.
- ii. Clarify expectations and complete ongoing reflective assessments which help recognise the increased demands placed on strategic reputational boundary objects by changing trust relationships; and
- iii. Define their stakes, which, by shifting away from fixed notions of stakeholders, makes possible a social constructivist perspective of stake-making and stake-breaking.

Ogony and Majola (2018) outline the task of local government as providing services that are essential to uplifting society at large, subject to national and provincial legislation as provided for in the Constitution. Promoting the wellbeing of the communities within its limits means ensuring all people have access to primary health care, electricity, sanitation, transportation, water, education, and housing, as well as enjoy the right to live within a safe and healthy environment (SALGA, 2018).

The provision of services by municipalities is a constitutional obligation, ss indicated by (Mokgojwa, 2019). South African local authorities become wardens of economic growth in

their jurisdictions. The recent outburst by communities due to lack of service delivery has a detrimental effect on the corporate reputation of the local municipalities responsible for it (Khan, 2018). Communities have a sense of entitlement as local municipalities are democratically elected by them using a national voting system to make provision for proportional representation.

2.10. TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Talent management is a process for assuring the consistency of talented employees' performance levels and must be performed through an elaborated appraisal of a talent's degree of evolution for higher job positions (Mehdiabadi and Li, 2018). Organisations must be fully committed to the right talent management strategies as part of the corporate's modality in order to catch smart employees and top expertise and turn them into talented managers and leaders. One of the major responsibilities of an organisation is to create a clear career path for talent with the future needs of the organisation and its talent in mind (McDonnell, Joos, and Scullion, 2020). When management is concerned about the interests of its employee, coupled with the organisation's interest, employees will be motivated in the development phase which will boost employee's professional development and involvement (Thunnissen, 2016).

In an interview, Rop, stated that a strategic application of talent management that depends on high possibilities and distinctive leadership involves management taking advantage of employee engagement as an approach to talent development, by adopting the idea of focusing on the whole workforce both internal and external. Talent development starts with a performance appraisal and evaluation, in which an individual's strengths and weaknesses are assessed to determine training needs and provide the feedback needed for learning programmes and career planning (McDonnell et al., 2020).

In many organisations, the link between identifying training needs and fulfilling them gets broken, which often leads to unnecessary talent acquisition in the future (McCaffry and Sexton, 2018). Similarly, succession planning tends to be approached from a blinkered perspective, with many organisations primarily focusing on senior management. Effective succession planning is not merely about what occurs next in the boardroom, it is also about identifying which roles are critical to the organisation, regardless of seniority (Kamal and Lukman, 2017). Most organisations have multiple key person dependencies at even relatively junior levels,

from an account manager who has developed a solid personal relationship with a key client, to specialist staff who understand the intricacies of individual systems and processes.

Through identifying critical roles and mapping potential successors, organisations can guarantee that they tailor their employee development and talent management to meet business priorities (Ajaz, 2014). Canedo et al. (2017) suggest that human resource professionals need to be trained and educated about values, issues, and preferred work environment to align with talent management strategies. Organisations that aim at accomplishing a sustained competitive advantage must optimise their human resources (Mabaso, et al., 2021). In this regard, the management of people who are talented has been often proposed as the decisive factor for gaining a competitive advantage through people (McCaffery et al., 2018).

Traditionally, talent management has been focused on development of talents exclusively. This meant it was directed towards a small percentage of the workforce who performed better than the rest or displayed more “leadership” potential (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; Swailes, 2013). The world faces issues today that make this approach short-sighted. The first issue is the global scarcity of talent, where talent is defined according to exclusive philosophies (Schuler et al., 2011). The second issue is that the highly dynamic environment organisations work in hinders the prediction of future talent needs (Yost and Chang, 2009). A study conducted by Schuler et al. (2011) emphasises environmental factors and personal characteristics as the two variables that most determine levels of employee satisfaction. For most management scholars, meeting the needs of employees remains the prime employee-satisfaction enhancement strategy (Giannikis and Mihail, 2011). Job satisfaction is vital because a satisfied employee is more willing and able to perform and shows a higher level of productivity in comparison to dissatisfied ones (Sejjaaka and Kaawaase, 2014).

2.11. BACKGROUND TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

As part of a national commitment to accelerated change, the government has started an initiative to introduce a performance management system into municipalities. This system, according to the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) (2020), can be broadly defined as a strategic approach to management, which equips leaders, managers, workers, and stakeholders at different levels with a set of tools and techniques to regularly plan, continuously monitor, periodically measure, and review performance in municipalities. This

initiative calls on local government to view citizens as customers as opposed to mere users of services and further calls on managers, leaders, and individual employees to be held accountable to ensure improved delivery of services and value for money to the local communities (DPLG, 2020). The logic behind this policy framework, as stated in the local government information series (DPLG, 2020), is primarily to discover new ways of working to encourage new attitudes and cultures, and to develop new skills and competencies. Performance management is a strategic tool that can help bring about such change.

The DPLG (2020) stipulates that, before the indicators are set, municipalities are expected to identify development priorities and objectives as part of their Integrated Development Planning (IDP). IDP is the process through which a municipality can establish a development plan for the short, medium, and long-term (Department of Constitutional Development, 2022). Once these priorities and objectives are identified, municipalities will develop indicators and targets for each of them.

IDP is generally regarded as a process by which future development is achieved in an orderly, sensible, and manageable manner with disciplined and responsible allocations of financial resources for such developments. IDP enables a municipality to assess needs of a community in the context of the current situation in the municipal area, including available resources, skills, and capacities to prioritise these needs in order of urgency and importance. Moreover, it sets goals to meet these needs, devises strategies to achieve these goals within a set time frame and sets targets so that performance can be measured (Department of Constitutional Development, Annual Report 2022).

2.11.1. Current realities

Planning requires a vision of where one wants the municipality to go. In order to arrive at this vision, one first needs a clear picture of where the municipality is currently i.e., an assessment of one's own current realities. Broad assessments of current realities can be achieved through SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses, needs analyses, and situational analyses (Department of Constitutional Development, Annual Report 2022).

2.11.2. Vision statement

Residents and stakeholders often have conflicting ideas on what to prioritise. Therefore, development should be planned and managed in the best interests of all the residents and stakeholders. In this light, the vision statement should also act as a broad support-base for future development initiatives. In the IDP process, it is necessary to find ways in which aspirations can come together. A vision statement aims to build a base for agreement and consensus to start the planning process focussed on the common aspirations of all those concerned (Department of Constitutional Development, Annual Report 2022).

2.11.3. Setting goals and situational analyses

It is important to set clear, achievable, and prioritised goals. These goals should reflect what the municipality wishes to achieve over the next 5 years. It is also important to review progress against these goals regularly and to review the goals themselves on an annual basis, because priorities can change and the goals to which the municipality has committed should change as well. On the one hand, situational analysis enables councillors to gain deeper insight into the key development issues. The analysis should cover internal factors, external factors, and spatial analysis of the local area. On the other, situational analysis helps address the desired, necessary, and possible actions (Department of Constitutional Development, Annual Report 2022).

2.11.4. Financial plan

IDP must include a financial plan, this is a strategy for the regular allocation of financial resources so that the development strategies can be achieved within a given budget and a set time frame. The financial plan involves producing a medium-term (five year) projection of capital and recurrent expenditure. It also contains a plan for raising revenue to support these strategies. The financial plan shows how the priorities in the budget change over the five-year period in order to achieve the IDP. By doing the above, municipalities will be better able to direct, redirect, and manage resources in a focused and disciplined way, to achieve the objectives of integrated development (Department of Constitutional Development, Annual Report 2022).

2.11.5. Action plan and budget

Any IDP must address the implementation of the development strategies including, how they will be carried out, managed, monitored, and sustained. Two kinds of plans of action must be

devised: an institutional plan of action and a financial plan of action. The first plan spells out how municipalities with resources at their disposal will implement their development strategies. The second plan comes into play primarily to regulate budgeting and allocation of resources so that development strategies can be achieved within a given time frame and budget (Department of Constitutional Development, Annual Report 2022).

2.12. ANALYSING SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

In transforming service delivery, effectiveness in the delivery of services that meet the needs and aspirations of all South African citizens is sought. Improving service delivery is therefore the ultimate goal of the public service transformation program. Nevertheless, the introduction of a service delivery improvement programme cannot be achieved in isolation from other management changes within the public service. It must be part of a fundamental shift of culture whereby public officials see themselves first and foremost as servants of the citizens of South Africa, and public service is managed with service to the public as its primary goal. Improvement of service delivery is a dynamic process out of which a completely new relationship is developed between the public service and its individual clients.

2.12.1. The significance of trust in a public sector performance environment

An appropriate conflict-free employment relations strategy is the key to a successful organisation, and the most fundamental element of such a strategy is deeply rooted in common trust permeating all sections, divisions, leadership, management, and employees (Liu, 2021). While organisational and state procedures and rules are significant in shaping organisational imperatives, structures, systems, strategies, plans, and actions of an entity, in the final analysis, the quality of existing relations depends on the levels of trust. Trust is founded and cemented mainly through the strategies, plans, and actions of the leadership and higher management levels of an organisation. Lindelöf and Taylor, (2017) have shown conclusively that trust among key stakeholders in an organisational set up is a key element in the success of the entity. This means that trust or the lack of it within a public sector entity such as a municipality will have direct and/or indirect effects on individual and group performance (Liu, 2021). The World Economic Forum's latest report on world competitiveness indicates that South Africa has been ranked as the worst of 137 countries in the list in terms of the relationship between employer and employee (Kusi, Opoku-Danso, and Afum, 2020).

Covering both the private and the public sector, the report links this outcome directly to the very low levels of trust between employees and organisations. The report, through its analysis, identifies mistrust between employers and employees in South Africa as a phenomenon with historical roots that has been exacerbated by the country's lack of capacity to train, retain, and attract talent, poor reliance on management, and the existing high levels of unemployment, and poverty (Schwab, 2017). An effective state with a well-functioning market both directly and indirectly ensures continuous economic and social growth and development enhanced by corruption-free competitiveness and GDP growth (Belle, 2014).

In contrast, unhealthy relations between employees and management in both sectors have direct negative impacts on organisational performance, which bears serious threats in both sectors' ability to build a more productive and equitable future for themselves and all citizens of the country as a whole constructively (Belle, 2014). The existence or absence of priorities for a productive and equitable future, cements or destroys trust within an organisation, especially a municipality as it is an entity empowered legally to be the foundation of community-based efficient and effective service delivery. Trust within a municipality is instrumental to building and cementing cooperation, coordination, synergy, and collective decision-making and planning, whereas mistrust creates divisions. Subsequently, escalations of professional, personal, political, and systemic organisational conflicts could result in the damaging of existing relationships and, in the long-run, organisational stability and efficiency (Afum, 2020).

Lack of harmonious cooperation and coordination within an organisation as a result of mistrust towards leadership, management, or existing plans and decisions leads to frustration, dereliction of duty, withdrawal, absenteeism, and lack of motivation. Poor work performance, ill-discipline and perpetual ignorance of duties and responsibilities have also been described as results of mistrust (Kwaeng, and Du Plessis, 2018). There is a perception, also confirmed in empirical studies, that widely spread mistrust can be eased by strict and thoroughly observed reliance on existing rules and regulations for higher productivity and better performance. Such a perception is founded on the confirmed belief (or reality) that when high levels of trust exist within an organisation, employees have higher degrees of job satisfaction, motivation, self-belief, discipline, and solid performance. In such a trust-driven organisational environment, the resolution of conflict is faster because of general agreements on key issues among the key elements of leadership, management, and employees (Belle, 2014).

Such a vision within a municipality would be the foundation of accountability, transparency, honesty, and high-performance levels leading to service delivery excellence, and the development of fresh professional identities and relationships committed to the principles of the NDP. The realities facing municipal employees in South Africa have been researched extensively at a number of levels, and there is no doubt that they are unique at most levels of their operational, functional, and systemic existence. This is because most of them are classified as ‘micro-environments’ in terms of human resources realities. The municipalities that can be classified as ‘mega environments’ (mainly found in the urban areas) are, to a large extent, more complicated at all levels not only because of their size but also the wider spectrum of interests created by the relationships between politicians and administrators, or politicians and the private sector service providers, among others. The diversification of service delivery targets is also a key issue of difference (Kravariti, and Johnston, 2020).

The foundation stone of trust building is employee participation summarised in the phrase ‘an employee must be given a voice’, pointing to collaboration, understanding, and trust building. This could become a reality through the opening of communication channels, regular strategy, tactics, monitoring, and evaluation meetings and socials. Such an approach is the opposite of the ‘top-down approach’. In municipalities, the latter approach is represented by the political leadership (Mayor, Speaker, and senior councillor) or the administrative sector (Municipal Manager, Chief Financial Officer, etc.). The most used types of ‘top-down communications’ include ‘leadership team briefings’, electronic communication with announcements and/or instructions when need arises, or employee surveys mainly associated with employee performance cards. When the obsession with outcomes overtakes the importance of communication, information sharing, and serious and honest engagement, trust tends to diminish (Scullion et al., 2017).

Existing power relations that have become a common feature in municipalities are rooted in a number of realities such as political or administrative battles over resources, monopoly of knowledge, and/or existing opportunities for corruption. These lead to a ‘professional distance’ between leaders, managers, and employees that generates mistrust as employees feel alienated from existing municipal realities, knowledge, opportunities, and decisions. All these are kept away from them in a situation where the leaders’ and managers’ authority cannot be challenged (Khan, 2018).

It is thus the leadership's decision and prerogative to take the initiative in providing employees with the opportunities to participate actively in decision-making, to have a clear picture and understanding of decisions made by leadership and management, and to see their own consultation and input on key issues regarding themselves and the communities they serve as their duty and responsibility (Khilji and Schuler, 2017). It is only when such an accountable, transparent, fair, and collegial process of decision-making is followed that trust is built through continuous commitment which finds its organisational manifestation in voluntary cooperation, coordination, and synergy that are guided by solid, fruitful, and creative performance (Chowdhury, 2018).

Employee performance is directly and indirectly related to an individual or group belief that leadership and senior management involve and value employee contribution to most, if not all, aspects of the organisation (Khoreva, Vaiman, and Van Zalk, 2017). Given the challenges facing human resources leaderships and practitioners throughout the organisational terrain in all societal sectors, the only organisational culture that guarantees solid and efficient employee performance is one characterised by active participation at all levels, continuous up-skilling and development, and collective support relations at all levels involving leadership, management, and all employees (Warnich et al., 2018). It is only such an environment where core organisational aspects can be discussed, agreed upon, and planned in terms of administrative, legal, regulatory, financial, budgetary requirements, risk management, and effective structures, systems, and processes (Martin, 2019).

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has accepted that trust cements a culture of inclusivity, fairness, and collegiality, and has, therefore, described fair labour practices, equal and participatory treatment, freedom of expression, association, and participation as the fundamental rights of employees and the foundation of common trust (Khoreva, 2017). This dissertation aspires to analyse the relationship between trust and organisational performance empirically within an organisation through the utilisation of a case study of a South African metropolitan municipality.

2.12.2. Management capacity

According to Ahmed (2016), another factor preventing effective service delivery is management capacity. This is the inadequate or irrelevant training of managers, including minimal usage of competency testing methods in the recruitment of managers and non-rotation of senior managers to ensure exposure to all facets of service delivery. Kroukamp (2008) further mentions unmatched staff to customer ratios, mismanagement of disciplinary issues, and a general lack of service commitment from officials as aspects of management capacity. In addition, information, referring to the quality, nature, availability, and accessibility of information provided in service delivery improvement plans, is generally poor, making it difficult to measure performance accurately. Finally, Kroukamp (2008) points out that there are misconceptions and a lack of knowledge regarding the regulatory framework of government that lead to cumbersome procedures, delays in turnaround time, and lengthy decision-making processes, all of which compromise the quality of services. According to Adero and Odiyo, (2020) the South African public service is characterised by three debilitating factors, namely the prevalence of corruption, the interference of politicians in administrative functions and a lack of appropriate skills and therefore a lack of commitment on the part of officials.

2.12.3. Performance of municipalities

There are great discrepancies between the municipalities across South Africa. In order to gain insight into which municipalities are performing well and which are performing poorly, one needs to read the AG report as well as reports from institutes such as the South African Institute of Race Relations (Auditor-General 2018/19; SAIRR 2018). The Auditor-General's (AG) report for the 2014-15 financial year indicates that provinces with the highest proportion of municipalities with clean audit opinions are the Western Cape (73%), Gauteng (33%), and KwaZulu-Natal (30%). The AG report further states that audit outcomes of municipalities in the Eastern Cape, Free State, and Mpumalanga are starting to show signs of improvement from many years of poor audit outcomes. Particularly solid improvements are reported in municipalities within the Joe Gqabi district in the Eastern Cape and Thabo Mofutsanyane District Municipality in the Free State.

The Auditor-General directed leadership in these municipalities to re-emphasise the benefits of good governance at all municipalities as a key mechanism to create a fertile environment for appropriate service delivery and to back this up with decisive action in setting the appropriate tone at the top levels, investing in the right skills and competencies for key positions and further continuing good record-keeping practices in all municipalities (Auditor-General 2018/19; SAIRR 2018).

According to the SAIRR (2016) the following indicators should be used to determine local government performance, unemployment rate, the proportion of people aged 20 and older who have passed grade 12, the poverty rate, the number of houses which are owned but not fully paid off, the proportion of households that use electricity for lighting, the proportion of households that have access to piped water inside the dwelling or yard, the proportion of households that do not have access to piped water within one kilometre of the household, the proportion of households that have their refuse removed by the local authority or a private company, the proportion of households that have a flush or chemical lavatory, and the number of households that have no lavatory. Each municipality should be given a score out of ten, zero being the worst score and ten being the best, which is in line with the balanced scorecard as proposed by SALGA (SAIRR, 2016)

2.12.4. Basis of problems facing municipalities

In its 2014/15 report on local government audits, the Auditor-General identified lack of capacity in local government due to vacancies in key positions as a root cause of poor audit results. Another issue identified was that the management of consultants continues to be “inadequate” (Auditor-General 2014/15). The National Development Plan (2014) identifies the need to professionalise the civil service and to attract highly skilled people that will be committed to a career in local government. There have been numerous reports detailing the problems facing local government. Although the problems are vast, three main systemic issues have been identified. These key problem areas are political appointments, lack of capacity, and lack of accountability (NDP, 2014).

2.12.4.1. Political appointments

The National Development Plan (NDP), in the chapter on local government admits that party-political intervention in decision-making and political appointments have caused turbulence

that has undermined the morale of public servants and citizens' confidence in the public institution and municipalities has not been spared in this situation. In part, the lack of true performance management originates with governing bodies that lack the political will to make the kinds of difficult decisions that are required to achieve substantial performance improvements in fields such as service delivery and, instead, redefine the issues as problems of mismanagement and inefficiency vowing to hold the respective bureaucracies responsible (Al Aina and Atan, 2020). Similarly, Baah et al., (2019) find that although there is improved decision making and performance is the most important purpose of measurement, elected officials are more likely to be interested in accountability and the symbolic value of requiring municipalities to report on their performance. Thus, while the performance management doctrine calls for allowing administrators greater discretion in managing municipal programmes in order to facilitate performance improvement, politicians have been reluctant to provide increased flexibility in financial controls in terms of resource allocation, procurement, and budget execution or human resource management in terms of hiring, performance appraisal, and compensation practices.

2.12.4.2. Lack of capacity

The lack of capacity or skills in local government affects the way local municipalities are run and therefore their ability to deliver on their mandate. The AG notes that “vacancies in key positions and key officials without the minimum competencies and skills continued to make it difficult to produce credible financial statements and performance reports” (Auditor-General 2014/15, p.15). A report by the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) in October 2012 estimated that the situation is most acute in rural and district municipalities. The inability to manage and maintain infrastructure has led to a decline in the condition of infrastructure and an increase in service delivery protests. Corruption, cadre deployment, skills shortages, and poor administration have all been blamed for poor local government performance (Baah et al., 2019)

2.12.4.3. Lack of accountability

The AG also identifies a lack of consequences as a reason for continued poor performance. The Public Protector identifies that lack of accountability and lapses in leadership are some of the causes of governance failure. The director-general in the Presidency for monitoring, has also stated that poor performance in the Government too often goes unpunished. Local government

can respond to the problems it faces only within the framework of its functions. This can limit the scope within which local government can address these problems. It is also true that the problems seen in local government are not unique to this level of government but can be found at the provincial and national levels too. Therefore, if the problems within local government are to be fixed, they must also be fixed at the provincial and national levels. Accordingly, lessons that can be drawn from the experience of the AG with regard to successful public institutions, can be applied to local, provincial, and national levels of government. One such lesson is that all successes are based on a leadership tone which shows a willingness to accept accountability, establishes a control environment that is conducive to accountability and sanctions, and decisively addresses weaknesses within a specified timeframe, as well as continual performance monitoring (Caligiuri and Dragoni, 2019)

2.13. TALENT PERFORMANCE

The ineffectiveness of service delivery by municipalities has resulted in the application of a performance management system to municipalities. The main purpose of introducing the performance management system is to improve service delivery (Atan et al., 2020). Municipalities are using performance management systems and the Balanced Scorecard to improve efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery as well as to reinforce accountability (Cascio et al, 2017). The latter is important since it makes sure municipalities are held accountable for the utilisation of municipal resources and the quality-of-service delivery they ultimately render (Clarke, and Scurry, 2020). Performance management involves the processes of planning, reviewing, rewarding, and developing performance (Collings, and McMackin, 2021). In other words, these processes are part of the bigger performance management process and are expected to be embedded in the human resource management function (Mol and Beers, 2005). Additionally, performance management is a process that ascertains whether employees are aware of an organisation's vision and mission statements in a way that enables them to comprehend their roles in the organisation, thereby improving the organisation's overall performance (Awamleh, 2013).

Flowing from the above definition, performance management consists of four key processes, namely, planning, reviewing (also called measurement in other performance management literature), rewarding, and developing performance (Cappelli, 2008). The planning process involves developing a mission statement and objectives, determining key performance areas,

formulating key performance indicators, and identifying critical success factors (Caligiuri et al., 2009). Carey, (2018) contends that performance measurement, which is another process of a performance management system, enables an organisation to make a proper evaluation of its progress in the attainment of its present goals. The performance measurement process also ensures the identification of an organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses. To implement the performance measurement effectively, organisations may have to utilise the Balanced Scorecard. The Balanced Scorecard is an evaluation technique that is used in measuring performance during the performance appraisal process (Chan, Ngo, and Teh, 2020). The Balanced Scorecard was developed to evaluate the performance of an organisation in terms of all essential performance measures and without an overemphasis of only one performance measure (Clarke et al., 2020).

Charles and Onouha, (2020) argue that “in order to make a performance management system successful, both the structure of the performance management system and the performance-driven behaviour of the organisation need to be of high quality. A method which can be used to assess whether this is the case is the performance management analysis. The performance management analysis looks at both the structural and the behavioural side of performance management (Collings et al., 2019). The structural side deals with structure which needs to be implemented to use performance management. It usually includes the critical success factors and key performance indicators of the Balanced Scorecard (Clarke et al., 2020). On the other hand, the behavioural dimension looks at how employees use a performance management system in an organisation. To have an effective performance management system or a performance-driven organisation, both dimensions - the structural and behavioural - of the performance management system should be accorded equal worth in the development and implementation of a performance management system (Caldwell and Peters 2018). In South Africa the government has promulgated the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 to give effect to performance management systems throughout municipalities. According to this Act, municipalities are expected to establish performance management systems relevant to their unique circumstances (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020).

2.14. MUNICIPAL STAFF REGULATIONS ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management and development system (PMDS) phases as required by the Municipal Staff Regulations (2021), indicate that performance management and development is the systematic process of:

- i. Planning work and setting expectations of the municipality by staff members or teams.
- ii. Continually monitoring performance of staff members or teams.
- iii. Developing the capacity of staff members or teams to perform optimally.
- iv. Periodically rating performance of staff members and teams; and
- v. Rewarding outstanding performance.

The performance management and development system of a municipality must consist of different phases relating to performance planning, coaching, review, and reward as provided in these guidelines. The performance management and development system must consist of the following phases:

2.14.1. Planning

According to the Municipal Staff Regulations (2021), the planning phase is required to include the following key activities:

- i. During the planning phase the supervisor and staff member must jointly identify organisational, departmental, as well as performance expectations of a staff member or team and secure the staff member or team's commitment to achieve the performance expectations.
- ii. The supervisor must explain to the staff member how the performance agreement and PMDS operate.
- iii. All staff members, including management, must be capacitated through training on what the process entails, why the municipality uses the PMDS process, how the PMDS works, including its phases, and the purpose of linkage with the competency framework.
- iv. The municipality must ensure that every supervisor has undergone training to acquire the relevant coaching skills needed for ongoing implementation of the PMDS.
- v. The supervisor and staff member must develop a performance agreement wherein the performance standards will be defined in terms of quality, quantity, time, and process.
- vi. Planned KPAs, KPIs, and targets as contained in the performance agreement must meet the SMART criteria; and
- vii. Job specific competencies can be selected from the relevant occupational streams as prescribed in the Local Government: Competency Framework attached to the Regulations.

2.14.2. Monitoring

Effective performance monitoring, coaching, and feedback must be engaged in continuously throughout the performance cycle. Performance monitoring, coaching, and feedback involve ongoing collaborative engagements between the supervisor and staff member, or team, aimed at improving a staff member's skills and competencies to meet or exceed the set standards of performance through.

- a) Observation, motivation, and encouragement.
- b) Frequent and infrequent exchanges of feedback about the staff member's performance.
- c) Regular evaluation of whether the staff member performs according to the set objectives as outlined in the performance agreement.
- d) Formal coaching and informal performance evaluation sessions.
- e) Reinforcing the discussions that took place during the planning phase culminating in the performance agreement.
- f) Affording the supervisor, the opportunity to encourage the development of the staff member or team.
- g) Proactive identification of challenges and solutions to enable achievement.
- h) Identification of accomplishments or challenges by the staff member or team that have been resolved, which otherwise may not have come to the supervisor's attention.
- i) Coaching that reinforces effective performance or brings the performance of the staff member closer to the expected standards; and
- j) A staff member or team who participates in several coaching sessions being aware of what is required of him or her to meet performance outcomes.

A municipality must ensure that every supervisor has received adequate training in performance coaching processes and is capable of effectively assessing progress and evaluating the performance of staff or team. Development needs of staff identified during performance monitoring and coaching processes must be evaluated and addressed to encourage good performance (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020).

2.14.3. The mid-year performance review

The mid-year performance review is a formal bi-annual performance appraisal where a staff member or a team is given feedback on his or her performance. The review must be recorded. It offers an opportunity for

- a) The supervisor and staff member to assess the staff member or team's performance against set performance objectives.
- b) The supervisor to monitor, coach, and provide feedback to ensure effective performance.
- c) The supervisor and staff member to identify performance challenges jointly and agree on solutions to overcome identified challenges.
- d) The supervisor and staff member to agree on developmental needs of the staff member and address such needs.
- e) The review of the performance targets resulting from workplace changes beyond the staff member or team's control; and
- f) The reinforcement of good performance.

If the review of the performance agreement is warranted, the Regulations and item two of these Guidelines apply. This means that the mid-year performance review will be based on the existing performance agreement. The amended performance agreement or addendum must be co-signed by the supervisor and staff member, and a record of the amendments must be kept for purposes of annual performance assessment (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020).

2.14.4. Annual performance evaluation

The objectives of the performance evaluation are to:

- a) Discuss the performance outcome achieved by the staff member against agreed performance indicators and targets based on the work performed during the performance cycle of 12 months.
- b) Rate the performance of a staff member or team against each measurable KPI using the five-point rating scale.
- c) Recognise positive achievements and provide feedback on unsatisfactory performance.
- d) Develop action plans to be included in personal development plans to address identified areas for improvement.

Every staff member or team must be subjected to an annual performance assessment at the end of the performance cycle of a municipality. The annual performance evaluation must be preceded by the staff member's self-rating against predetermined objectives, and, where necessary, supported by a portfolio of evidence (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020). Rating entails evaluating the staff member or team's performance against performance standards in a staff member's performance plan and assigning a numeric rating for each KPI.

The supervisor and staff member must formally and objectively:

- a) Confirm the staff member's performance outcomes against agreed KPAs, KPIs, and job specific competencies.
- b) Rate the performance of each staff member or team against each measurable KPI and job specific competencies using the 5-point rating scale.
- c) Recognise positive achievements.
- d) Identify deficient performance.
- e) Identify the staff member's developmental needs, which will inform the Personal Development Plan of the employee; and
- f) Sign the final annual performance assessment.

At the end of the performance cycle, a rating scale is used which has a bearing on rewarding and recognising performance goes beyond expectations. The supervisor must submit the final annual performance assessment, performance scores, and any related evidence supporting performance to Human Resources. Performance ratings for KPAs and competencies are calculated using the 5-point rating scale. KPA ratings are calculated where individual ratings have been assigned to each KPI using the five-point rating scale. No rounding of calculations is allowed, and two decimal points must be used.

2.15. STAFF REGULATIONS ON TEAM BASED PERFORMANCE

A supervisor working in collaboration with individual team members must rate the performance of a staff member working within a team-based performance arrangement and identify challenges relating to individual staff member(s) working within a team as well as appropriate interventions aimed at improving the staff member's performance (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020).

2.15.1. Guideline performance evidence

- i. During the planning phase, the submission of evidence is subject to the agreement on what evidence is to be used with the aim of minimising time and effort, and the evidence gathered during the performance cycle as this will inform and substantiate the scores according to the rating scale.
- ii. The staff member or team must gather, collate, and present evidence against the measurable KPIs and, where applicable, job specific competencies as contained in the performance agreement. It is particularly important to ensure that evidence is gathered during the performance cycle in preparation for the mid-year performance review and annual performance evaluation, as it will be used to substantiate scores related to achievement of KPIs and job specific competencies. The ultimate accountability for the submission of the portfolio of evidence rests with the staff member or team being evaluated.
- iii. The nature of work must determine the type of evidence that should be provided. This may, inter alia, include official records, confirmation by a supervisor, confirmation by other stakeholders such as letter from a government department, and inspection or viewing of evidence by a supervisor such as filing system, memorandums, reports, etc.

2.15.2. Performance moderation committee

The Municipal Systems Amendment Act 3 of 2022 requires that a Municipal Performance Moderation Committee be duly constituted by the municipal council, and must, to the extent possible, be constituted as follows:

- a) Municipal manager or his or her delegate who will act as the chairperson.
- b) All heads of departments of a municipality.
- c) Manager responsible for PMDS.
- d) Manager responsible for organisational development.
- e) Manager responsible for organisational performance.
- f) A representative from finance, where applicable.
- g) A representative from governance, where applicable; and
- h) A representative from audit, where applicable.

Departmental representatives who are invited to attend the performance moderation committee to present on the results of their respective departments must be on a senior management level and may request a specialist on the departmental performance management to provide technical advice where needed. Members should collectively possess the necessary expertise and must

demonstrate knowledge and competencies in local government, municipal human resource environment, corporate governance practices, corporate strategy, performance management and development system, human capital management, organisational development, financial management, business management, operations management, and leadership.

The main objectives of the committee are to ensure that the application of the PMDS is fair and consistent, the integrity of the PMDS is protected, performance is evaluated consistently, and individual ratings reflect the overall performance of the department, as well as advise on financial affordability for the municipality, and recommend performance rewards to the municipal manager for approval. The committee may develop and approve the terms of reference, review the performance management and development system across the municipality, and make recommendations regarding implementation.

It may also monitor the performance evaluation process by obtaining an overall sense of whether norms and standards are being applied realistically and consistently both horizontally and vertically across the municipality, determine the overall performance of departments and align this with summary results based on individual performance, moderate scores of a department(s) or a unit, recommend reward levels for performance, make recommendations regarding actions to be considered where supervisors do not implement the system properly, and ensure that the minutes and supporting information on matters dealt with by the panel, are available for examination upon authorisation by the municipal manager (Municipal Systems Amendment Act 3 of 2022).

2.16. STAFF REGULATIONS ON MANAGING POOR PERFORMANCE

These procedures are intended to create an enabling environment to facilitate effective performance by the staff members, provide the staff members with access to skills development and capacity building opportunities to promote efficient and effective performance, and provide remedial and developmental support to assist the staff members to deal with substandard performance. The Code of Good Practice provided for in Schedule 8 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995, constitutes part of these procedures, in respect of poor work performance (Municipal Systems Act 3 of 2022). The municipality must evaluate a staff member's performance by considering the extent to which the substandard performance impacts on the work of the municipality and the achievement of municipal goals, the extent to which the staff member fails to meet the required performance standards set by the municipality, the extent to which the staff member lacks the necessary skills, competencies, and expertise to meet the

performance objectives and targets for his or her post as contained in the performance agreement, and the nature of the staff member's work and responsibilities (Municipal Systems Amendment Act 3 of 2022).

2.17. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUBSTANDARD PERFORMANCE

The Municipal Systems Amendment Act 3 of 2022 indicates that if the municipality has reason to believe that a staff member is not performing in accordance with the minimum performance standards of his or her post, the supervisor must:

- a) Convene a meeting to give feedback to the staff member on his or her performance.
- b) Furnish the staff member with reasons why it is necessary to initiate this procedure.
- c) During the meeting convened in paragraph, the supervisor must.
 - i. Explain the requirements, level, skills, and nature of the post.
 - ii. Evaluate the staff member's performance in relation to the performance agreement.
 - iii. Explain the reasons why the performance is considered substandard; and
 - iv. Afford the staff member or his or her representative an opportunity to respond to the performance outcomes referred to in paragraph (ii).

After considering the staff member's reasons, the supervisor may, if necessary, initiate a formal programme of counselling and training to enable the staff member to meet the required standard of performance. This must include assessing the time it will take for the staff member to deal with substandard performance, establishing realistic timeframes within which the staff member is expected to meet the required performance standards, and identifying and providing appropriate training for the staff member to reach the required standard of performance (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020).

If the staff member fails to meet the required performance standard for the post after being subjected to a formal programme of counselling and training the supervisor must establish ways to address any factors that may affect the staff member's performance that lie beyond the staff member's control, and may regularly evaluate the staff member's performance, or provide further remedial or developmental support to assist the staff member to eliminate substandard performance (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020). If the staff member's performance does not improve after he or she has received appropriate performance counselling, the

necessary support, and reasonable time to improve his or her performance, or he or she refuses to follow a formal programme of counselling and training, the supervisor must bring the allegations of substandard performance against the staff member to the attention of the municipal manager and dismiss the employee if there is no improvement (Municipal Systems Staff Regulations, 2020).

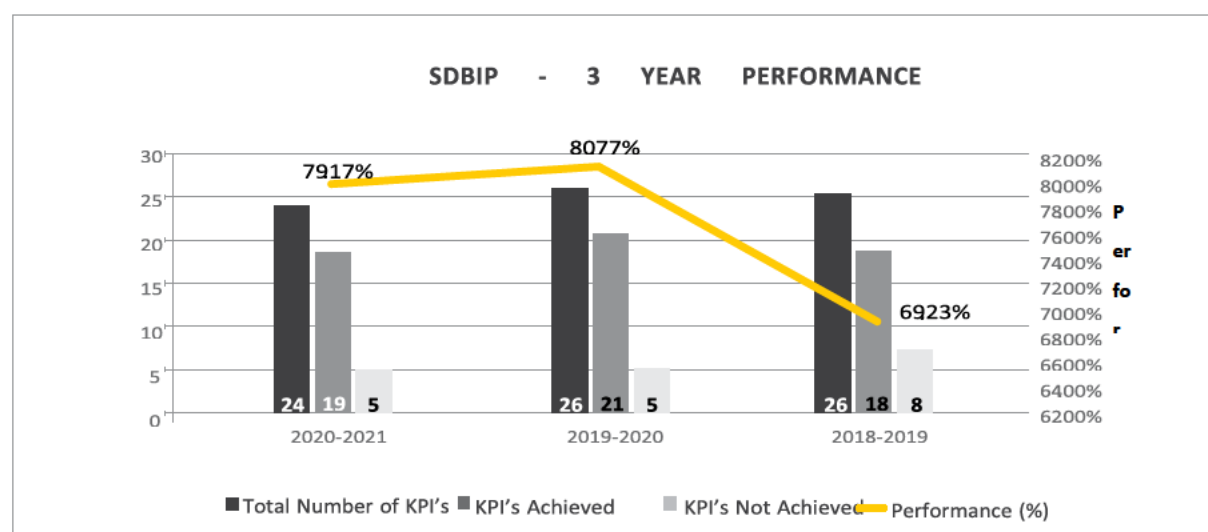
2.18. HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT CLUSTER

The Human Settlements, Engineering and Transport (HSET) Cluster is made up of three Units: Human Settlements Unit, Engineering Unit, and Transport Authority Unit. The Cluster has an overall Capital budget of R2.4 billion, and a staff complement of approximately 2 800 staff. Today, 56.2 percent of the global population resides in cities.

2.18.1. 2020/21 Summary of cluster performance per unit

The HSET Cluster is entrusted with the mandate to ensure access to housing, implementation of sustainable transportation systems, and the provision of engineering infrastructure, primarily roads, stormwater, coastal and catchment management, and architectural building services. The key achievements of each of the units are outlined in more detail in the sections below include the following highlights: the launch of the Forecast Early Warning System (FEWS), the Amawoti Library, the Verulam Fire Station, the launch of various housing projects in Lamontville and Isipingo, and the Springfield City Fleet Depot (eThekweni Municipality Annual Report, 2020/2021).

Figure 2.1: SDBIP 3 Year Performance



Source: eThekweni Municipality Annual Report, 2020/2021

Table 2.1: HSET Cluster challenges and mitigations

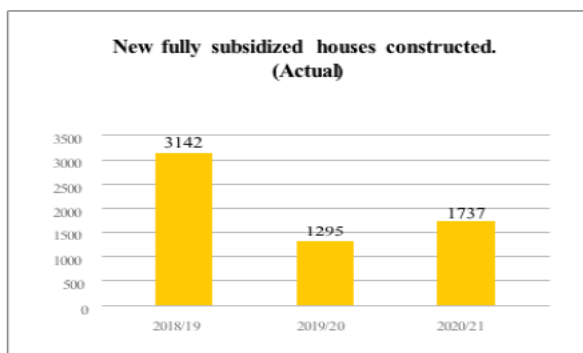
CHALLENGES	MITIGATIONS
Transport Unit GO Live of C3 Human Settlements Unit Work stoppage and Covid related delays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key negotiation initiatives commenced and intervention by City Leadership was affected. • Established integrated high-level technical capacitation for the associations to enable negotiation processes. • Sustained communications and explored various empowerment initiatives with the affected operators. • Implemented the RET Strategy. • Established the social facilitation programme during the project's lifetime. • Accelerated efforts to implement projects and spend on allocated budgets.
Engineering Unit Ageing & inadequate infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and used the Roads Asset Management Plan informed by bi-annual conditional assessments of entire paved road network in eThekweni and the informed Comprehensive Conditional Assessments for non-road related infrastructure. • Developed building asset registers. • Implemented electronic reporting systems for maintenance works. • Used conditional assessment of council building assets. • Budgeted and planned for proactive maintenance.

2.18.2. Human settlements unit performance

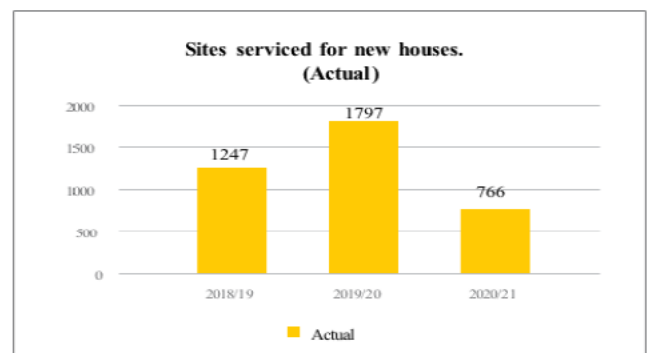
COVID-19 affected the delivery of new houses and serviced sites in 2020/2021. The country went through various stages of lockdown. Safety regulations on construction sites limited the number of workers on-site at any one time. Nevertheless, the demolition and rebuilding of 578 houses irreparably damaged during the storm disasters of 2017 have been completed. Work on

Figure 2.2: Human Settlement Services

Graph 8: New fully subsidized houses constructed 3-year trend.



Graph 9: Sites serviced for new houses 3-year trend.



the remaining 715 houses continues, with alternative sites having been found for those whose houses are unsuitable for rebuilding.

Source: eThekweni Municipality Annual report 2020/2021

2.18.3. Engineering unit performance

The Roads Provision Department has been affected by delays in the procurement process. The statistics depicted in the table below relate to the upgrading of gravel roads in the former township areas. The estimated cost of providing these upgrades is R8.5 million/km. The upgrading of gravel roads is desirable to improve the transportation level of service for communities.

Table 2.2: Total Gravel Roads

Year	Total gravel roads (in former township areas) (km)	Gravel roads upgraded to surfaced (km) (High Volume Roads)
2018/19	260.72	10.72
2019/20	250	7.02
2020/21	243	14.24

Source: eThekweni Municipality Annual Report, (2020/2021)

Asphalted roads provide a durable, low maintenance surface with improved traffic safety and lower user costs. The improved access and mobility facilitate the movement of vehicles providing emergency and health care services, solid waste removal, safety and security, transportation of the elderly and people with disability, all of which serve to provide social upliftment for the community. The table below shows the upgrading of surfaced roads in the municipality.

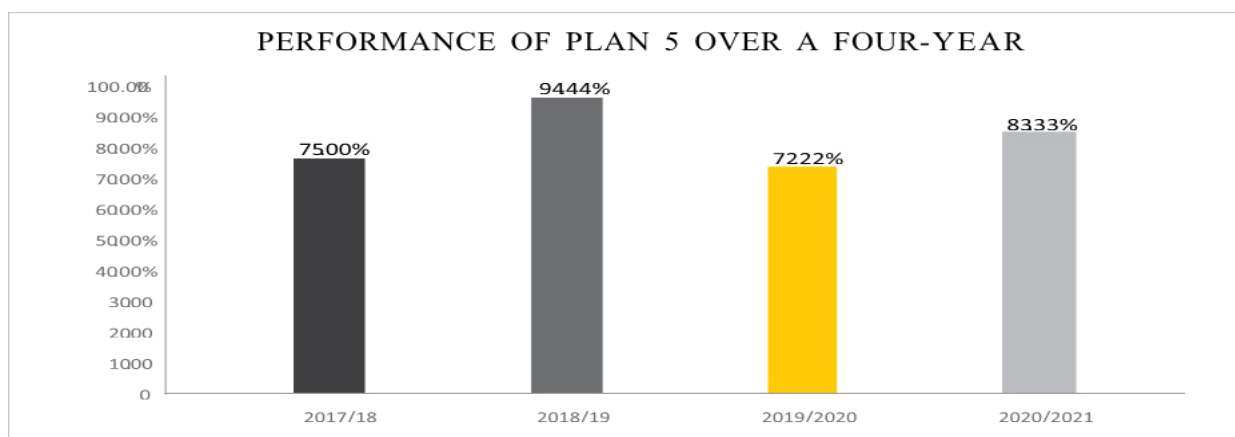
Table 2.3: Total Surfaced Roads

Year	Total Surfaced Roads (km)	Existing surfaced roads rehabilitated (lane km)
2018/19	6 988	340
2019/20	7 019	99.3
2020/21	7 059	163

Source: eThekweni Municipality Annual Report, 2020/2021

The preventative maintenance programme is a planned strategy of cost-effective treatments to an existing roadway system that preserves the system, retards future deterioration, and maintains or improves the functional condition of the system. The implementation of Incremental Services in the 2020/21 financial year for road access, footpaths, and stormwater control targeted 11636 households in informal settlements across the entire Municipal area to the value of R67 million, on behalf of the Human Settlements Unit. Due to Covid-19, SCM delays, and budget cuts, many projects were impacted, and this resulted in only 9939 households being serviced by the end of June 2021.

Figure 2.3: Performance of Plan 5 over a four-year period



Source: eThekweni Municipality Annual Report, 2020/2021

2.18.4. Organisational performance

The Department of Public Service and Administration Report (2021) argues that “there are many contributing factors to current service delivery challenges in South Africa particularly in the public sector”. Given the challenging service delivery environment, and, in so far as employees generally have little to no control over changes in service delivery and the manner in which challenges are met, employees may become disengaged.

Drawing on this realisation, the present research seeks to identify and evaluate factors related to employee engagement in the selected government department, to improve service delivery through employee valorisation, and countering the perceived poor levels of employee engagement. In this, South Africa is not an exception, and poor employee engagement is a cause for concern for most organisations. According to Farouk (2016), the “public sector should change the focus and start appointing relevant employees from the recruitment stage that possess public sector values by using Batho Pele principles as a tool for selection and

recruitment of employee. Batho Pele principles “are consistent with the constitutional values of nurturing and upholding high standards of professional ethics effectively and proficiently for utilising resources, responding to people’s needs and holding public administration accountable (Atan, 2020).

The view is that when appointing employees who already understand and share public service values, engagement will come more naturally to these employees. The public sector should also explore other ways to ensure that employees understand and connect with their organisational goals and objectives by clearly communicating service expectations and strategic goals to be achieved. The Gallup (2013) State of the Global Workplace Report, in categorising employees across all sectors according to three different levels of engagement (engaged, non-engaged, and actively disengaged) underlines the importance of both recruitment and of continued monitoring of employee engagement. By recruiting engaged employees, the problem of employee engagement is forestalled, while the identification of employees or groups of employees who have become, or are in the process of becoming, disengaged may allow palliative measures to be timeously taken, avoiding a situation of active disengagement. These measures may include positive extrinsic measures such as improved remuneration, or non-monetary incentives such as promotion, as well as intrinsic measures related to the prosocial aspect of public service work and psychological factors which may include efforts to improve the framing of information, and to move beyond a deleterious status quo that negatively impacts employee engagement (Ahmed, 2016).

Literature furthermore suggests that, beyond the inherent engagement of employees, the work environment itself contains certain specific elements that may help motivate employees in both a positive and negative sense. These factors are key to the organisation in so far as the work environment plays a constant underlying role in overall employee engagement. Baah and Jin, (2019) considers employee welfare, empowerment, growth, and interpersonal relationships the key drivers of employee engagement, whereas, for Bedarkar et al., (2014) important drivers of employee engagement include leadership, teamwork, training and development, compensation, organisational policies, and workplace well-being. This is echoed by Bedarkar and Pandita (2014) who claim that leadership, communication, and work-life balance are key contributing factors to overall employee engagement. While, as Sundaray (2011) suggests, factors that influence employee engagement differ significantly from one organisation to another, there are nevertheless common factors that, regardless of the sector, influence overall employee

engagement. Bedarkar and Pandita (2014) and Sundaray (2011) corroborate Mani's (2011) findings listing recruitment, job design, career development opportunities, leadership, empowerment, equal opportunities and fair treatment, performance management, compensation benefits, health and safety, job satisfaction, communication, and work life balance as significant factors bearing on employee engagement. In so far as employee engagement levels can be improved by the application of certain measures, organisations may adopt various different strategies that are appropriate to their specific needs, building on the aforementioned factors to improve employee engagement. The following measures have been identified as avenues which may improve employee engagement on an organisational level: learning, development, and training, assessment, and recognition, and building confidence and trust. On an international level, the public sector experiences dynamic issues in relation to the specific culture and engagement required by public service (Anitha, 2014).

The solution to public sector challenges lies in engaging public sector employees; this is supported by studies undertaken regarding Australian public sector employees that reflect the need for psychological connection and individual satisfaction at work. Consequently, as the South African public sector strives to provide efficient and effective services to citizens through the continuous transformation of the entire public sector and through the improvement of human resource management, by better equipping employees to deal with the demands and pressures of their jobs, a parallel can be drawn to one of the key issues facing industry in the highly competitive, winner takes all, international business environment (Cappelli, 2008). The importance of employee engagement is this parallel, and it has come to be seen as critical to the ongoing success of an organisation in so far as it can assist in addressing lacklustre service and unnecessary wait times by increasing overall productivity through better employee engagement. That is to say that, from a public service standpoint, employee engagement elements are critical; engagement is required and expected of a public servant to provide efficient and effective service (Charles and Onouha, 2020). The amelioration of employee demotivation and disengagement improves service delivery more generally. Thus, public organisations require energetic employees who serve with passion and pride and, therefore, need to be physically and mentally engaged (Carey, 2018). Indeed, research has shown that employee engagement has a direct impact on service delivery and client satisfaction because of the emotional state of mind of the employees providing the service (Charles, and Onouha, 2020).

As part of public sector transformation goals and national development goals, employee engagement in the public sector remains a key strategic issue that can assist in changing the face and future of public sector performance. To this end, Eldor and Vigoda-Gadot (2013) suggest that the public service should implement strategies to obtain improved results specifically in relation to employees' key engagement areas and to enhance service delivery. The proposed strategies that can assist organisations in improving service delivery are employee engagement as a selection criterion, the promotion of the social significance of the job, as well as the promotion of engagement through leadership. This can help counter what Bakker and Demerouti (2008) describe as disengaged employees who are "physically showing their unhappiness in the organisation. Disengaged employees have no emotional connection to their job responsibilities and are not ashamed to make their dissatisfaction known. Ahmed, (2016) argues that "disengaged employees are not interested in providing new ideas regarding the organisation, they are busy with their own agenda against the organisation objectives". It is therefore critical that organisations identify early symptoms of employee disengagement and take ameliorative measures to counter the problem at an early stage, as emphasised by Markos and Sridevi (2010). They suggest both pre-emptive measures and early intervention as among the best strategies for countering employee disengagement (Baumruk, 2004).

2.19. THE CONCEPT OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

Rothwell (2010) defines succession planning as a "deliberate and systematic effort by an organization to ensure leadership continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement". Furthermore Farashah et al. (2011) agree that succession planning is a purposeful and systematic effort by an organization to ensure leadership stability in key positions, to retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and to encourage employee development. According to Kim (2012), succession planning is "the deliberate use of mentoring, coaching and grooming of employees inside the organization identified as having the potential to advance when vacancies occur at senior executive level". Furthermore Galbraith, Smith, and Walker (2012) state that succession planning describes the selection and training of internal employees for key leadership positions.

2.19.1. Empirical review

Succession planning has been used as a tool for employee and organisation development despite its lack of effectiveness in strategic plans. Kariuki and Ochiri (2017) define strategic planning as a process of developing a vision, mission, and the objectives of an organisation. Succession planning communicates the organisation's goals and actions needed to achieve those goals (Matini, Gesimba and Mwangi, 2019). According to Adewale, Abolaji and Kolade (2011), human resources play vital functions in an organisation and there is a need to employ strategic human development concepts to achieve organisational goals and objectives. Thus, strategic human development concepts such as talent attraction, talent retention, career management, and training and development influence the performance of organisations through succession planning (Wang'ombe and Kagiri, 2013). Despite the fact that succession planning is one of the most significant human resource management responsibilities within today's organisations (Mwemezi, 2011), succession planning is not often used by human resources managers in the local government authority.

2.19.2. Succession planning in government.

The concept of succession planning has long been the subject of study in the private sector, but not in the public sector. Nevertheless, it is increasingly discussed in the public sector, and the dangers of not having a succession planning mechanism in place are becoming apparent. Singh (2012) points out that succession planning is a subject of concern for managers worldwide as organisations face problems in filling critical positions where they need employees with a specific set of skills along with experience. According to Ahmadi et al., (2012), succession planning is "a strategic process that reduces leadership or management gaps and gives opportunities for top talent to develop skills necessary for future roles". The absence of succession planning can hold back an organisation as the demand for both the quantity and quality of talented employees grows worldwide (Farashah, Nasehifar and Karahrudi, 2011). Although promotion is not always assured, succession planning ensures a consistent supply of well-trained, experienced, and motivated employees who are ready to step in and assume the roles necessary for business continuity. Furthermore, Perrenoud (2012) states that the shift in management is a serious point in the existence of an organisation. Thus, succession planning is critical as it provides methods of retaining and developing individuals while transferring institutional knowledge (Rothwell, 2010). If little emphasis is placed on the importance of grooming successors, it will not be surprising to find distressing uncertainty and detachment

towards assuming leadership roles among young employees in an organisation (Shamsuddin et al., 2012). The best source of competitive advantage of an organisation depends on its staff, as capable and talented employees represent a distinct and unique resource since they cannot be imitated by competitors (Beheshtifar and Moghadam, 2011).

2.19.2.1. Leadership

Transformational leadership forms part of a new leadership paradigm, and it fits the needs of today's work group, who wants to be inspired and empowered to succeed in times of uncertainties (Northouse, 2010). According to McLaggan, Bezuidenhout and Botha (2013), transformational leadership is effective in developing leaders, and is linked to the outcomes that most organisations, employees, and leaders value. Transformational leadership theory fits into succession planning (Hart, 2011).

By having leaders who possess the characteristics of transformational leadership, namely idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration (Bass, 1997), the organisation could see greater engagement in the process and the success of the succession planning programme over time (Hart, 2011). The transition between leaders can be a particularly difficult time for any organisation. Sometimes this need for change is recognised and initiated by the organisation's Board of Directors and other times it is initiated by the leaders (Worth, 2017).

Having a succession plan is important for when a change in leadership is initiated by the board, but it is imperative in the case of the sudden departure of an executive. There can be many different reasons for the sudden departure of a leader. An executive may have received an offer from another organisation, felt they had completed everything they set out to do, or fallen ill and can no longer complete the duties required of them (Worth, 2017). These sudden changes are tough on any organisation but can be particularly difficult on non-profit organisations which typically do not have the financial capacity to retain people on staff that can step in when an executive resigns abruptly.

Many for-profit organisations' leaders rise from within the organisation (Dowell et al., 2009). Thus, they understand the company culture, know the business and its values, and have seen the organisation grow. They know what has worked and what has not and have a sense of direction for the organisation. This carries the real risk of picking the wrong person and

potentially compromising the effectiveness and stability of the organisation (Jackson, 2014). The first component of a succession plan would be identifying the key positions surrounding the succession plan and any possible internal candidates who can fill these positions. Without first identifying what positions need to be planned for, it is impossible for an organisation to know on which areas to focus (Tolman, 2016).

Understanding which positions are critical and require a succession plan, makes it easier to identify what these positions entail and which of them can be fulfilled internally. There may be more than one employee who can fulfil this requirement. With a succession plan laid out, it will be easier to identify these individuals as time goes on (Buttiens et al., 2017). A succession plan is needed for the executive position in particular to ensure a smooth transition of leadership by identifying potential internal candidates with the necessary qualities for the position and developing them to be able to fulfil it (Rastgoo, 2016). The potential candidates must be not only qualified to fill the role of a leader, but also competent to rise to the task at hand. By definition, a competency is a group of related skills, abilities, and knowledge that enables a person to act effectively in a situation (Worth, 2017). These competencies go much further than simply listing job requirements. They require identifying how job requirements would be applied to actual situations within the organisation. These competencies should ultimately be supportive of the organisation's mission. The final component of the succession plan is to be constantly assessing the plan's progress and modifying the succession plan as needed. This component of the succession plan is, arguably, the most important aspect (Rop, 2015).

By ensuring that the plan is up to date, organisations will minimise the risk of picking a successor to the CEO based on competencies that no longer support the organisation and its mission. Succession planning in the non-profit sector holds tremendous value. By having a succession plan in place, a non-profit organisation stabilises itself for the future ensuring that those supported by its actions will continue to be. Transition is difficult for any organisation (Rastgoo, 2016), but succession planning minimises the disruption to the organisation during this process.

2.19.2.2. Succession planning and leadership sustainability

Despite the evolution of sustainability management in many organisations i.e., local government, there is lack of clear framework among managers on how to integrate sustainability into management practices (Zeemering, 2018). Francis and Armstrong (2003)

contend that embedding sustainability in an organisation contributes to stakeholders' quality of life, increases profit, and ensures a healthy working environment. Therefore, there is a need to integrate sustainability into the succession planning process in organisations (Gordon and Overbey, 2018).

Organisations need to take a holistic view of their talent management programs. It is no longer sufficient to look only at the top leadership. High potentials need to be identified early and customised plans put in place to ensure that their development is aligned with the organisation's strategy (Newhall, 2015). Generally, succession planning is a fundamental structure that considers the organisation's resources for the protection and development of high potential employees. Webb et al. (2017) conclude that succession planning is a crucial employee professional development component that directly increases individual performance. Thus, it ensures the sustainability of leadership and management in many organisations including local government authorities in, for example, Tanzania. Knowledge Gap Reviewed empirical studies reveal a lack of knowledge of and skills in succession planning among employees in many organisations. The few with knowledge of succession planning, have limited involvement in management practices (Massalu et al., 2022; Murimi and Munjuri, 2018). In general, organisations are failing to reach goals and objectives which support their mission and vision (Bhuvana and Sasikumar, 2022; Muhoho, 2014).

Reviewed literature reveals that succession planning efforts and strategies are underdeveloped, unevenly executed, unfairly implemented, and sometimes simply ignored negatively impacting the performance of the organisation (Massalu et al., 2022; Tetteh, 2015). Although many studies have been undertaken in succession planning (Massalu et al., 2022; Murimi and Munjuri 2018; Ngabo, 2014; Nyika, 2019; Odgers, 2020; Ruben et al., 2018; Willium, 2017), effectiveness in achieving sustainable leadership and management is less studied, particularly in local government authorities. This study addresses this lack of research as it focusses on the public sector, particularly the local government authority, where succession planning has not been effectively implemented despite its availability in the municipal strategic plans.

2.19.2.3. Employees' perception of succession planning

According to Weisblat (2018), succession planning is a relatively new concept in government, non-profit organisations, and education institutions. However, it has been commonly adopted

and practiced in family businesses (Massalu et al., 2022; Salau and Nurudeen, 2022). According to Stuner (2012), where commonly practiced, succession has been dedicated to executive officers and focussed on business cycles rather than the behaviour side of succession strategy. This means that, as Kouzes and Posner (2017) argue, succession planning needs to be extended to involve employees of all levels and backgrounds for successful career transition and sustainable leadership. Since sustainable leadership is not part of many organisations' cultures, the succession concept needs to be integrated into training and leadership activities (Bottomley, 2018).

This calls for organisations to develop specific strategies and tactics to address issues of staff training, leadership development, and succession planning needs within an organisation for their effectiveness. Succession planning needs to involve identifying critical management positions, starting at the levels of project manager and supervisor, and extending up to the highest position in the organization (Rothwell, 2015). Research supports the efficacy of succession planning in enhancing organisational performance. For example, Avanesh (2011) findings show a positive relationship between the practice of succession planning and organisational performance. Similarly, Kamande and Gachunga, (2014) reveal that human resource plans, employee resourcing, career planning, and human resource development influences organisational performance and productivity.

Furthermore, Fulmer and Conger (2004) assert that an effective succession planning system can help talented people to climb the ladder faster and more appropriately. Thus, it is important to understand that the main factor which influences succession planning is the role of human resource development such as organisational development, career development, and the development of potential successors as a strategy for effective succession. The general framework for succession planning in an organisation involves identifying key open positions through information such as current and future strategic goals and objectives, retirement forecasts, turnover rates, current and expected vacancies, and changes to existing programmes and services (Sukayri, 2016).

In addition, competencies related to jobs in the organisation and potential candidates need to be identified. Furthermore, identified candidates need learning and development to acquire required knowledge, skills, and competencies. Santora et al. (2015) argue that poor succession planning has negative impacts on the sustainability of organisations. Thus, a comprehensive

succession planning framework is imperative for effective succession that ensures the success and sustainability of an organisation. Effective succession planning and its implementation requires training, management supports, clarifying career paths, creating positive visions, technology advancement, flat structure, and financial capacity (Mehrabani and Mohamad, 2021). It has been observed by Satora (2015), that in many organisations executives and top managers are not committed to succession planning and are against the implementation of the system. In such a context, employees do not support the activities of the plan which result in ineffective implementation (Santora et al., 2015).

Thus, for effective implementation of succession planning, an adequate human resources information system is needed with an appropriate organisational structure for promotion as well as training, coaching, and mentorship programmes in the organisation (Ahmad and Keerio, 2020; Nyambita 2021). Kouzes and Posner (2017) suggest that effective succession planning should be integrated into the overall strategy of an organisation and should be part of its culture. In this way, a good succession plan can be structured and formalised. Furthermore, succession plans should be simple, and easy to communicate and implement with accountability (Weisblat, 2018).

Since employee perceptions are foundational to the development and evaluation of organisational policies, procedures, and programmes (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2015; Jiang et al., 2017), it is detrimental to succession planning that most employees perceive a lack of seriousness in many organisations in regard to the practice of succession planning (Kariuki and Ochiri, 2017). Additionally, scholars contend that employees perceive an unprofessionalism in the process of succession planning, lack of involvement of all key stakeholders, micromanagement of successors, and a lack of seriousness in the implementation of the process (Murimi and Munjuri 2018; Rothwell, 2010; Theus, 2019). In regard to the extent of sustainability in leadership and management, there is diverse opinion of succession planning and management among employees and managers. According to Bhuvana and Sasikumar, (2022), many employees believe that the future service needs in organisations are not well assessed, causing organisations to fail to reach their goals and objectives which support the mission and vision of an organisation.

As a result of the extreme visibility of critical positions for succession in departments and units, non-critical positions are often considered with a lower level of technical proficiency and competencies. Furthermore, gap analysis is not well done for the competencies in each position. The selection of critical positions is done by the executive management team instead of the head of the department and administrative management. Additionally, in many organisations, recruitment and job descriptions are found not to reflect the strategic plan and training for employees, and managers, if any, are not well trained (Jackson and Allen, 2022; Owolabi and Adeosun, 2021; Tunje, 2014). As a result, most managers are not contributing to the strategic plan. This has implications for present and future individual performance in an organisation. According to Richards (2017) successful organisations do not recruit leaders, rather they grow their own. For sustainable leadership, executive leaders need to support managers in attracting and retaining talents, promoting future leaders, and fostering diverse succession policies (Rothwell, 2015). Therefore, sustainable leadership is an interdisciplinary approach to accomplish succession planning. Sustainable leadership advocates for the importance of both individual and leader development which should be embedded throughout an organisation (Lambert, 2011). Although there is growing scholarly work on sustainability studies which include principles, policies, and stakeholder participation in decision making in organisations (Moslehpour et al., 2018), less research has been done on the implementation and management of succession planning, particularly stakeholders' participation in this (Wang et al., 2012).

2.20. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is an employee's level of commitment to and involvement in an organisation. Schaufeli (2013) states that in business, engagement is a blend of job satisfaction, being committed to the organisation, and extra-role behaviour in that an employee is willing to go beyond what is in his or her job description. An employee that is engaged will go the extra mile without being coaxed, believes in the values and vision of the organisation, and wants to contribute to its success. Engaged employees are part of the solution and step up to the plate to deliver business results (Gordon and Overbey, 2018).

Kahn (1990, p. 694) introduces the concept of employee engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances". According to Lockwood (2007), there are different levels of engagement which organisations must be cognisant of, which could either positively or negatively impact organisational performance.

The first level of engagement includes the ‘engaged employee’ who is passionate about his or her job, feels connected to the organisation, and drives superior performance. The second level of engagement is the ‘not engaged employee’ who is there to earn a living; he or she has no interest or passion for his or her work. The last level of engagement describes the ‘actively disengaged employee’ who is unhappy and shows it, undermining the achievements of engaged employees. As a leader, being able to recognise the level of an employee’s engagement is important in managing employees. Employee engagement is regarded as cognitive, emotional, or behavioural (Khan, 1990). What an employee believes about the workplace culture, its managers, and the organisation is referred to as cognitive engagement. How employees feel about the organisation, management, and fellow co-workers is referred to as emotional engagement (Lockwood, 2007).

2.20.1. The benefits of employee engagement

Robertson-Smith and Markwick (2009) maintain that engaged employees perform 20 percent better than their co-workers because they immerse themselves fully in their work. Talented, engaged people who are aligned to the business strategy and feel connected to the organisation are more likely to stay with the organisation, thus reducing employee turnover and ensuring business continuity. Employees who are engaged positively influence their fellow workers, thus improving not only individual performance but also team performance. This has a roller-coaster effect on the organisation. High-performing teams hold themselves accountable for performance, which delivers business results. A similar view was shared by Lockwood (2007), who affirms that business success is determined by the levels of engagement within an organisation. An increase in the levels of employee engagement helps in the retention of talent, increases stakeholder value, improves the loyalty of customers, and subsequently improves organisational performance.

2.20.2. Drivers of employee engagement

According to Robertson-Smith and Markwick (2009), a ‘onesize-fits-all approach’ will not deliver the desired benefits of employee engagement because the levels of engagement and drivers of engagement are not the same. They identified several key drivers of employee engagement, which include the following:

- a) Nature of work: the kind of work an employee has or is expected to do greatly influences how engaged he or she is. Employees want work that is exciting, uses their skills and capabilities, and challenges them. They want to know that the work they do adds value and is important to them and others.
- b) Work that has purpose and meaning employees want to feel as if they are making a difference; they want to feel proud of their organisation, what it does, and their own work.
- c) Opportunities for development and improvement: employees want to develop their skills and grow in their careers. Managers and organisations must encourage employee development through regular feedback discussions. Engaged employees feel empowered and when they are confident in their ability and their job, they perform at their best.
- d) Reward and recognition: employees want to be recognised; they want to feel appreciated and valued.
- e) Relationships that are effective: maintaining good and productive relationships with peers and managers is important. It must be a trusted relationship where there is mutual respect and open dialogue. Managers can show trust in employees by allowing greater autonomy. The organisation must support a culture of trust.
- f) Two-way communication: employees must be consulted in decision-making and allowed to have a voice; and
- g) Inspiring leadership: managers must adopt a collaborative approach; they must act with integrity and inspire employees.

The drivers identified above by Robertson-Smith and Markwick (2009) as being key to performance management are supported by a study conducted in 2006 in Singapore by the Gallup Group. This study concludes that the key employee desires forming the basis of engagement include the desire to know what is expected from them and the desire for the necessary tools to perform their jobs. Employees also want to use their skills and talents and they want recognition. The study found that it was important for employees to feel valued. Feedback on their performance is also important, and they want opportunities to learn as well as good relationships with their co-workers (Gopal, 2006). Employees are considered the heart of any organisation due to their important role in the implementation of an organisation's strategies and policies, in addition to the impact of their integrated capabilities, skills, and creativity on the achievement of organisational goals (Ajaz, 2014). Therefore, organisations

must make the right strategic decisions in accordance with the appropriate human resource qualitative manners to lead to a higher organisational strategic position through a competitive advantage, or even a core competency, that gives the organisation the potential for sustainable success (Lambert et al., 2003). Organisations need to restructure their cultural platforms in a way that provides a wider capacity to absorb and nurture the best talented employees. This relies, ultimately on communication (Ajaz, 2014).

2.21. CONCLUSION

This chapter examined talent management techniques in the context of local government, as well as talent management definitions and the study's conceptual framework. The literature reveals that the legislative framework and corporate context influences diverse approaches to talent management. According to the literature review, the implementation of talent management in public services is influenced by several factors such as the political environment, basic service delivery requirements, the alignment of the talent management strategy with the business strategy, the supply and demand for talent, talent identification, and the use of a performance-management, all of which have an impact on basic service delivery outcomes. The next chapter addresses talent management practices from an international perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

TALENT MANAGEMENT FROM AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of Talent Management in Public Sector (PTM), which prioritises organisational performance and efficiency agendas, impacts Talent Management and its underlying logical approaches. The exclusive approach to TM is seen as a better fit with the logics of PTM, and TM has been seen as a managerial tool to improve efficiency and performance (Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017). These logics affect TM policy and practice, and Thunnissen and Buttiens (2017) suggest that in the public sector the focus should be on enhancing motivation as the way to increase performance. However, a key challenge for TM in the public sector is that defining performance can be problematic given the greater diversity of goals and stakeholder groups (Blom et al., 2020). In addition, (Dougherty and Van Gelder, 2015) argue that the adoption of PTM and austerity measures has reduced the ability of public sector organisations to attract talent and had negative effects on employee engagement. TM in the public sector has been influenced by internal and external factors. While the former involves activities which align with the strategic objectives and core cultural values (Kravariti and Johnston, 2020; Thunnissen et al., 2013), external factors such as political, cultural, and financial factors seem to play a stronger role in the context of the public sector (Kravariti and Johnston, 2020). For example, government budget cuts have reduced resources for implementing TM and limited the ability of the public sector to attract talents (Llorens, 2011).

3.2.TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

While attracting, retaining, and developing leadership competencies are seen as increasingly important in public sector organisations (Tummers and Knies, 2013), talent management (TM) in this context is an underexplored field of research (Barkhuzien, 2014; Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Kravariti and Johnston, 2020). Traditionally the public sector has been characterised by employment security, life-long careers, and the strong tradition of equality of treatment and development opportunities open to all on an equal basis (Leisink et al., 2013).

However, this approach is under pressure for several reasons. First, due to austerity and government cuts, investment in TM initiatives has been limited. Second, there is a trend in many countries of reducing the size of the public sector in the economy to increase privatisation. Third, there is some shift away from permanent to more flexible contracts (Culie et al., 2014). Fourth, the new focus on Public Sector Management (PSM) promotes managerial and efficiency logics, increased pressure for accountability, and the need create value (Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Macfarlane et al., 2012). Finally, the public sector is characterised by goal ambiguity as goals in the public sector are less tangible, more diverse, and more difficult to measure which makes the design and implementation of TM practices more challenging, particularly when resource constraints limit flexibility in approaches to TM (Blom et al., 2020).

3.3. TALENT WORKFORCE PLANNING

In business, it is often stated that the highest value of an organisation is provided by the employees working there (Héder et al., 2018). According to workforce planning, managers must comprehend that their HR tasks and the process of attracting, recruiting, developing, and retaining talent are directly connected to the main goals of an organisation (Creelman, 2004). This leads managers to afford extra effort to achieve their duties upon realising the importance of their role in the excellence of the whole organisation (Schweyer, 2010). The roles of talented workforce planning include envisioning future business and environmental demands to meet the HR requirements obliged by these circumstances (Creelman, 2004).

The following are activities involved in talented workforce planning (Schweyer, 2010):

- a) Talent Inventory: this includes the current talents operating in the organisation and their roles.
- b) Workforce Forecast: this anticipates the potential needs for talents.
- c) Action Plans: the procedures from the moment an employee is hired until the stage of compensation; and
- d) Control and Evaluation: the procedures that allow the HR department to monitor the process of workforce planning using closed-loop feedback.

To conclude, talented workforce planning aims at allocating specific employees with specific talents to specified jobs at the correct time with the convenient skills required to fulfil these jobs (Dries, 2013).

Thus, TM is how an organisation implements its strategic workforce plan. It is also the mechanism by which an organisation adjusts its talent supply, based on changing business organisation needs (Morgan and Jardin, 2010). Talent workforce planning is considered to be one of the analytic, forecasting, and planning procedures (Sheehan and Anderson, 2015) that is connected to TM activities which ensure an organisation has the right people in the right places at the right time for the right price to implement its business strategy (Tucker et al., 2005).

3.4. INCLUSIVE VS EXCLUSIVE APPROACHES TO TM IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The inclusive approach to TM views all employees in an organisation as potential talents who can contribute to organisational goals. This approach reflects the importance of equal opportunities and employee development. It has been suggested that the inclusive approach is a better fit for the egalitarian public sector culture and plays a role in integrating employees toward the common values of the public sector (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013). Thus, the public sector should use HR practices that enable the optimisation of the generic capabilities of all employees (Sparrow et al., 2014). Studies on TM in the public sector highlight that inclusive approaches are used in the public sector, but there is little discussion about the rationales behind these approaches (Macfarlane et al., 2012). For example, Glenn (2012) argues that while inclusive approaches are generally a better fit with public sector culture, exclusive approaches are also common and used for strategic purposes such as recruitment for scarce, strategic, and leadership positions. Recent research by Tyskbo (2019) shows that despite the highly egalitarian and collectivist context of a Swedish public sector hospital, exclusive TM approaches are used to recruit and develop professional staff. Shortages of leadership talent in the public sector has led to the growing use of exclusive TM approaches to fill critical roles (Kravariti and Johnston, 2020). This tension between inclusive and exclusive TM approaches is a key TM challenge in the public sector (Bevort and Poulfelt, 2015). In spite of these discussions, TM practices in the public sector are still relatively underdeveloped, poorly applied, and can be characterised as ad hoc, fragmented, and reactive (Barkhuizen, 2014; Culie et al., 2014). However, public sector organisations have begun to adjust their HRM policies and practices to align them to fit the demands of a rapidly changing external environment where the focus is increasingly on performance, challenging the traditional values of equality and fairness in the public sector (Boselie and Thunnisen, 2017).

3.5. PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

The increase in retirees across the public sector is another emerging challenge for TM (Clarke and Scurry, 2020), contributing to talent shortages (Poocharoen and Lee, 2013). Research suggests that public sector HR actors need to address competing priorities, and that competing institutional logics play an important role in how TM practices are understood and enacted in practice (Alvehus, 2018). Research further suggests that TM is more complex in the public sector (Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017), and that competing logics play an important role in its implementation (Tyskbo, 2019). The market driven logic of NPM and TM conflicts with the professional and bureaucratic logics in the public sector, highlighting that effective TM in the public sector depends upon different organisational actors bringing different institutional logics to the fore (Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Grant et al., 2020).

A number of institutional principles are underscored by describing how different models of the state, market, and society impact TM conceptualization and implementation. International travel restrictions imposed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic have increased public sector motivation to reduce reliance on foreign skills and competencies, expatriates, and the concentration of Emiratis in the public sector, resulting in a unique labour market situation (Al-Waqfi and Forstenlechner, 2014). The increasing demand for highly skilled employees, such as medical staff, engineers, and academicians, attracted a high number of expatriates. The development of these skills and competencies requires a long-term investment in the education system. For example, the UAE government allocated 14.8 percent of the federal budget to the development of the education system, to provide quality education services and enhance a knowledge-based economy in 2020 (UAE, 2020).

3.6. OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

TM practices are the activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which significantly contribute to an organisation's sustainable competitive advantage, as well as the identification, attraction, selection, recruitment, development, and retention of talented individuals on a global scale to fill in these roles effectively. TM is both broader than leadership succession and more exclusive than human resource management. It focuses on key positions considering the global scope of the organisation, key individuals (with high levels of talent) to step into these roles, and a differentiated human resource architecture to manage such talented individuals effectively with specific focus on the following areas.

3.5.1. Talent attraction/talent acquisition

Talent acquisition has been defined as the process of recruiting talent (Stahl et al., 2012). Thus, TM policies increasingly focus on developing employee value propositions and employer brand to source the best talent (Martin and Sinclair, 2019). Developing a strong image as an employer is essential to attract the best talent and many organisations invest heavily in trying to be known as one of the best places to work (Sparrow and Makram, 2015).

The current emphasis on talent acquisition tends to overlook the reality that hiring talent does not necessarily lead to successful talent utilisation (Groysberg, 2010). Getting the talent in is only the first step and customised socialisation practices, such as “onboarding”, are often required for incoming talents (Dokko and Jiang, 2017).

3.5.2. Talent development

Talent development is a key element of the TM process (Cappelli, 2008) and should be linked with the strategic trajectory of the organisation (Phillips and Roper, 2009). A key issue is whether organisations make or buy talent (Bidwell, 2011). The former is positive for addressing both employee and organisational needs (Sparrow et al., 2014), and enhances the development of organisational knowledge (Lepak and Snell, 1999) and succession planning (Gandz, 2006). Talent development seeks to provide job and career-related competencies for individuals and involves a range of practices including leadership development programmes and mentoring (Caligiuri et al., 2009).

Developing talents is a key challenge for public sector organisations given rapidly changing environments (Boselie and Thunnissen, 2017; Scullion & Collings, 2011). To date, there is little empirical research on public sector talent development strategies; thus, more research is needed on how talent in public sector develops the knowledge, networks, and skills to compete for high level strategic positions in the organisation (Leisink et al., 2013). Macro level studies suggest talent is a key element influencing national competitiveness (Khilji and Schuler, 2017; Vaiman et al., 2019)

3.5.3. Talent retention

Talent retention is a critical challenge for employers (D'Amato and Herzfeldt, 2008) and is one of the main purposes of effective TM systems (Dries, 2013; Holland and Scullion, 2019; Scullion et al., 2020). However, while organisations invest significant resources to limit talents leaving the organisation, it has remained unclear how organisations retain their talent (Martin & Schmidt, 2010; Pate and Scullion, 2018). Moreover, increased mobility and the erosion of long-term employment relations and traditional psychological contracts make retention more difficult (Scullion et al., 2020). The costs of replacing talents can be considerable (Holland and Scullion, 2020). Public sector organisations have begun to employ a range of retention strategies to minimise turnover including career development, compensation and benefits, flexible working, and work-life balance (Kravariti and Johnston, 2020).

3.5.4. TM success factors not consistently applied.

Research results show that success critical instruments are not sufficiently applied in international organisations. It appears that the practice of TM in most organisations is a mix of the normative and critical schools of thought. However, the results show that development-oriented instruments such as potential, personal objectives, and alternative career paths are more successful than a pure business orientation toward TM. Research, therefore, confirms the 'critical' view of TM which emerged in parallel to the McKinsey school of thought (Tarique and Schuler, 2009).

The second line of thought links the rise of TM to demands from the labour force. According to this line of thought, organisations should offer TM programs in response to an increasing demand from younger-generation professionals for meaningful work, work/life balance, fairness, and transparency in organisations. This hypothesis suggests TM owes its rise to a change in values by new generations of professionals with implications on how organisations manage human capital internally, from recruiting to performance management, appraisal, and compensation processes. According to this view, the rise of TM is due to a primarily demand-based change in expectations of younger-generation professionals who demand higher levels of transparency, a higher level of work/life balance, and career options that are attractive and motivating to them.

This view on the rise of TM is largely based on Richard Florida (2005) and others' (Deloitte Research study on change in values) description of generational changes (XY generation) and has been picked up by modern HR management as the motivator's dilemma (Losey, Ulrich and Meisinger, 2003).

Meyer and Kirby (2010) have linked this line of thought to the increased desire to create transparency which spills over into many life venues. Since many young people have different expectations about their career lives, including the expectation to find a better work/life balance and do meaningful work, TM is on the rise. Transparency in business will be one of the major influences on organisations in the coming years. Closely connected to transparency in TM decisions is the concept of interactional and procedural fairness.

A wide range of empirical evidence adds especially these two fairness ideas to the list of important issues of modern and future HR management. Pfeffer (2001) responds to McKinsey's approach by restating Deming's theory that the attributes of the system in which the person works need to be improved to increase talent output. He also emphasises the importance of teamwork, claiming that the overemphasis on individual talent hurts organisational effectiveness. Some German organisations are not responding well to the increasing pressures on their TM programmes as a result of the wide range of requirements. These organisations are in the practice of applying effective programmes. In addition, executives and employees often rate the TM in German organisations as insufficient and actual metrics also point to a quality deficit.

Despite TM's high importance rating, however, TM success factors are not consistently applied, and TM is not well implemented in practice. There is not a good infrastructure and effective instruments are not used often enough. Furthermore, not enough differentiation is possible and there are not enough alternatives or potential assessments available. Moreover, openness and flexibility and other sustainable factors of a successful TM are lacking. Openness and flexibility accommodate motivation requirements and are, from fairness research studies, also known to be important factors.

3.5.5. People strategies in many organisations weak or non-existent

A further possible explanation for bad TM in practice is that the underlying people theory is wrong. Mostly, talent management refers to recruitment and development of A-Performers (Collings and Mellahi, 2009) and the implication is that there are critical workforce segments who contribute disproportionately higher to company success compared to other employees. As a result, many organisations do not use success critical instruments and processes but rather focus on the wrong instruments and processes. Also, in many organisations, there is huge insecurity about the right approach to TM resulting in conflicting approaches. Discussions tend to be very dogmatic, and TM is often not managed well, due to a lack of orientation and use of best practice. Generally, the focus is too much on performance rather than potential and development; on hierarchy rather than enabling communication and the exchange of ideas.

The results of Beechler and Woodward (2009) and Tarique and Schuler (2009) lead to the conclusion that the development argument used by the critics of the McKinsey approach to TM is correct. Considering the current lines of thought on TM, this study offers support to the critical view of the McKinsey approach. It seems, organisations focus too much on middle managers and upwards as talent activities are associated with internal costs and often do not immediately pay-off. In addition, most managers do not seem to pay much attention to a rigid execution of TM processes further detracting from their quality. Finally, the widespread use of talent instruments used specifically for the administration, control, or resource planning of talents indicates that TM in most organisations further shows the short-term cost/benefit orientation of TM.

3.5.6. Organisational engagement and TM

A growing body of studies associates TM with employees' organisational engagement practices. An effectively implemented TM can result in effective recruitment and retention of employees and enhanced organisational engagement (O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). Employees' organisational engagement is considered a critical factor in retaining talent and motivating people (Alias et al., 2016; Blass, 2009; Hughes and Rog, 2008). The engagement can also be supported by development, leadership effectiveness (Barrick et al., 2015; Butler and Waldrop, 2004), and relational creativity (Bhatnagar, 2007).

Leaders can improve the performance of the organisation by ensuring the engagement of its members. Internal capabilities should be developed to improve employees' organisational engagement (Barrick et al., 2015; Goestjahjanti et al., 2020). Likewise, organisational engagement and TM strategy are mutually connected and related practices. One way of having a successful TM strategy requires employees to feel "connected" or engaged in their job and organisation. It is suggested that effective TM policies and practices result in more engaged employees and lower turnover by ensuring commitment to human capital (Hughes and Rog, 2008; Pandita and Ray, 2018).

Retention is one of the critical concerns in a TM process. This is supported by many studies in which more engaged employees are more likely to stay on the job (Bakker et al., 2003; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Hallberg and Schaufeli, 2006). One of these studies, conducted by the Corporate Leadership Council, demonstrates the connection between engagement in business success and its direct impact on employee performance and retention. The study also shows the contribution of managers to enhance employee commitment to the organisation, job, and work teams (Lockwood, 2007). Even though, theoretically, the link between TM and organisational engagement is well acknowledged, there is limited empirical evidence revealing the relationship between retention and engagement. Therefore, there is a need for more empirical studies to support the positive effect of TM on employees' organisational engagement.

TM gives particular attention to the role of human capital in organisations as a key source of sustained competitive advantage (Sheehan, 2012). Human capital is the knowledge, skills, and abilities personified in an organisation's employees (Coff, 2002), and viewed as a crucial factor in firms' competitive advantage. Lepak and Snell (1999) discuss how the human capital of a given firm can be classified into two dimensions: value and uniqueness. Value is the talent of the human capital which contributes to its organisation's competence and improves its competitive advantage. High-value human capital is the assets that are vital to the organisation's core business, whereas low-value human capital normally refers to the so-called 'peripheral' assets. Uniqueness of human capital refers to the degree to which the organisation's human capital would be difficult to replace. Talent, in the form of its employees' skills and competencies that lead to organisational capability, has become the main source of success in today's highly competitive environment. Knowledge, skills, and competencies of employees' need to be maximised and recognised as unique sources of competitive advantage.

TM works for the future existence and excellence of the firm. TM is defined as a process that involves the systematic documentation of key positions which subsidise the sustainable competitive advantage of an organisation. The TM programme objective is to align the workforce so that employees realise how their objectives connect to and support to overall organisational objective, empowering the entire team to strive for the same goal. Such objectives may focus on increasing customer service as a main pillar of competitive advantage (Gitonga, Kilika and Obere, 2016).

The use of competency in organisations is not a new concept, although there are problems with its lengthy and complex process of implementation (Shippmann et al., 2000). Competency management cannot be anticipated just at an individual level. The main concern is how competency management is implemented at an administrative level. Competency management at an organisational level can be explained as the key abilities of an employee required for the success of an organisation. If competency management is well integrated into human resource systems, it brings many benefits to the organisation (Ewerlin and Sub, 2016).

3.7. COMPETENCY AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

Talent management plays an important role in managing an organisation's managerial capital, i.e., its potential competency since managerial capital is the key to success (Sheehan, 2012). If managing staff is knowledgeable, then these the organisation needs these employees more than they need the organisation (Bohmer and Schinnenburg et.al., 2014; Sheehan, 2012;). Highly skilled and knowledgeable workers have become key factors for the competitive advantage of the firm (Ewerlin and Sub, 2016). However, it is also necessary to identify the skills which are required for a specific job (Homer, 2001).

In TM terminology, knowledgeable workers in the right job at the right time is called as talent positioning (Whelan and Carcary, 2011). TM is an approach to provide new job knowledge to companies (Gholipour, Siadat and Mahmoudi, 2016). TM is the identified process of recruiting, selecting, and developing the skilled workers to manage competitive advantage of the firm (Ewerlin and Sub, 2016; Gitonga, Kilika and Obere, 2016) because the supply of competent workers is decreasing continuously. In the words of Khmour (2016), talented employees are the key competitive advantage of the organisation, and an organisation could use competency management at the time of recruiting competent employees (Heinsman et.al., 2006).

The supply of a skilled and competent workforce has been difficult to forecast (Bohmer and Schinnenburg, 2016; Heinsman et.al., 2006). Competency management approaches should be applied properly, otherwise they may create negative attitude towards the organisation (Heinsman et.al., 2006). If competency management is applied well, employees are able to tackle unpredictable challenges and use competency effectively in their daily work (Heinsman et.al., 2006; Mühlbacher, Nettekoven and Kovac, 2011). Competencies make an individual strong enough to tackle upcoming challenges (Mühlbacher, Nettekoven, and Kovac, 2011). Competency management, if well implemented and integrated in the human resource system, can hugely advantage the organisation (Becker and Huselid 1999; Heinsman et al. 2005).

However, implementation of competency management is not an easy task. It needs internally consistent human resource strategies and congruence within industrial characteristics (McMahan, Virick and Wright, 1999). The business model of a firm changes with time and needs different skills according to its requirements. This is why a team is needed to manage the competency of employees according to the needs of the organisation (Schinnenburg et.al, 2014). Like companies, the whole world needs core competencies at times of natural and human made disasters for emergency management (Kapucu, 2011).

HRM of an organisation helps to build organisational competency and employee motivation (Pandey and Guha, 2014). Managerial bodies should be aware of the present and future competency needs of both the organisation and its employees (Keçecioglu and Yilmaz, 2014). Companies draw attention to the importance of resources that are intermittent, valuable, well-organised, and inimitable (Barney, 1991; Tripathi and Agrawal, 2014). HRM can create these characteristics among employees by developing competencies. Many scholars (for example, Frank et.al., 2004; Deloitte, 2008) represent TM as the most critical challenge HRM will face in upcoming years.

3.8. COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE THROUGH TALENT MANAGEMENT

Michael Porter (1985) writes that a firm that can discover better technology for performing an activity than its competitors will gain a competitive advantage. Similarly, Becker, Huselid, and Beatty (2009) denote the business processes that are indispensable to a firm's strategy, and which provide a competitive advantage to the company over its competitors in the form of strategic capabilities. These scholars contend that the workforce can be made into a competitive

advantage, through adopting a differentiated workforce strategy. However, they note that it is a big leap from identifying the strategic capabilities of a firm to creating a differentiated workforce strategy – since the missing link is often that the firm needs to express how talent can contribute to the success of its strategic capability (Becker, Huselid and Beatty, 2009).

In order to understand further which talent factors, lead to executing the strategy of the company, Becker, Huselid and Beatty (2009) recommend performing a talent map, which is their continuation of Kaplan and Norton's strategy map adapted to TM. Kaplan and Norton (2001), in their book *The Strategy-Focused Organization*, claim that the strategy map describes the process for transforming intangible assets into tangible customer and financial outcomes. The strategy map is part of their Balanced Scorecard concept and depicts the strategic goals as dependent on a chain of strategic drivers, under a cause-and-effect logic (Kaplan and Norton, 2001).

3.7.1. Identifying strategic jobs

A common tenet within TM is that in order to understand the talent drivers of the organisation more thoroughly, it is important to classify its strategic jobs. Becker, Huselid and Beatty (2009) indicate that companies need to move away from traditional approaches and adopt a model in which the relative value of jobs is determined by the specific strategic capabilities needed to execute the strategy. They urge companies to invest more in these strategic positions (or “A jobs”) and put the most talented employees in these. Similarly, Boudreau and Ramstad (2005) indicate that organisations need to segment their talent to identify the pivotal talent pools the jobs, roles, and competencies in which the human capital will have the biggest impact on implementing organisational strategy successfully. Becker, Huselid and Beatty (2009) also argue that there are certain characteristics of strategic positions where talent can greatly increase the probability of strategy execution and performance variability, which refers to the idea that the impact of a role on performance and strategy fulfilment depends on the person who occupies the position for example, a high performer will greatly affect the fulfilment of the strategy in a positive direction. Furthermore, it is often difficult to attract and retain top talent for these positions. Selecting the wrong person for these jobs will result in immediate poor performance and may cost the company in terms of performance and strategy fulfilment (Becker, Huselid and Beatty, 2009).

3.7.2. Talent management success predictors

Research has shown that the companies that excel at TM have implemented a system that is internally consistent and reinforces the practices they use to attract, select, develop, evaluate, and retain talent; moreover, they align these practices with their business strategy, corporate culture, and long-term goals (Beechler and Woodward, 2009). In addition, the TM system in place has many owners in the organisation: the CEO, the managers at every level, and the HR department (Beechler and Woodward, 2009). The Boston Consulting Group (From Capability to Profitability, 2012) and BCG and WFPMA (Creating People Advantage 2012, 2012) argue that it is not enough to execute people management practices in a linear fashion to be successful in TM, since each activity is to be carried out in parallel, and the logic behind talent management is integrated. In the report 'From Capability to Profitability' by the Boston Consulting Group (2012), it is argued that companies that enjoy the highest economic performance consistently outperform their peers in three areas: TM, performance management and rewards, and leadership development.

3.7.3. The role of middle managers

Middle managers constitute the link between the management team and the rest of the organisation, since they are to translate the business strategy into concrete business plans; therefore, middle managers need to be good communicators, builders of trust, and implementers (The Boston Consulting Group, 2010). Vaiman and Vance (Smart Talent Management, 2008, p. 180) argue that a strategic plan is "only as good as the managers who are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the goals and strategies do indeed cascade to all departments and individuals". This is closely connected to an effective TM system. Wikström and Martin (2012) state that middle managers are important culture bearers and are responsible for the close, everyday leadership. Moreover, line managers have a better knowledge of informal networks and can therefore drive change (Nguyen Huy, 2001).

Wikström and Martin (2012) also encourage a broader perspective on the middle managers, since they often hold a deep knowledge of the organisation and have larger networks and closer relationships within the organisation than managers higher up in the hierarchy. Line or middle managers should be responsible for the selection of employees that are to perform assignments. Furthermore, they should have the primary responsibility to develop the employees; managers need to stretch employees continuously since about 70 percent of competence growth is assignment related. As the person closest to the employee, the line manager has a great

responsibility in matters related to rewards and recognition. Moreover, the line managers have an impact on work design and can change job content. Lastly, managers play their most important part in strategic human capital planning (also known as strategic workforce planning), where they determine and evaluate the strategic capabilities of the firm and conduct talent inventories that give information on which talents they need to develop for the future (Becker, Huselid and Beatty, 2009).

3.7.4. Succession management/planning

Succession planning, or succession management, can be defined as the process of ensuring a suitable supply for current and future key jobs successors, so that the career of individuals can be managed to optimize the organization's needs and the individual's aspirations (this has particularly been applied to leadership succession) (Becker, Huselid and Beatty, 2009). Succession management involves projecting the competence needs for the future for certain positions, assessing employees that are on the short-list for these positions, and planning how to develop the competencies of these employees so that they can advance the strategic needs of the organisation (Huang, 2001). Succession management is believed to be another source of competitive advantage to organisations (Huang, 2001). McDonnell et al. (2010) suggest that succession management is an integral part of TM. Conger and Fulmer (2003) argue that succession planning must be combined with leadership development. By this they mean that, these days, it is not enough to have a clandestine list of potential successors to certain positions, since employees need to know which goals they are to achieve to qualify for these positions. Furthermore, they present five rules for effective succession planning:

- 1) Focus on development of employees.
- 2) Identify linchpin, strategic positions.
- 3) Make the process transparent.
- 4) Measure the process regularly; and
- 5) Keep it flexible.

In an empirical study of Taiwanese companies, Huang (2001) found that there is a significant relationship between the degree of sophistication of the succession planning system, and the effectiveness of the HR department. He found that successful succession planning systems are implemented and designed carefully, have committed top-level management, are perceived as credible by the employees, and have sufficient resources allocated to them.

It is also important that line managers are involved in the development of talents, and that they are evaluated regularly for this (Cohn, Khurana and Reeves, 2005; Conger and Fulmer, 2003; Huang, 2001). McDonnell et al. (2010) found that a formal succession planning system is important for effective global TM (i.e., TM in multinational enterprises) since they argue that it is important to know that the development programmes are adequately aimed at the employees identified as high potentials who are expected to move on to higher positions in the future. In other words, it is important to integrate development programmes with succession planning systems. Cohn, Khurana, and Reeves (2005) also point out the importance of having a formal, not an ad-hoc, succession planning system which is integrated into other HR processes. Cappelli (2008) represents another school of thought that contends succession planning does not work in a business world which is under the pressure of frequent changes and employees leaving after shorter periods of employment.

3.9.SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Succession planning involves preparing the right people for critical roles and unexpected vacancies (Timms, 2016). It also consists of understanding the vacant positions' ramifications and efforts to develop internal talent. Successors must quickly assume an essential part as a well-qualified candidate (Rothwell, 2016). While Timms (2016) understands that succession planning reduces dependency on external recruitment for top talent, Rothwell (2016) concludes that top performers in the workplace should not be taken for granted, even in the most challenging times of downsizing of organisations. External recruitment can be costly and time-consuming, widening the gap in employee productivity loss within the organisation. For example, during the initial hiring phase, managers allot time to interview multiple external candidates for a vacant position that takes time away from their day-to-day duties. In addition, the hiring manager of the company may spend two to three weeks identifying and selecting the potential candidate who is highly qualified for the vacant position, increasing the opportunity costs for recruitment. Promoting internal candidates who are prepared for promotion to a critical role minimises the costs and downtime of external hires' recruitment (Timms, 2016). Research indicates that proper succession planning ensures leadership continuity in key positions. However, Rothwell (2016) provides the following definition of succession planning: a means to identify critical management positions, starting at the levels of project manager and supervisor, and extending up to the highest position in the organisation.

Succession planning also encompasses management positions to provide maximum flexibility in lateral management moves and ensure that as individuals achieve greater seniority, their management skills broaden and become more generalised in the total organisational objectives, rather than in purely departmental objectives. In addition to the definition of succession planning, Berke (2005) suggests that succession management is focussed more on building a robust leadership map and developing talent benches for key positions rather than identifying and grooming select individuals for specific roles. He warns readers that succession management is often inexact and may not always be used interchangeably with succession planning. Given the nature and the complexity of succession planning, the concept requires a comprehensive approach. Further, Timms (2016) notes that organisations could save a large amount of money, resources, and time when employers commit to proper implementation steps.

Rothwell (2016) mentions that the idea of succession planning extends beyond just the management positions and management employees. In today's world, where organisations are faced with a growing number of baby-boomers retiring and increasing turnover among the younger workforce (De Long & Davenport, 2003), the development and retention of personnel are an essential condition for the successful function of any organisation. Organisations must build high-performance work environments to ensure that strategic and operational challenges are met. Also, Timms (2016) admits that managers cannot avoid an aging population's harsh reality and the likely effects on the economy. He agrees that most organisations will encounter problems adjusting to the idea that employee retirement is not a one-time event.

Organisations must reassess their talent pool as more workers from the baby boomer generation exit the workforce (Timms, 2016). This is why it is imperative to improve personnel development mechanisms to develop employees' existing and potential capabilities to create an adequate succession pipeline. But government organisations have limited resources to retain and obtain talent to maintain the provision of quality services. With employees departing for various reasons, organisations face the loss of the institutional knowledge and experience base that will hurt organisational goals. To avoid harming long-term corporate sustainability, senior managers need to pass along their knowledge before retirement for succession planning to be effective (Timms, 2016). As a result of workforce turnover, it has become apparent that public organisations must develop some workforce planning and development systems to secure organisational continuity.

Based on the information provided by the Centre for State and Local Government Excellence, succession planning is identified as one of the most important issues in workforce development. Many public service organisations have not developed formal succession plans as it is not their priority (Jarrell & Pewitt, 2007). Political ties to a particular administration, lack of information on how to proceed, and human resource professionals' reluctance to question the existing system are some of the reasons behind the absence of a succession plan (Jarrell & Pewitt, 2007). The most significant challenge is developing a strategic plan to be able to compete and maintain organisational longevity. It is imperative to remember that succession planning addresses the question of "who" and assesses the organisation's inventory of strengths (Timms, 2016). With 52.1 percent of local and federal government employees in the U.S. nearing retirement, government leaders must shift their focus to planning for the future.

3.10. INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT SUCCESSION PLANNING

Based on the statistics and the number of expected departures, succession planning must become a part of a long-term strategic planning for government organisations rather than the short-sighted replacement of existing employees. The main goal of succession planning in an organisation is to help ensure the most efficient and effective mission accomplishment. Due to limited funding sources, public organisations must have a succession plan in place to be able to retain and develop knowledgeable staff, so they can hit the ground running when an internal candidate is selected for promotion. Therefore, the main reason behind succession planning is to acquire new knowledge and retain the organisational learning that already exists, which can help cut costs in the future. Before succession planning became a real issue within government organisations, workforce planning was relatively simple and was not the main priority for leadership. Vacancies were filled when needed, and the search was often performed outside of the organisation, which frequently affected the organisational culture and created low morale throughout the organisation (Rothwell, 2016).

New hires often had their own vision of the organisation's mission and had to be trained for a significant amount of time which often negatively impacted service delivery. As mentioned before, nowadays, leadership is faced with many people retiring, and vacancies will not be so easy to fill due to a shrinking workforce market with Baby Boomers departing. The organisational socialisation process can take months for new employees, and some institutional knowledge can be lost even then (Rothwell, 2016).

Organisations must develop a plan of maintaining the organisation's knowledge base to ensure a smooth transition when employees depart. Therefore, current succession planning became one of the top priorities in public service management (Busine and Watt, 2005).

3.11. SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

The best practices for the successful implementation and maintenance of succession planning must include the following steps (Friedly et al., 2014):

- 1) Succession planning strategy creation which should align with the mission of the organisation.
- 2) Identification and selection of key positions in which different techniques can be used to identify and select the candidates: skill inventory surveys, assessment of the staff by managers, success profiles, etc.
- 3) Development and training of the chosen candidates.
- 4) Monitoring and regular review of the progress of development activities.
- 5) Preparation of candidates for placement into leadership positions; and
- 6) Review and evaluation of succession planning. This step ensures the relevancy of the plan and should be performed annually to adjust the plan if necessary.

If planned and implemented well, these practices will help an organisation address the challenges of workforce turnover. It is also essential to understand that succession planning is not about determining who will be an individual candidate for a specific position. Rather, it is about ensuring that the organisation has people to fill the critical role when it becomes vacant. Assignments should be filled based on merit and competency. This process has been demonstrated by Michelson's (2006) analogy which indicated that succession planning requires putting the right people on the bus, getting the wrong people off the bus, and positioning the right people in the right seats. One more advantage of succession planning is that it allows an orderly transition rather than a forced succession. The existence of a succession plan can prevent forced turnover. The probability of such an eventuality is expected to be lower than in organisations that do not have any workforce planning in place (Naveen, 2006).

3.12. SIGNIFICANT DISADVANTAGE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

A significant disadvantage of succession planning is that it can create low morale in an organisation. Employees who are not chosen for the succession pipeline might feel undervalued, which can negatively impact productivity (Rothwell, 2016).

Skills inventories used to assess employees' current pool might seem threatening to some. There is the possibility of false information being entered into the skills inventory due to the fear factor. Some employees might think that if they do not possess the highest level of individual skills, they might be let go. Thus, they might exaggerate while filling the inventory out, producing inaccurate results (Rothwell, 2016).

This is why it is of the utmost importance for the implementation team to be as transparent as possible and inform the staff about the succession planning's true nature before launching the organisation's programme. The City of Arlington team, with the help of the University of Texas at Arlington capstone group, has worked on a communication plan for this. The plan includes a detailed email and infographic familiarising staff with what succession planning entails. Another issue that the implementation team can face is the frustration of employees who were not chosen. The leadership must think of alternatives to offer to the employees if they are interested in professional growth. Upskilling and reskilling programmes are a good alternative that can help identify a new candidate for the succession pipeline that was initially not considered (Rothwell, 2016).

3.13. CURRENT PRACTICES IN VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS

The organisations mentioned below use different strategies to develop and implement succession plans or any other workforce development to ensure the organisation's sustainability and ability to fulfil the mission without interruptions in service that cause public dissatisfaction.

3.12.1. City of Dayton

The City of Dayton in the state of Ohio focussed on a succession planning strategy that includes staff development, coaching, and retention strategies. Dayton's city manager believes that, with the help of a well-planned and well executed succession plan, city leadership will continue to make a difference to Dayton's mission accomplishment (Smith, 2019).

3.12.2. The Netherlands

The South Holland Municipality expects the loss of 57 people eligible for retirement, including top public safety and transportation officials, within the next five years. In light of the upcoming talent shortage, the leadership has started to track who is eligible for retirement and increased their recruitment efforts to find the next generation of public sector workers.

The plan is to introduce a workforce development programme. For smaller countries like Holland, it is beneficial to have mentorship programmes so that the newest employees spend quality and in-depth time with people who possess vast in-house knowledge before their departure. This helps facilitate knowledge transfer and determine where gaps can occur with people leaving the organisation (Smith, 2019).

3.12.3. City of Grand Rapids, Michigan

In the City of Grand Rapids, some utility and skilled trades jobs are designated "learn and earn" positions, providing a pipeline to employment with the City. In this system, workers get paid while they are being trained. The city also remains in the final stages of creating an apprenticeship programme for electricians so it can introduce its new workers to achieve journeyman licenses. Grand Rapids has a robust employee development programme, including tuition reimbursement for workers who want additional training or professional development. The city has also undergone succession planning workshops. It has brought in key members from departments and discussed building a master list of positions and replacement of institutional knowledge (Smith, 2019).

3.12.4. City of Grand Prairie, Texas

The City of Grand Prairie does not currently have a succession plan; however, they do offer a few career advancement opportunities. The city encourages learning and development through conferences and personal development goals. Tuition reimbursement programmes are also being offered to full-time employees who are obtaining a degree. Although there are no available succession plans, they realise they need workforce development and retention plans, so there are advancement opportunities for employees. But having those is not enough. The inclusion of a well-detailed succession plan into the organisation's strategy must happen to ensure workforce development and retention continuity. If not, the previously mentioned development activities may be quickly abandoned. A succession plan should be seriously considered as the next step towards building a sustainable organisation (Smith, 2019).

3.14. CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the international perspective of TM practices with reference to today's ever-changing business environment globally, that steers organisations and pushes them to excel by modifying and optimising their organisational assets such as human resource, which is considered to be the fundamental asset in any organisation. Tollman et al. (2016) states that the overall organisational performance depends on the demeanour of its human resource. Thus, to leverage organisational effectiveness, the focus should be on harmonising the human resource demeanour with the overall organisational context. The next chapter discusses the methodology adopted for this study, with a specific focus on how the research was conducted.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide an outline of the research methodology used in this study. According to Creswell (2013), research methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem. It is the science of studying how research is to be carried out. In this chapter, the focus is on the methodology used in this study, including the request by the researcher to relevant authorities to conduct the research study at eThekweni Municipality. The drafting and piloting of the questionnaires for the study will be discussed, as well as the sampling procedure used to draw units of analysis into the sample. The way in which data was collected from respondents is a focal issue, and the qualitative methods that were used to analyse the collected data are also elaborated upon. The importance of ethics in research will also be highlighted. This research explored the impact of talent management on organisational performance at eThekweni Municipality.

4.2. PRINCIPLES OF RESEARCH DESIGN

Creswell and Clark (2011, p. 53) define research design as an all-encompassing term referring to how information is collected, evaluated, and interpreted for the purpose of addressing the research questions. Mouton and Babbie (2009) further state that research design refers to how individuals conducting the research will carry out the study; it provides an outline to be followed by the researcher. According to Kuada (2012), measures aimed at minimising bias should be employed; whilst Williams (2006) states that there are various methods of designing the research and the most suitable one should be selected for a particular study. Therefore, the research objectives and questions should determine the design of the research. In addition, Prozesky (2002) states that quality should not be compromised as the aim of the research is to provide valid and accurate findings, thus minimising bias. Zikmund et al. (2013) further highlight that once the research problem has been formulated and outlined, the researcher should develop a research design, providing a plan of action for the research.

4.3. TYPES OF RESEARCH DESIGNS

Zikmund et al. (2013) argue that there is no single or most suitable research design. The three types of research design are the mixed research method, quantitative research method, and qualitative research method (Morgan, 2014). This study used a qualitative research design.

4.3.1. Qualitative research design

According to Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2006), the qualitative research method is administered through the collection and evaluation of information in different forms, mainly non-numeric. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) state that one major aim of qualitative research is to respond to complex questions which may require participants to describe and explain. Zikmund et al. (2013) highlight that the qualitative research method normally employs observations, document reviews, and interviews. This research method gives the researcher a broader perspective of a cultural or social phenomenon. Sekeran (2003) concurs that the focus of qualitative research is a phenomenon that statistics cannot adequately describe.

4.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Exploratory research is useful for a more persistent phenomenon, testing the research feasibility, and designing the research methods (Babbie, 2010, 2013). Scholars such as Dane (2011) and Neuman (2006) explain that exploratory research may be applied in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, but is most significant in qualitative research. For Engel and Schutt (2013), exploratory research offers more insight into the nature of a specific subject matter, developing more focused research questions for investigation. According to Hallingberg et al. (2018), exploratory research can provide vital information to aid more robust evaluations and to reduce costs associated with the study.

Exploratory research was applied in the qualitative phase of this study to provide more satisfactory and conclusive answers to the research questions. Exploratory research has two main goals in this study: to increase the understanding of the impact of talent management (TM) practices on service delivery outcomes within eThekweni Municipality and to lay the foundation for the entire study. Additionally, this research design was adopted because it helps to provide more insight into the research problem.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) claim that a research methodology or system is likely to be informed by the way in which research questions are crafted as well as the nature of the phenomenon being studied. Consequently, the research flow or structure used in an investigation should be a tool to answer the research question. This study is aimed at understanding the impact of organisation commitment on employee turnover from the participant's point of view. This study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. To what extent does performance management influence succession planning?
- ii. How effective is succession planning with the City?
- iii. How effective is the use of competencies in performance management practices?
- iv. What is the impact of talent management on organisational performance?
- v. What strategies can improve the impact of talent management on organisational performance?

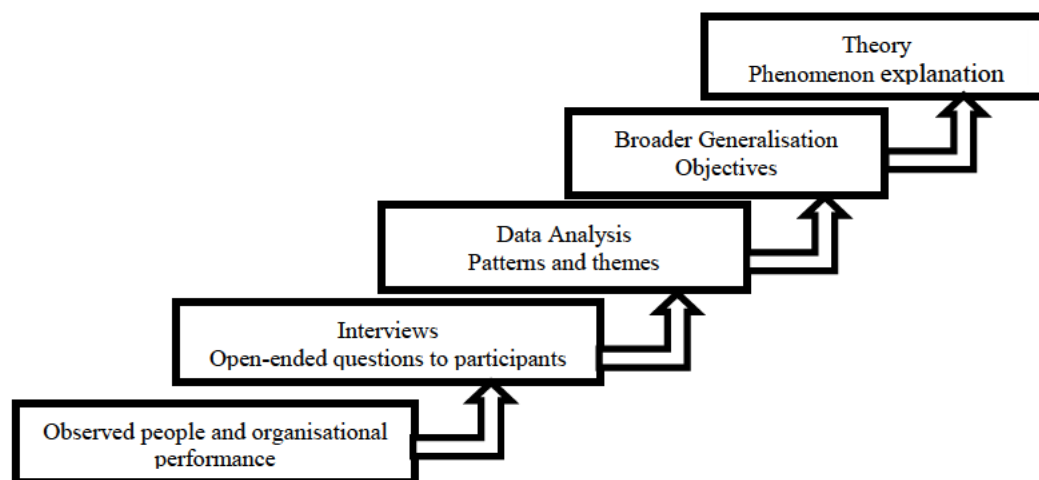
The qualitative research methodology was selected as a preferred approach because this approach reinforces an understanding and interpretation of meaning as well as the intentions underlying human interaction. This approach is suitable for this study as it allows for an in-depth investigation of a problem in one or more real-life settings. Bhattacharjee (2012, p. 113) states that a comprehensive plan for data collection in an empirical research project is a research design; it is a "blueprint" for empirical research aimed at testing a specific hypothesis or answering specific research questions and must specify at least three processes; the sampling process, the instrument development process, and the data collection process.

4.5. RESEARCH APPROACH

This study employed a qualitative research methodology which is a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning. The purpose of this approach is to gain an understanding of impact of TM on organisational performance at eThekweni Municipality to further explore the depth and complexity inherent in the performance phenomenon. The study adopted a case study research design to provide an in-depth study of the research problem in question. This research design was used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one or a few easily researchable examples. The study also provided insight into the impact of TM on organisational performance. Creswell (2007) explains that qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

The main characteristic of qualitative research is using a hands-on method the researcher gathers information through direct conversation with people and observing how they act and behave at their workplace (Creswell, 2009). The research process followed the inductive logic of research. Inductive logic reasoning was used in the study to make broad generalisations regarding the impact of TM on organisational performance, from specific observations within eThekweni Municipality as shown in the figure below.

Figure 4.1: The Inductive Logic of Research in a Qualitative Study



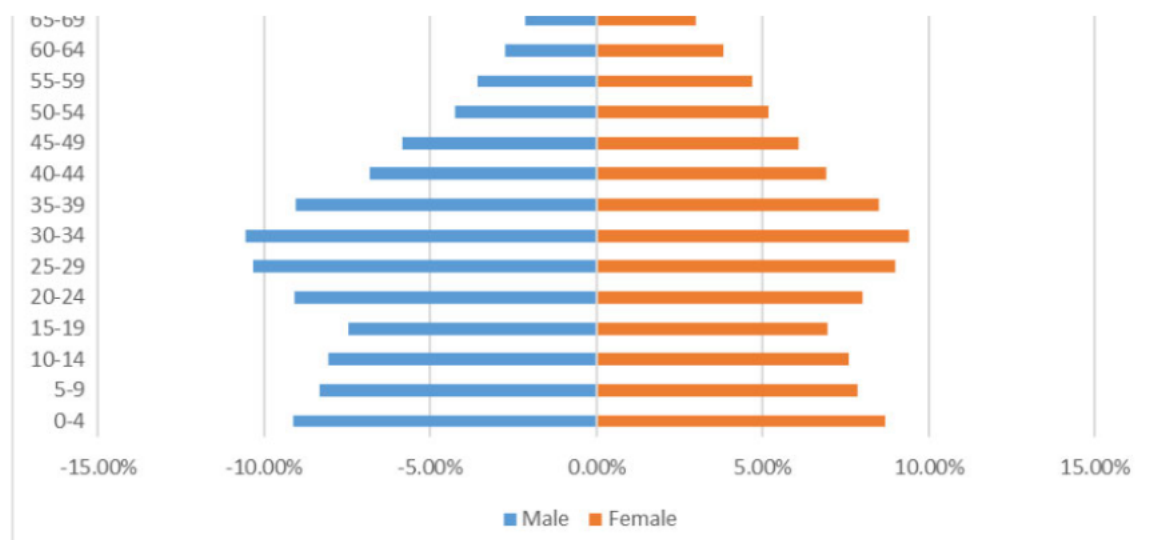
Source: Liyanage, (2009).

Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena (Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge, 1998). According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) in qualitative research, meanings are principally derived from words not numbers. It is necessary to explore and clarify these with great care, since words may have multiple as well as unclear meanings. To take heed of what Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) say above, the data collection method selected for this study sought to explore and clarify research questions as set out in this study.

4.6. STUDY SITE

The study was conducted at eThekweni Municipality, specifically at the eThekweni Municipality Offices based in Durban. The eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality is a Category A municipality found in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal. eThekweni is the largest city in this province and the third-largest city in the country.

Figure 4.3: eThekweni Population Pyramid



Source: Stats SA, 2020

4.7. TARGET POPULATION

The “population is typically a total of individuals that the researcher intends to learn about” (McBride, 2010). It “is the larger group, whether individuals, objects, or events which could also be referred to as the target population” (McMillan, 2004). According to Pernecky (2016), a target population is the collection of units or people with specific characteristics in which the researcher is interested. In this study the target population was all permanent employees who form part of management, technical specialist, and scarce skills within Metropolitan Municipality. This included the executive team, senior managers, middle managers, and the technical specialists. These employees are from different racial groups, namely, Black, White, Coloured, Indian, and Asian. The elements of the population encompass employees irrespective of gender or sexual orientation.

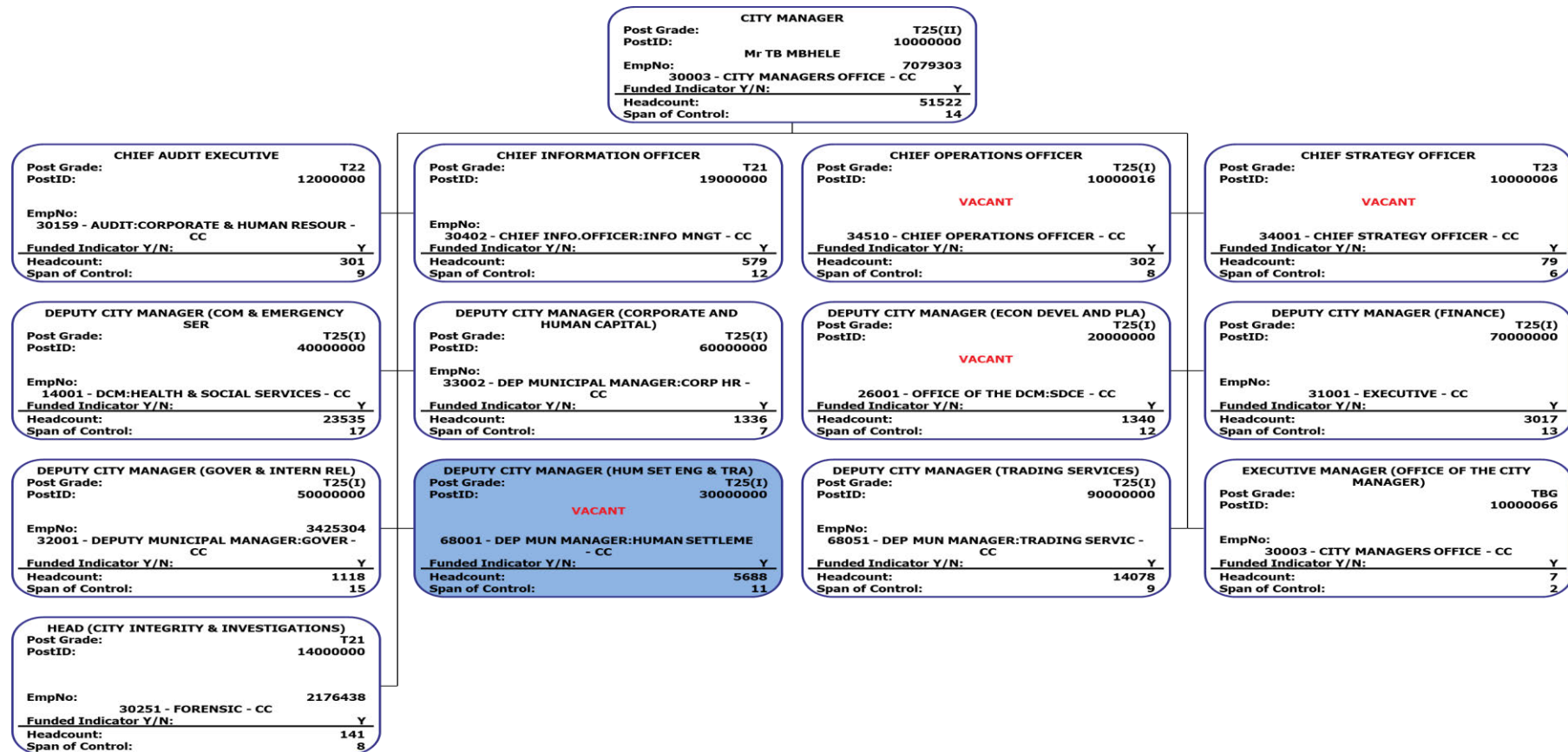
4.8. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

eThekwini Municipality has a total of eight Clusters reporting to the City Manager and five specialist support units.

This organisational structure is deemed to be top heavy, and the total staff complement of the municipality is around 28 000 employees.

Source: (eThekwini Municipality, 2022).

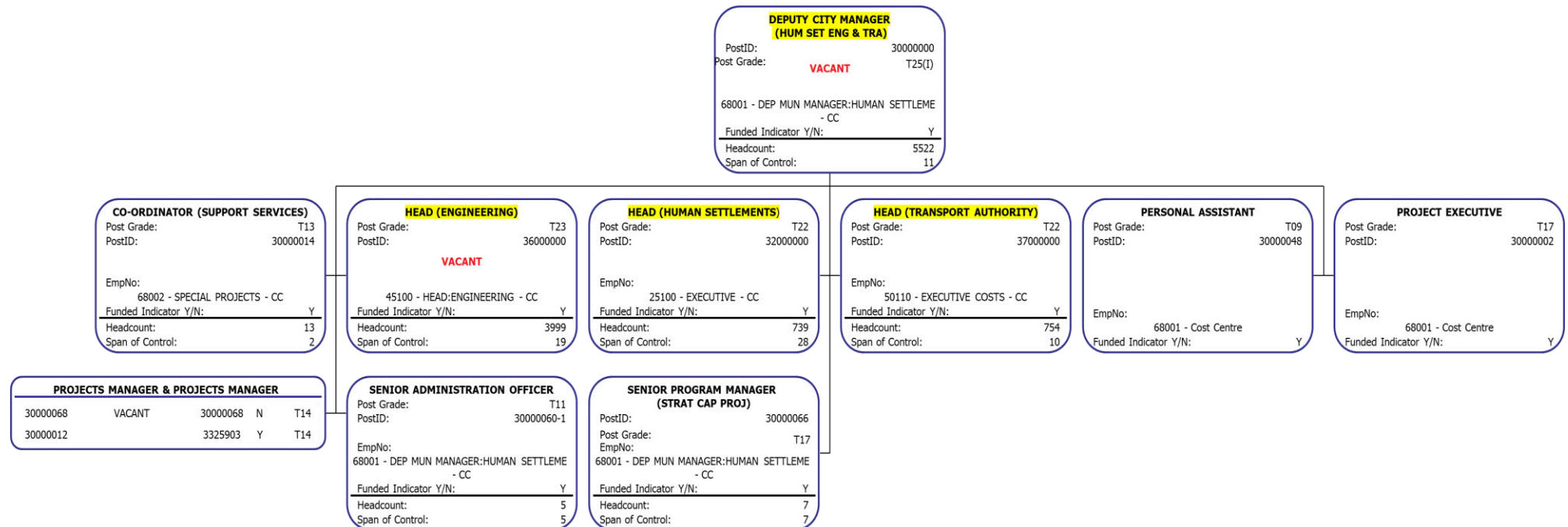
Figure 4.4: eThekwini Municipality High Level Structure



4.9. HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT SERVICES CLUSTER

This Cluster is a significant backbone and a point of strategic attention in respect of the economic and social and spatial strategies through its implementation of Plan 3 of the City's IDP. The leadership intent is to integrate, promote, and communicate the objectives with key stakeholders so that there is a clear understanding of the direction of the HSET Cluster and, in reciprocity, the needs of communities that are serviced by this Cluster as well as the areas of integration with its parallel municipal departments, (eThekweni Municipality, 2022).

Figure 4.5: HSET Cluster Organogram

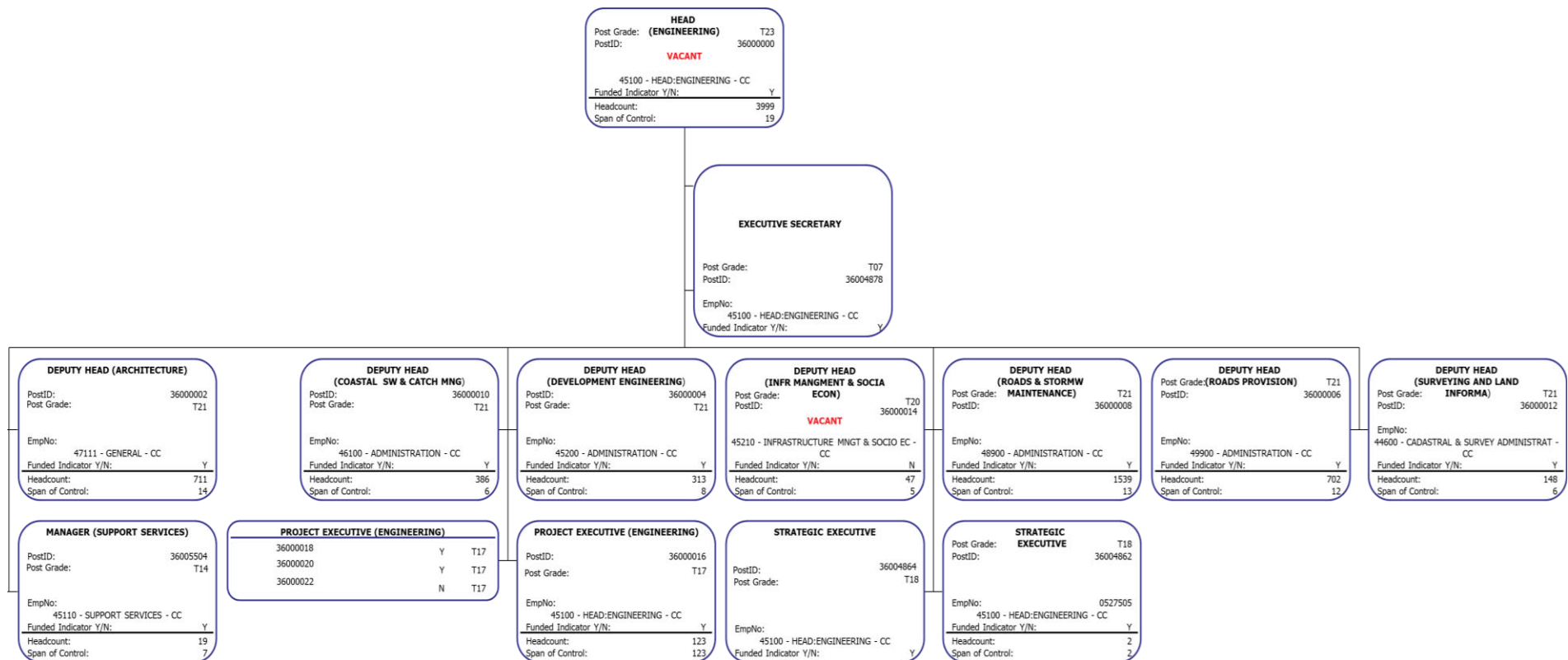


Source: eThekweni Municipality (2022)

4.9.1. ENGINEERING UNIT STRUCTURE

One of the largest infrastructure assets owned by the city is the City's Road network. There are thousands of kilometres of roads in the city, with an overall asset value of over 100 billion rand. The bulk of the capital allocation provided to the Engineering Unit is spent on providing and maintaining road infrastructure. This road network plays a critical role in connecting residents to social and economic opportunities, and to the economy of the city.

Figure 4.6: Engineering Unit Organogram

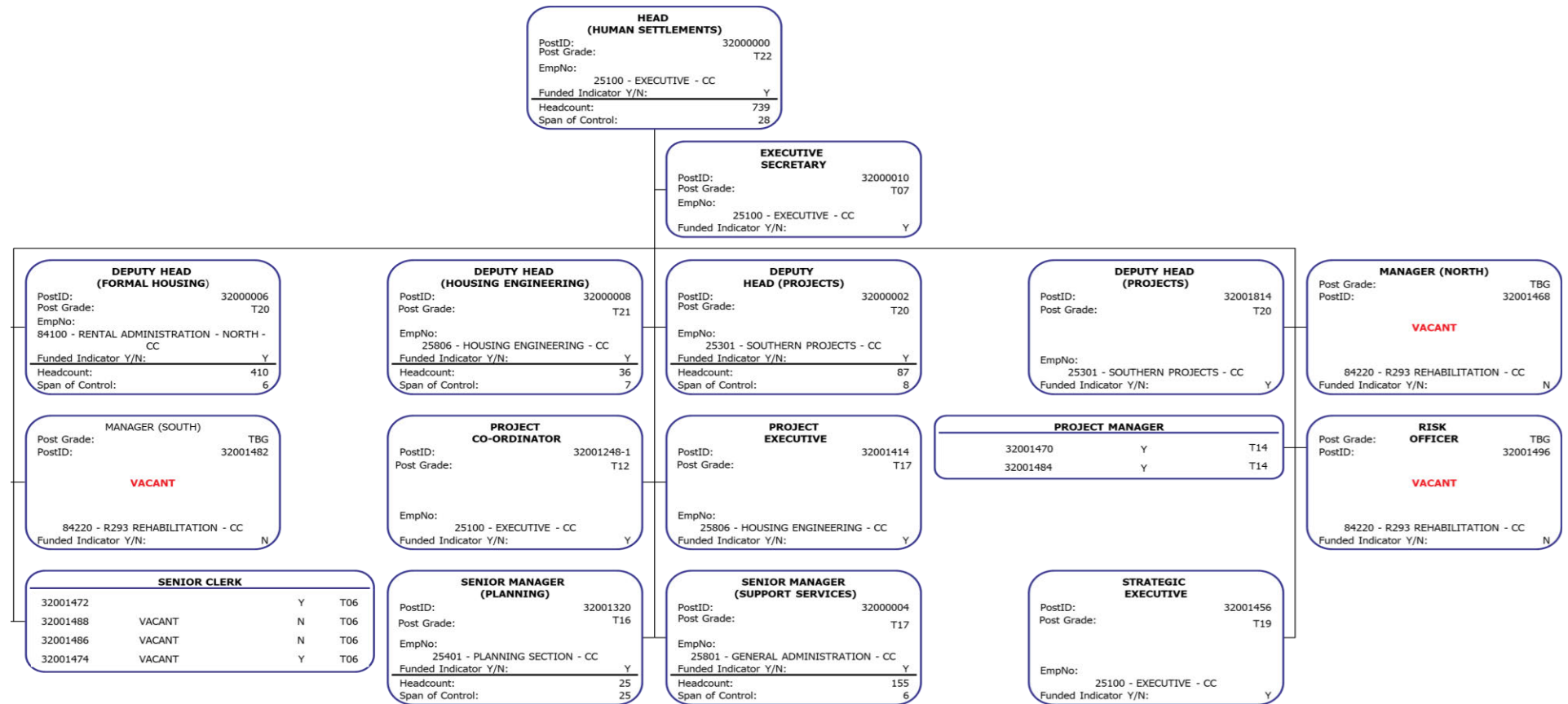


Source: eThekwin Municipality (2022)

4.9.2. HUMAN SETTLEMENTS UNIT STRUCTURE

The influx of people into the city increases pressure to provide proper human settlements. Urbanisation requires urgent strategies to deal with human settlements challenges. Housing is pre-dominantly undertaken through large-scale Housing Projects. Projects are undertaken in three main Regions in eThekweni i.e., North, South, and West.

Figure 4.7: Human Settlements Organogram

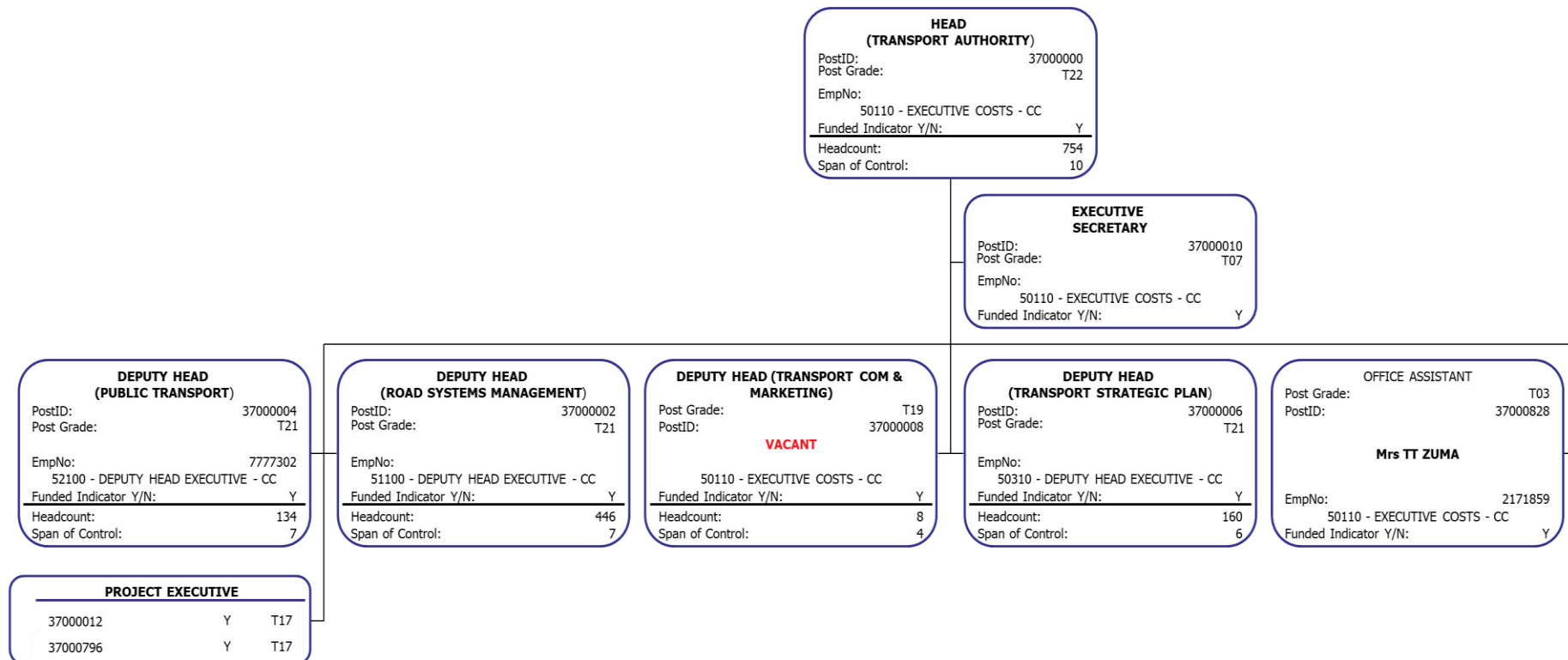


Source: eThekweni Municipality (2022)

4.9.3. TRANSPORT AUTHORITY STRUCTURE

The ETA is responsible for all municipal roads in eThekwin Municipality and plays a critical role in approving construction and other catalytic projects happening across the city. The unit is responsible for the provision of Strategic Transport planning, public transport services, and Road Systems.

Figure 4.8: Transport Authority Unit Organogram



Source: eThekwin Municipality (2022)

4.10. SAMPLING METHOD

This study is a qualitative study, and it is for this reason that the researcher elected to use a non-probability sampling method in selecting the research participants. In this sampling method, participants are deliberately selected to reflect specific types of groups within the study population. Saunders (2012) asserts that this method allows a researcher to decide on what types of units should participate or represent the sample, because the aim is not to generalise the result of the study to the population from which the sample is chosen. The researcher specifically selected participants for this study. The sample comprised 20 permanent employees who form part of management, technical specialist, and scarce skills, making-up occupational level one to three, within the Metropolitan Municipality. This selection criterion was in alignment with the municipality project scope which only applies to these occupational levels and will be cascaded to lower levels in the future. These participants were selected as they would be able to contribute to the research topic and were willing to share their experiences during their tenure in the organisation. These research participants were selected because they would be able to provide rich descriptions of their experiences and were willing to articulate their experiences, thereby providing information that is rich and representative of a population (Saunders, 2012).

4.11. SAMPLE SIZE

While the study included 20 permanent employees who were part of management, technical specialist, and scarce skills, who also fell within occupational levels one to three within Metropolitan Municipality, the number of participants was informed by saturation points reached during the interviews (Kvale, 2010). The interviews were conducted until the data reached an acceptable saturation point and the researcher determined that the research question could be answered adequately. 20 permanent employees were purposefully selected to represent the sample (McLeod, 2018).

Table 4.1: Distribution of sample size

UNIT	INTERVIEW	DISTRIBUTION	COMPLETED
Engineering Unit	February 2023	10	Yes
Transport Authority Unit	March 2023	5	Yes
Human Settlements Units	March 2023	5	Yes

Source: Author's Own Compilation (2023).

4.12. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Kvale (2010) defines an interview as a conversation between two or more people where one or more of the participants takes the responsibility for reporting the substance of what is said. The definition indicates that the interviewer poses a series of questions to the interviewee. Interviews are used to glean qualitative data. In research instances where a questionnaire has been used, it can be followed up with an interview to probe further into any important aspects not fully covered by the questionnaire (Verma & Mallick, 1999).

Interviews are of three kinds: a structured interview, an unstructured interview, and a semi-structured interview. The structured interview is an interview in which an interviewer has prepared a series of questions from which they do not deviate. The unstructured interview or open-ended interview is designed to allow the respondents freedom in answering questions. Lastly, semi-structured interviews are a combination of structured and unstructured interviews used for sensitive topics (Repko, 2008).

The advantages of interviews are the following:

- i. Interview procedures are appropriate for eliciting cooperation from respondents.
- ii. The interviewer is afforded the opportunity to answer respondents' questions, probing for adequate answers.
- iii. Interviews allow for the concurrent use of other methods, such as observations, visual cues, etc.; and
- iv. The interviewer can establish rapport with the interviewee (Creswell, 2007).

Some of the notable disadvantages of interviews include the following:

- i. It is an uneconomical method of data collection.
- ii. The researcher needs to be adept at the interviewing technique, which is normally not the case.
- iii. Some samples (those in "high-rise buildings or high crime areas, elites, employees, students") may be less accessible, thus making it difficult to interview research participants (Fowler, 2009).

In-depth semi-structured interviews were used in this study to collect data from participants.

4.13. DATA QUALITY CONTROL

Data quality control is imperative when doing scientific research, as it guides the researcher in ensuring that all data collection instruments used measure what they are supposed to measure consistently throughout the study. Azeroual and Abuosba (2019) believe that data quality is of great importance in every research. It provides resilient, useful results, and allows for an in-depth understanding of the research data. Azeroual and Abuosba (2019) describe quality data as data which is error-free, complete, accurate, and reliable. According to Wang and Strong (1996), data quality refers to its fitness for use. In this study, the following data quality control measures were considered (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005).

4.13.1. Dependability

Dependability of the data refers to the stability of the findings over time (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). Due to different views and interpretations, researchers are required to support their findings and acknowledge sources by different authors. An audit trail was used to record all information used in this study, considering that in-depth interviews were used to collect data, which required recordings, note-taking, and data analysis (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005).

4.13.2. Credibility

The credibility of research is very important in that sources need to be verifiable and/or auditable. Credibility discourages the researchers from fabricating the study. Readers can trust that the researcher invested effort into studying the phenomenon. It provides readers with an opportunity to ascertain whether findings of the research are a true reflection of data presented and original views of the researcher (Mouton, 2004). Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Polit and Beck (2012) claim that credibility is also known as internal validity in quantitative research, and concerns truth-value aspects. The credibility of the qualitative data was determined through the following means: prolonged engagement with the participants, peer debriefing, and triangulation.

Utilising this approach, the researcher spent extended time periods obtaining relevant and rich information from the participants and building trust during the interview sessions. Peer debriefing is a common method of establishing the credibility of qualitative data, in which the researcher discusses the investigation with peers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The transcribed qualitative data was discussed with peer debriefers who knew the subject matter and research methodology. The peer debriefers were encouraged to be empathic when providing feedback

on the research. The debriefing sessions were documented to serve as a reference for the investigator and assist with the audit trail. Peer debriefing, as a credibility criterion, was used because it helps in the observations and interpretations of the data. The study used multiple and different data, and methods of triangulation. This enabled the researcher to use the qualitative and quantitative methods to compensate for the limitations in each. The interviews were used as the data-collection tools to complement the quantitative results from secondary data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Moreover, theoretical triangulation was conducted, which allowed the use of multiple perspectives and frameworks in exploring the intangible outcomes of TM practices.

4.13.3. Confirmability

According to Anney (2014, p. 63) confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of the research can be confirmed or corroborated by others. If this can be established through the audit trail as well, the researcher affirms that this study can be confirmed. Multiple perspectives were utilised to explore the impact of TM on practices. Furthermore, mixed-methods research was conducted to enhance the confirmability of the research findings. In terms of the audit trail, the study described the research steps that were followed during the initial stage of the research by developing and reporting the research findings.

4.13.4. Measurements

The researcher used interview schedules and checklists to track the progress and success of the study. The interview schedule assisted the researcher to complete the study within a specified timeframe outlined in the research timetable. The checklist indicates that the participants participated in the study as allocated in the interview timetable (Maykut, 2006).

4.13.5. Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the study outcomes can be generalised to other scenarios. This study was conducted at eThekweni Municipality in Durban and findings cannot be generalised to other settings; however, other researchers can use the results for this study as a point of reference (Babbie and Mouton, 2014).

4.13.6. Reliability

Golafshani (2003) affirms the reliability of a research instrument helps to ensure consistency or repeatability of the measurement of a phenomenon. Mohajan (2017) observes that reliability and validity are the most effective tools for evaluating research instruments. Kimberlin and

Winterstein (2008) assert that reliability and validity are prerequisites for enhancing the integrity and quality of the measurement tool. Tavakol and Dennick (2011) concur that reliability and validity are the two most essential tools that enhance the measurement instrument's accuracy and evaluate the research work. Forza (2002) claims that it is impossible to describe the effect of measurement errors on theoretical relationships if the reliability and validity of the research instruments cannot be determined. The following two major components of reliability were utilised in the data quality control of this study.

- i. Parallel forms of reliability are a measure of equivalence, and involved administering two different forms of measurements to the same group of participants and obtaining a positive correlation between the two forms; and
- ii. Test-retest reliability, which involves administering the same research instrument at two different points in time to the same research subjects, obtained a correlation between the two sets of responses.

4.13.7. Validity

Validity helps to check whether the research is measuring what it is supposed to be measuring. Below are the four types of validity that can be used depending on the research instrument the researcher has chosen (Borsboom, Meulenberg and van Heerden, 2014).

- i. Face validity requires the research instrument to be relevant to participants in the study. Face validity can be established by asking friends, colleagues, and individuals from the target population to comment on the relevance, balance, and adequacy of the research instrument in relation to the research objectives.
- ii. Content validity is like face validity except that the researcher must seek the opinion of experts in the field on the adequacy of his/her research instrument.
- iii. Criterion validity has two distinct forms of validity associated with it; and
- iv. Predictive validity refers to the capacity of a respondent's ratings and responses to items on the instrument to predict behaviour outside the immediate framework of the research instrument.

4.14. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis and interpretation represents the application of deductive and inductive logic to data in the research. Shepard (2002) advocates that accurate and appropriate analysis of

research findings is an important component in determining data integrity. Improper analysis of data distorts the scientific results, misleads readers, and negatively affects the public perception of the entire research. The purpose of the data analysis is to offer the readers more insight into the research findings.

This study used thematic data analysis to analyse primary data sourced through interviews and content analysis to interpret secondary data obtained from organisational reports (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Harper (2012) explains that qualitative analysis is the examination of qualitative data such as text data from interview transcripts; the emphasis in qualitative analysis is sense-making or understanding a phenomenon, rather than predicting or explaining. Atkins and Wallace (2012) and Schurink et al. (2011) state that a qualitative study involves an inseparable relationship between data collection and data analysis to build a coherent interpretation of data. Albers (2017) observes that the principal goal of data analysis is to display the patterns, trends, and relationships of the study's contextual issues. The quantitative data was first analysed, followed by the analysis of the qualitative data.

Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that it is the first qualitative method that should be learned as it provides core skills that are useful for conducting many other kinds of analysis. Another advantage, particularly from the perspective of learning and teaching, is that it is a method rather than a methodology (Braun and Clarke 2006; Clarke and Braun, 2013). This means that, unlike many qualitative methodologies, it is not tied to an epistemological or theoretical perspective.

The thematic analysis method was used in this study. Recorded data was transcribed to derive meaning required for the study. Thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set. By focusing on meaning across a data set, thematic analysis allows the researcher to make sense (Clarke, 2012), Figure 4.9 illustrates the thematic data analysis process.

Sesay (2011) defines thematic analysis as a method of identifying, analysing, interpreting, and reporting significant patterns or themes within data where a theme captures something relevant about the data which is related to the research question and represents some level of relationship in the data. For this study, the data was grouped together according to the following themes:

- a) Talent attraction
- b) Performance management.
- c) Organisational performance.
- d) Succession planning
- e) Talent development

The researcher followed the following four key stages in thematic analysis:

i. **Read and annotate transcripts.**

This is the most basic stage. Here you do not provide an overview of the data but make preliminary observations. This is particularly useful for the first few transcripts, where you are still trying to get a feel for the data.

ii. **Identify themes.**

The next step is to start looking in detail at the data to identify themes and summaries. In the margins of each transcript or set of notes, start to note what the interviewee is referring to. Try to make these as abstract as possible, this means not just summarising the text but trying to think of what the text is an example.

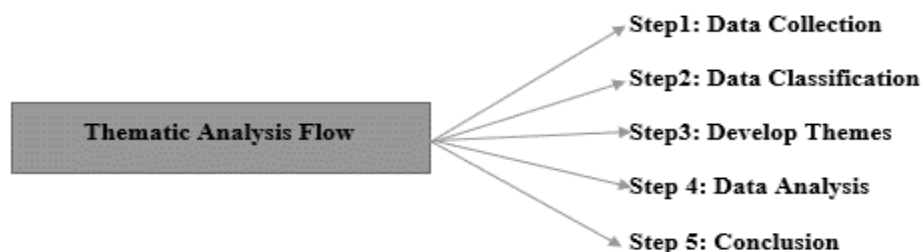
iii. **Developing a coding scheme**

These initial themes can now be gathered to begin to develop a coding scheme. This is a list of all the themes, and the ‘codes’ that will be applied to the data.

iv. **Coding the data**

The codes are applied to the data to sort it into themes.

Figure 4.9: Thematic Analysis



Source: Braun and Clarke (2006).

4.14.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS

An advantage of qualitative content analysis is that it is cost effective (Creswell, 2007). The materials necessary for conducting qualitative content analysis are easily and inexpensively accessible. Qualitative content analysis is a particularly beneficial procedure for assessing events or processes in social groups when public records also exist. A researcher working alone can effectively undertake a content analysis study, whereas undertaking a national survey might require a large number of researchers, enormous amounts of time and huge expense. Qualitative content analysis provides a means by which to study a process that occurs over a long period of time that may affect trends in a society (Babbie, 2007)

This study augmented the utilisation of thematic data analysis with content analysis because in this study there was some quantification of data, Thus, content analysis provided opportunities for the researcher count instances of codes which allowed the comparison of the qualitative and quantitative data collected in the study. Content analysis was applied to numerical data and other textual data, not just data from the interviews. The analytical process content allowed the researcher to familiarise herself with the data and conduct coding on all data (Creswell, 2007).

4.15. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations addressed in this research included a written consent form, confidentiality/privacy, anonymity, bias, and incentives. Regarding informed consent, written permission was obtained from the selected institutions and the participants. A written informed consent form was attached to the research instruments that contained important information such as research methods, procedures for the investigation, categories of the participants, and benefits derived from the study. The participants were requested to sign the form, indicating their acceptance.

Concerning the confidentiality principle, the transcribed data were stored in a secure place to prevent unauthorised access. Moreover, the participants were assured that the information elicited would be used solely for its intended purposes. They were also assured of the confidentiality clause.

Regarding anonymity, the participants names were replaced by pseudonyms in the research and any future publication, guarding their personal information. Every necessary step was

taken to ensure that participants' identities were not disclosed to third parties. Also, bias was eliminated by giving every element within the population the same opportunity to be included in the study.

4.16. CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the research methodology adopted for the study. The pragmatic approach was used to collect and analyse multiple data on the research phenomenon. Moreover, deductive, and inductive approaches were combined to provide an in-depth understanding of the research phenomenon. Descriptive and exploratory studies were conducted to accurately describe and provide more insight into the nature of the research phenomenon. The next chapter presents the results of the qualitative study.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the interviews that were conducted with the middle management, technical specialists, and executives within the Human settlements, Engineering and Transport authority Cluster to understand the impact of talent management (TM) practices on service delivery outcomes within eThekweni Municipality. The conceptual framework adapted from Areilly (2003) for this study, namely, the TM conceptual framework, provided the basis for the completion of interviews via Microsoft Teams that were emailed to participants utilising Microsoft forms to maintain the confidentiality of the research participants.

According to Osanloo and Grant (2016), the theoretical framework is important because it dictates data collection procedure based on theory which has a connection with concepts, constructs, and ideas. This chapter, therefore, is an elucidation of the findings of this study based on the theoretical framework underpinning it. It is divided into three parts: the first part reports on the respondents' demographic information, the second part reports the findings to each of the questions posed in the interview, and the third part presents the findings of the results that were obtained from talent review reports, overtime reports, and performance management assessment reports.

5.2. STUDY OBJECTIVES

Presentation of data is categorised into themes emanating from the research objectives, research questions, and interview guide. The aim of the study was to explore the impact of TM practices on service delivery outcomes in the eThekweni Municipality. The research takes into consideration TM practices and how people performance translates into organisational performance. For the purposes of this study, the following five objectives were identified:

- a) To understand the rationale for the implementation of TM within eThekweni Municipality.
- b) To examine how talent acquisition practices impact service delivery outcomes.

- c) To explore how TM practices contribute to capacity development and employee performance within eThekwini Municipality.
- d) To understand if employee performance translates into organisational performance; and
- e) To explore the impact of TM practices on service delivery outcomes at eThekwini Municipality and develop a model for monitoring such practices.

Table 5.1: Themes and Sub-themes

No.	MAIN THEMES	No.	SUB-THEMES
1.	TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	1.1	Internal Customer Experience
		1.2	EVP-Recruitment and selection
2	EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	2.1	Performance Management
		2.2	Succession Management
		2.3	Talent Development
3	ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE		Service Delivery Outcomes

5.3.RESPONSE RATE

The 20 targeted participants that fell within the target population responded to the interview questions. The researcher selected this sample based on characteristics of the population that were of interest employment at TASK grade fourteen and above to enable participants to answer the research questions. Remarkably, all 20 research participants completed the interview questions and availed themselves for interviews on Microsoft Teams. Table 5.2 below is indicating the response rate across the different Business Units of the Cluster. The overall response rate of 100% can be described as excellent in terms of Maxfield and Babbie's (2014) standard.

Table 5.2: HSET Cluster Response rate

HUMAN SETTMENTS, ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT CLUSTER				
Business Unit	No. of employees	No. of participants	No. of responses	%
Engineering	100	10	10	100
Human Settlements	50	5	5	100
Transport Authority	50	5	5	100

5.4. PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The findings are presented in terms of each of the questions posed in the interview questionnaire. A total of ten questions were posed to the 20 participants on different occupational levels within this Cluster but limited to technical roles, middle management, and executives as the organisational strategy on TM only covers these levels. The first question of the interview dealt with position details, level of position, and the location of the position within the Cluster. The participants then responded to the remaining nine questions and their responses were consolidated in line with the key questions that were posed to participants. Data from internal reports was used to supplement the data collected from the interviews. The next section details the interview questions that were posed to participants and their responses.

5.4.1. Participant details question

Of the 20 participants who responded to the interview questionnaire, six were executives within occupational level one and two, ten were middle to senior management, while the remaining four were technical specialists. This is in line with the TM strategy of eThekweni municipality which focuses on employees at TASK Grade 14 and above as well as employees who occupy positions deemed to be technically scarce and critical to organisational success.

5.4.2. Application of talent management practices

Majority of the respondents indicated that: The main issue that requires urgent attention is the turnaround time of recruitment practices which has a direct impact on our ability to deliver services. Long lead times amount to service delivery delays due to constraint capacity. The constraints in capacity lead to increased overtime beyond the legislative requirements for overtime. *Majority of the delays, particularly in the infrastructure delivery cluster, are further exacerbated by political principles who insist on contributing to hiring the candidates that will be responsible for major budgets and might also influence to whom the major construction projects will be allocated. At times, their preferred candidates do not possess the essential competencies.*

Majority of the respondents also indicated that: Talent management is supposed to address organisational issues such as the aging workforce within the Municipality and generational mix in development, hiring, and promotional initiatives to ensure business continuity. There has been an improvement in the number of business areas embarking on talent management, developing staff, creating work exposure opportunities, and eventually promoting those employees. What is glaringly lacking is the communication of talent management success

stories. The communication of these stories will arouse interest in other employees and line managers who are not convinced of the impact of talent management in the organisation. *There are several Senior Managers who were identified and promoted, others are now executives and leaders of units, yet these successes are not shared, and this is a missed opportunity to embed these practices in the organisation.* Participants further indicated that this is a huge challenge, take for example during Covid-19, a lot of employees with pre-existing conditions were required to isolate themselves for protection. Considering that a significant number of the people who hold executive and senior managerial positions in the municipality have advanced age and are prone to pre-existing conditions, this left a number of critical work functions exposed with junior employees filling these positions unsupported. The increase in the number of deaths amongst the elderly made our leaders less willing to accept any risk exposure. Some of the potential risk areas were identified before Covid and communicated to line management who did not see the importance of talent management until covid-19. Take for example, City health was warned of its aging workforce and the need to create succession plans to ensure business continuity, but no action was taken.

In 2019 majority of the executives in the City Health Unit proceeded on to retirement, whilst the remaining leaders were also advanced in age. At the same time, we experienced covid-19 which meant that several elderly people would have direct exposure to the virus due lack of generational mix within the leadership team that was responsible for the running of the clinics. In the case of the Engineering Cluster, it became increasingly difficult to attract scarce skilled individuals into the city. If the city had been intentional about its talent management practices, the challenges faced by the workforce could have been met with better preparedness and improved prospects of success. Participants further indicated that the quality of the professionals also is challenging since senior executives often collude with political principles to water down minimum essential requirements of technical roles to accommodate those who are subservient to the principles. This not only demoralises existing qualified professionals, but it also floats various legislative requirements such as the Engineering Act of Southern Africa, which clearly defines the scope of work for different categories of registration. The impact is not just limited to other candidates who were competing for the same role, but it filters down to impact service delivery as these people lack fundamental competencies. The impact is also not limited to the month or year of their appointment but filters all the way into the succession planning processes of the organisation where undeserving individuals have either been hired or promoted and, incidentally, they form part of the talent pool for leadership positions.

Majority of the respondents further indicated that: Job security with benefits such as medical aid, pension, and bursaries for high institutions of learning, the payment of scarce and critical skills allowances are the biggest positive aspects of talent management practices though we wish we could be allowed greater operational scope with a view to contribute meaningfully towards service delivery.

Some respondents indicated that: Ongoing professional development is one positive aspect of the talent management value chain. The Municipality provides numerous work exposure and development programmes from basic to the most complex. Some of these initiatives include the driver training programme for elementary occupational level, artisan programmes, professional development for technicians, engineers, police in training, and fire fighters just to name a few. Furthermore, the municipality creates opportunities for acting appointments, and secondments which are occupationally directed learning initiatives.

5.4.3. Challenges and benefits of talent management practices.

Majority of the respondents indicated that: The most challenging aspect of talent management practices within the Municipality is talent acquisition or recruitment practices. In the past, the top first risk in the City's risk register was the issue of aging workforce. However, if you review the risk register now, the first item on the risk register is recruitment and selection of employees. The second most challenging aspect is dealing with employment relations. There are several developments that are impacting this element of talent management such as the reduction in membership of SAMWU and the formation of the new trade union MATUSA, which is highly militant as it attempts to cement itself within the local government workforce. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of work stoppages resulting in collective misconduct disciplines which further strains the relationship between the employer and the employees. *Through the inclusion of Unions in interviewing processes for observer status, unions want to dictate and participate in interviews. This delays processes and translates into terrible employee experiences.*

5.4.4. The influence of recruitment practices and the impact on service delivery outcomes and the workforce at large.

A significant number of respondents indicated that: Talent management practices have been very good and impactful. The employer has often prioritised technical skill to improve the quality of services rendered through these employees. The employer has even taken a step further to ensure that recruitment packages within the municipality are comparable with other

employers. These packages include the recruitment and retention motor vehicle allowances aimed at attracting talent into the organisation. The municipality also offers scarce skills allowances for occupations within the built environment, critical skills allowances for impactful support function, and favourable benefits associated with rest periods like annual leave, sick leave, and family responsibility leave. *The strong focus on transformation and the preference of women and people living with disability when it comes to appointments for leadership and technical roles has drastically increased the diversity and inclusion within the city.*

The majority of the respondents indicated that: Whilst the City has made good strides when it comes to transformation and provides solidly attractive benefits, because of all these lucrative benefits in recent years recruitment practices have been hijacked by politicians to the detriment of service delivery. Take for example, the recruitment within the Roads and Stormwater maintenance requires candidates who are physically fit to deal with the labour-intensive nature of the jobs. This means that recruitment assessments and interviews should test for such capabilities. However, the majority of the employees recently employed cannot fit into manholes or get into the trucks without assistance which is a clear indication of the fact that they may not have been subjected to recruitment assessments.

The greatest concern raised by respondents was: There is cadre deployments and cronyism when it comes to recruitment practices which is driven and protected by human capital practitioners. Take for example the recruitment of general workers across the municipality. These are now the only positions that are centralised to the Human Capital Unit. They prioritise recruitment for councillor constituencies, their family members, and friends who are not interested in service delivery and refuse any form of accountability. The impact to the workforce is that those who have opportunities to leave the municipality have done so and majority of those in technical streams have emigrated abroad.

Respondents indicated that: The issue is further compounded by the tendering processes within the local government, and these add their own challenges to recruitment practice within the municipality. In recent years, executives within the municipality have to a greater extent been consulting with their political principles on whether to appoint certain candidates when it comes to recruitment and selection practices. This is premised on the fact that certain business units, for example like Roads Provision, Water, and Sanitation, have the biggest budgets

associated with capital or infrastructure projects. As such individuals appointed to lead such functions are often in alignment with certain political ideologies and prime the environment for easy access to those projects.

These practices overlook long serving qualified and experienced employees in favour of unqualified youth league members. Senior and strategic posts are filled with unqualified people who are aligned certain political parties, and this obviously leads to non-performing sectors as these people do not have a clue as to what they are doing. Non-black professionals are not appointed or promoted no matter how capable they are; service delivery thus becomes hampered due to unqualified people being appointed into senior posts.

Majority of the respondents expressed concern: The implementation of the City's employment equity plan does not cater for the employers' operational requirements. The city is strangely applying employment equity plan requirements even at the expense of service delivery. For an example, certain positions will be requiring female candidates due to them being under-represented in that occupational category. What happens at an operational level is that once the female is employed she will refuse to service certain sites that are in remote area which could be dangerous for females and you find that other employees are now stretched having to cover this work that should have been done by this employee and eventually this employee will resign or request a transfer which will lead to the repeat of this cycle. The other challenge when it comes to the implementation of employment equity through recruitment is that you find that promotional opportunities have become limited for male employees within the municipality. The greatest challenge is on the interpretation of the requirements of the employment equity plan.

There are instances where you will find that there are three grades within an occupational level and when you apply for the next grade within that occupational level which is not over-represented as you are already counted as an internal employee within that occupational level, you are overlooked in favour of females despite them not being under-represented within that occupational level and that becomes unfair exclusion. Participants further opined that recruitment delays have a negative influence on local government service delivery. Prolonged recruitment processes result in critical positions remaining vacant and hamper public service performance. Due to vacant positions, existing employees are expected to take on extra duties, resulting in increased strain and potential burnout. Recruitment delays do cause irritation and low morale among current staff, reducing productivity and engagement.

A protracted recruitment procedure also results in the loss of qualified candidates to other businesses, reducing the talent pool accessible to local government. Delays in recruitment result in greater expenses since the Municipality needs to rely on outside consultants to fill service delivery gaps. Streamlining recruitment processes and eliminating bureaucracy will aid in the employment of new employees. This includes establishing clear, consistent recruitment practices, establishing realistic timeframes, and periodically monitoring progress to identify and address bottlenecks. Using technology to streamline recruiting processes and enhance overall efficiency of talent management initiatives will help. Adopting application tracking systems, using online job boards and social media platforms for recruitment, and applying digital tools for staff training and development are some of the initiatives that should be considered as they are available but not effectively utilised. Promoting diversity and inclusion in recruiting and talent management processes will help to attract a broader range of qualified applicants while also creating a more inclusive work environment. This must include putting in place diversity and inclusion policies, doing targeted outreach, and providing training on unconscious bias and cultural competency.

5.4.5. Overtime work and improvement in service delivery outcomes.

Majority of the respondents indicated that: There is a direct link between the poor recruitment practices and the increasing abuse of overtime in the Municipality. If the focus of talent management in the city was on hiring the right people, with the right skills for the right job roles and at the right time, those leaders would be competent in managing employee performance and curbing overtime abuse. *The current situation is caused by the fact that management have abdicated responsibility for managing overtime utilisation in alignment with the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. Employees deliberately delay ordinary work to enable themselves to claim overtime. When this happens, the supervisors of these employees by virtue of the reporting line also benefit from this overtime because they must supervise the work being done and the managers in the Departments are not addressing these issues.* The Municipality is continuously recruiting, particularly at lower levels. the municipality does conduct bulk recruitment for general workers, metro police, and fire Departments for example. The continuous increase in recruitment should be having positive results and driving down the cost of overtime.

The opposite is true in the municipality, however; recruitment is on the increase year on year and overtime costs are also on the increase. Overtime increase can be attributed to insufficient overtime control mechanisms. It increases the City's salary bill and negatively impacts on the City's ability to meet the service demands due to depleted financial resources. Overtime has now become a right for employees, and non-allocation of over time results in work stoppages and strikes. Again, the municipality is seen as a cash cow with an endless budget that can be tapped into without any consequences. Employees have claimed overtime hours that are not humanly possible and there are no consequences for such conduct.

Research participants also indicated that: Employees are abusing overtime because management is not monitoring the utilisation of overtime in alignment with legislative requirements. There are departments where employees deliberately delay work to ensure that the work gets delivered as overtime. For example, you find a situation where you report a water leakage on Thursday, but the employee will delay the incident and only attend to it on Friday afternoon to delay further until Sunday to ensure they earn more overtime. There is no positive impact associated with overtime that is unmanaged. In fact, the overtime is incentivising bad practices where employees are delaying work deliverables and causing backlogs to create overtime. Some supervisors are complicit in this behaviour because they are beneficiaries of the abuse of overtime as they will be required onsite to monitor the work. In the past, for example, roads provision managers used to create weekly output of tonnage that was required, excluding inclement weather and breakages. This tonnage would be a baseline for ordinary hours of work and where there were unforeseen circumstances like inclement weather then employees would be allowed overtime to catch up and where there were machinery breakdowns or life threatening disasters employees would be granted emergency overtime. However, all these controls have been abandoned.

There is now also a very strong link between union officials and political parties to the extent that union officials wear political regalia in the workplace. As a result, several employees' view overtime as a right. Hence, when such overtime is refused or managed there are several work stoppages hampering service delivery and thus forcing line managers to accede to the overtime demands. To a smaller extent, the delays in recruitment processes also contribute to the overtime challenge as existing employees are expected to shoulder the responsibilities of vacant roles over an extended period.

5.4.6. Effective people performance management and service delivery

Majority of the respondents indicated that: While the drafting of key performance areas and indicators is done in such a way that employees will meet performance expectations, there is no clear alignment between actual performance and service delivery on the ground. The main reason for this misalignment is that performance agreements in the municipality are input based as opposed to measuring the required outputs. The cause of this challenge is that there is no alignment between the Integrated Development Planning, which is an approach to planning that involves the entire municipality and its citizens in finding the best solutions to achieve good long-term development, and the service delivery budget implementation plan.

A significant number of respondents indicated that: The fragmentation when it comes to managing employee performance is so bad that executive performance is managed by a different department whilst general employee performance co-ordination is managed by the human capital unit. The framing of the performance agreements is poorly done and input-based to the extent that employees will achieve their input without needing to fulfil the service delivery outcomes. This is the area that requires immediate attention because performance management in its current form is ineffective. Some of the indicators that the system is measuring the wrong elements can be found in the increasing unhappiness with the level and quality of service that is provided by the municipality. The recent COVID-19 disaster and floods have also made matters worse with extensive infrastructure damages. It has taken the municipality more than a year to address all those damages and even when that is done, the level of delivery is quite poor, this is an indication of poor management and leadership. The supporting units to service delivery units are not providing the required support and holding those units to account. For instance, you will find that payments have been made for substandard work, therein, you must question what the role of finance in this regard is simply to process payments or ensure value for money. The municipality is failing at the effective monitoring of both the municipal employee performance and contractor performance for contracted services.

Majority of the respondents occupying scarce and technical roles indicated that: *Our skills and technical competencies are under-valued and under-utilised by our employer who pays premium remuneration and scarce skills allowances.* The municipality has more than 300 positions classified as being scarce in the cluster. More than 50 percent of these positions are

occupied by professionally qualified and skilled individuals who are professionally registered with different professional bodies within the built environment. The municipality also has a development programme for professional engineers which has been successful at producing professional engineers. Despite all these efforts, the municipality continues to outsource technical work to external service providers. The skilled professionals employed by the municipality are only required to play a project management role. This approach takes away from their ability to strengthen their technical skills through practical experience. In some instances, the service providers deliver inferior quality work which requires the internal employees to redo the entire project. *There is a lost opportunity cost where the municipality is paying premium salaries and not fully utilising internal employees. If the municipality wants to continue with the current operating model, the leadership should consider doing away with technical roles where majority of the work is outsourced and only appoint project managers.*

Alternatively, work should be split between internal workers and work for contracted services should only be utilised to augment internal capacity. Equally concerning, on the other hand, is the question of the role of human capital in service delivery, and why they are not conducting monitoring and evaluation of performance outcomes and making appropriate recommendations in so far as performance enhancement is concerned. The performance management processes are the most challenging because there is no quality control or value-added form of human capital where managers check if the employees are delivering or have delivered what they are required to deliver. Human capital should also have the responsibility to recognise line managers who are not managing performance regularly and report them. However, now performance is just an administrative exercise. Performance management in its current form is input based and human capital should be leading line management towards it becoming more outcomes based and incorporating the assessment of behavioural competencies. The municipality is a service environment and therefore behavioural competencies, or lack thereof, will have a significant impact on performance outcomes.

5.4.7. Performance assessments, rewards, and customer satisfaction

A significant number of respondents explained that: There is a misalignment between the implementation performance management and service delivery. There is also a lack of coordination between the units that are supposed to be monitoring service delivery and those that deliver the service, the Performance Management Unit, and the Human Capital Unit. Performance agreements are not correctly crafted, and input-based which means that they measure the incorrect elements that will not translate into service delivery.

In other instances, line managers do not assess employee performance at all, they just allocate a score of three for most employees out of concern that they will need to engage with union when employees have been rated as poor performers. *The city has very few employees that are identified as non-performing and there are no interventions to deal with their non-performance. Employee performance is not output based, it is more linked to job descriptions which does not talk to service delivery issue.* Employees are only interested in meeting their performance scores so they can get performances bonuses, but those scores are not aligned to IDP and the service delivery budget implementation plan.

There are a number of contributors to these challenges such as lack of employee accountability, lack of proper performance management, and a fear on the part of supervisors of being challenged by their subordinates which causes them to award a comfortable score that indicates that employees are meeting performance expectations. There is also a lack of moderation of performance scores, and performance is used as compensation for incorrect salary offers given to employees at the beginning of their employment.

The accumulation of these challenges does not contribute to capability and capacity improvements. Hence, employees work excessive overtime.

5.4.8. Employee engagement and productivity

Majority of respondents indicated that: The city does not monitor engagement levels of employees within the key areas that they want to measure. The last employee engagement survey was done in 2017, the result of which pointed to several issues that required management attention. Currently, engagement is very low, and employees are demoralised, particularly men due to the lack of promotional opportunities emanating from the transformation requirements. High impact employees are disengaged due to lack of recognition and promotional opportunities that are reserved for the politically aligned or relatives of executives and senior managers. A significant number of nonblack employees is completely disengaged or somewhat engaged because the city has been driving the implementation of employment equity extensively.

The result has been that, where there are nonblack employees who have applied for certain roles or if they applied and were not successful, the vacancies are declared non-appointments, meaning that no suitable candidates was found, despite there being nonblack candidates who were appointable based on merits. This approach creates an environment where promotional opportunities are exclusive to black employees, and results in resentment and disengagement in the workplace. Furthermore, there are other issues that impact employee engagement, such as the bureaucratic supply chain management process, that have a direct impact on an employee's ability to delivery services. There are instances where City Fleet is not able to service machinery, power tools, and operational vehicles due to expired contracts that require supply chain management interventions. The non-availability of tools of trade is demoralising to employees who are willing and able to perform but cannot do so because the proper tools are unavailable. Other respondents indicated that: Our teams are productive and engaged, the challenge is that at times, we are overburdened by those that are not delivering, and there are no interventions in place to deal with disengaged or non-performing employees.

5.4.9. Succession management and business continuity

The TM strategy that was adopted by Council in 2011 formed the basis for the TM practice in the city. The strategy document expired in 2020 and should have been reviewed to re-inform and update businesses, since it has been 12 years since the last business case. The implementation of talent management has been varied across the units within the municipality. In other areas, there has been good implementation that has ensured effective business continuity, whilst in other areas employers have been quite reactive. There is also the issue of appointment based on alignment between individuals and politics over merit, which is a total disregard of organisational processes, and adversely impacts service delivery. Some respondents indicated that: The extensive implementation of employment equity appointments has improved succession planning from a diversity and inclusion perspective in the sense that a significant number of women joined the leadership pipeline. A significant number of units had their talent reviews that have informed the talent development action plans. The municipality also has credible occupationally directed learning interventions to provide support to employees. Those employees who lack academic qualifications, which are the inherent requirements of other job roles, are provided with bursaries to bolster the development of talent pools within the municipality. The city has also promoted several employees in different roles and most of these employees have been identified as potential successors in past talent reviews.

The impact and the effectiveness of succession planning in the city is not known or well communicated because there is currently no measure in place to highlight successes in this area. Other respondents indicated that: Succession planning is not effective in our units due to the implementation of employment equity policy that is used to appoint people into posts that already have identified successors. Technical and professional posts are mainly occupied by non-black employees and the current stance is that only black people must get promoted hinders succession planning efforts in technical and professional posts.

5.4.10. Service delivery challenges and customer satisfaction.

Majority of the respondents indicated that: Political interference within the administrative environment is the biggest challenge to service delivery in a number of areas. Recruitment and selection are one such area. There are several critical vacancies within the Human Settlements, Engineering, and the Transport Services Cluster. Most of these positions are senior management and technical positions within the Engineering Unit which are funded positions designated to carrying out critical infrastructure projects. The filling of these vacancies has been delayed due to political interest as the potential candidates are likely to be responsible for lucrative budgets for capital projects. There have been instances where executive leadership has to consult to find out who the potential recruits should be in relation to political ideology or sympathies as opposed to the merits of those candidates. This impacts good work that is being undertaken.

Human capital and line management executives have colluded through the centralisation of general worker positions within the human capital unit to ensure that CVs of family members, and councillors from certain political parties are prioritised when it comes to the filling of vacancies. Furthermore, in departments such as the Roads and Stormwater Maintenance department, potential candidates at a general worker level are no longer being subjected to interviews and physical assessments which are basic requirements of the recruitment process. These processes are circumvented to ensure that certain individuals gain employment despite not having the experience or competencies required for these roles. The impact of these decisions at a service delivery level is that these employees blatantly refuse to carryout instructions, resulting in poor to no service being rendered, the demand for overtime for work not delivered during ordinary hours. Management is afraid to hold them accountable because of their political affiliations and blood relations within the organisation.

The second challenge to service delivery relates to a lack of consequence and poor performance management where Supply Chain Management practitioners are concerned. There have been several incidents reported in which SCM practitioners deliberately delayed the issuing of letters of appointments for service providers to solicit bribes. These employees are not held to account for these unnecessary delays. This impacts the service delivery level. For instance, when the Engineering Unit requires materials, equipment, or machinery for road repairs, the SCM will delay the processes resulting in a total number of 1500 employees sitting and idling in the depots because there are no contracts in place for materials, servicing of vehicles, and equipment required for service delivery. The impact is far reaching because, if a similar situation is experienced in Electricity, Water, and Sanitation Units, basic services will not be delivered because of expired contracts for repairs to operational vehicles and equipment. Yet, there are no disciplinary or performance consequences to deter employees from this kind of conduct.

There is a serious fragmentation and duplication of service in so far as customer contact centres are concerned. The customer contact centres are dysfunctional and marked by poor performance of contact centre agents. Contact centre agents are not effectively managed, and they contribute to the frustration that causes reputational damage to the municipality. Work complaints are not effectively captured and directed to the service departments for implementation. Coordination and integration between units can improve service delivery. All employees need to be held accountable when service delivery needs are not met. Some of the things that can be done to address the situation is to improve on accountability, hire the best employees and terminate ill-disciplined and non-performing employees. A rigid dichotomy between political and administrative environments must be maintained. Although, the political environment has a role to play in ensuring that there is no disruption to the provision of services to the customers, this is one area that lacks effectiveness and opportunity is lost.

Where there are several dedicated employees within the municipality who are passionate about service delivery, their attempts to deliver services to community members often places their lives at risk, since the eruption of business forums. These forums will, at times, disrupt the delivery of services to communities, confiscate work tools from city employees, and hijack municipal vehicles to instil fear in employees and ensure that services are outsourced by the municipality.

The business forums have political alliances which makes it difficult to hold accountable them accountable. Consequently, their interference causes delays and underspending within projects. These forums have also contributed to disruptions in major projects. Some of the project failures have related to internal capacity issues. For example, in the 2019/20 financial year, R300-million in transport grant funding was returned to National Treasury because the municipality failed to spend it properly in the allocated period. Despite huge costs being incurred and significant grant funding from the national government, it [Go! Durban] is years behind where it should be. The deadlines are repeatedly moved. Work stoppages, sabotage and disruptions, poor planning and poor management have all played a role.

5.5. PRESENTATION OF ETHEKWINI INTERNAL REPORT RESULTS

This section outlines the findings that emerged from internal organisation reports that were reviewed to supplement the data collected from interviews. The internal reports that were reviewed include the employment equity (EE) report, the recruitment and selection report, the performance management report, the talent management report, and the overtime report which provide the following insights.

5.5.1. Cluster EE demographic report results for FY 2020/2021

Section 42 of the amended Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 (EEA), as amended by the Employment Equity Amendment Act, No. 47 of 2013, deals with the assessment of compliance with employment equity by a designated employer. The Act requires all employers to develop employment equity plans to achieve diversity and inclusion.

The purpose of the employment equity plan is to enable the employer to achieve reasonable progress towards employment equity to assist in eliminating unfair discrimination in the workplace, and to achieve equitable representation of employees from designated groups by means of affirmative action measures. An employment equity plan, therefore, must clearly set out the steps that the employer plans to follow to achieve these objectives. To assist employers, the Department of Labour published a Code of Good Practice on the Preparation, Implementation, and Monitoring of Employment Equity Plans (EEA, 1998).

Table 5.3: Employment Equity Occupational Levels

Occupational Levels	
01 (TK19-25)	Top Management
02(TK 16-18)	Senior Management
03(TK 14-15)	Professionally Qualified and Experienced Specialist and Middle Management
04(TK09-13)	Skilled Technical and Academically Qualified Workers, Junior Management
05(TK04-08)	Semi-Skilled and Discretionary Decision Making
06(TK01-03)	Unskilled and Defined Decision Making

Table 5.4: Cluster Occupational Level 1: Representation Results

Staff Strength in Level	29									GRAND
Level of Post	01 (TK 19-25)									TOTAL
RACE	WHITES		INDIANS		COLOUREDS		AFRICANS		PWD	
GENDER	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
REQUIRED DEMOGRAPHICS	1	0	2	1	0	0	13	12	1	
CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS	0	0	3	1	0	1	11	13	3	
Variance	-1	0	1	0	0	1	-2	1	2	

During the period under review the White and African Males were under-represented by one whilst Indian Males, Coloured Females, People with Disability and African Females were all over-represented.

Table 5.5: Cluster Occupational Level 2: Representation Results

Staff Strength in Level	71									GRAND
Level of Post	02 (TK 16-18)									TOTAL
RACE	WHITES		INDIANS		COLOUREDS		AFRICANS		PWD	
GENDER	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
REQUIRED DEMOGRAPHICS	1	1	4	2	1	1	32	30	1	
CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS	9	2	25	4	1	0	20	10	2	
Variance	8	1	21	2	0	-1	-12	-20	1	

During the period under review the White Males, White Females, Indian Males, People with Disability, and Indian Females were all over-represented, whilst African Males, Coloured and African Females were all under-represented.

Table 5.6: Cluster Occupational Level 3: Representation Results

Staff Strength in Level	157									GRAND
Level of Post	03 (TK 14-15)									TOTAL
RACE	WHITES		INDIANS		COLOUREDS		AFRICANS		PWD	
GENDER	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
REQUIRED DEMOGRAPHICS	3	2	8	5	1	1	70	66	3	
CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS	11	2	34	14	3	1	53	39	2	
Variance	8	0	26	9	2	0	-17	-27	-1	

During the period under review all other demographic profiles were over-presented with the exception of Africans and People with Disability who were all under-represented.

Table 5.7: Cluster Occupational Level 4: Representation Results

Staff Strength in Level	612									GRAND
Level of Post	04 (TK 9-13)									TOTAL
RACE	WHITES		INDIANS		COLOUREDS		AFRICANS		PWD	
GENDER	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
REQUIRED DEMOGRAPHICS	12	7	32	20	6	6	272	256	12	
CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS	16	5	74	32	11	6	252	216	5	
Variance	4	-2	42	12	5	0	-20	-40	-7	

During the period under review the White Males, Indian Males, Coloured Males were all over-represented, whilst White Females, Africans and People with Disability were under-represented.

Table 5.8: Cluster Occupational Level 5: Representation Results

Staff Strength in Level	1110									GRAND
Level of Post	05 (TK 4-8)									TOTAL
RACE	WHITES		INDIANS		COLOURED		AFRICANS		PWD	
GENDER	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
REQUIRED DEMOGRAPHICS	22	13	59	37	10	10	493	465	22	
CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS	1	7	99	20	10	5	687	281	12	
Variance	-21	-6	40	-17	0	-5	194	-184	-10	

During the period under review Indian Males and African Males were grossly over-represented whilst all other demographic profiles were under-represented.

Table 5.9: Cluster: Occupational Level 6: Representation Results

Staff Strength in Level	606									GRAND
Level of Post	06 (TK 1-3)									TOTAL
RACE	WHITES		INDIANS		COLOURED		AFRICANS		PWD	
GENDER	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
REQUIRED DEMOGRAPHICS	12	7	32	20	5	5	269	254	12	
CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS	2	0	28	1	3	4	380	188	6	
Variance	-10	-7	-4	-19	-2	-1	111	-66	-6	

During the period under review the African Males were grossly over-represented whilst all other demographic profiles remained under-represented.

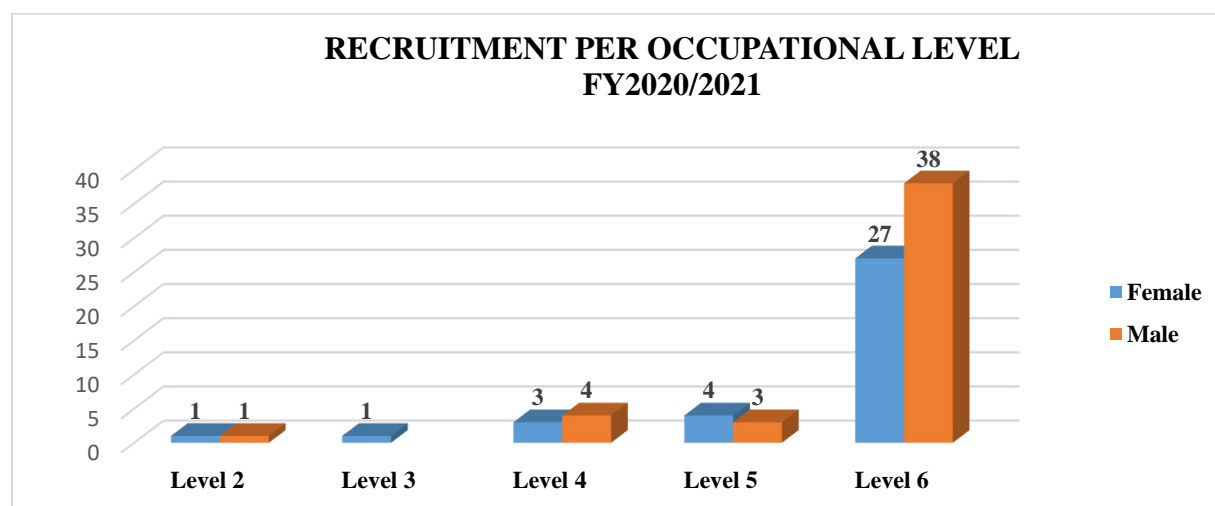
5.6. RECRUITMENT REPORT RESULTS FOR FY 2020/2021

Recruitment and selection in all South African local government is regulated by the municipal staff regulations which seek to transform and improve governance around this process. The recruitment and selection of staff forms part of the municipality's staff attraction strategy and its broader talent management framework. The recruitment and selection of staff should support and enable the municipality's capacity needs. Recruitment strategies should be designed to attract and retain diverse, qualified applicants, including persons with scarce skills and talent.

5.6.1. Cluster recruitment by occupational level.

During the period under review, 26 Females were employed in different occupational levels whilst 46 Males were employed in the same period. The highest number of Males employed was in occupational level six.

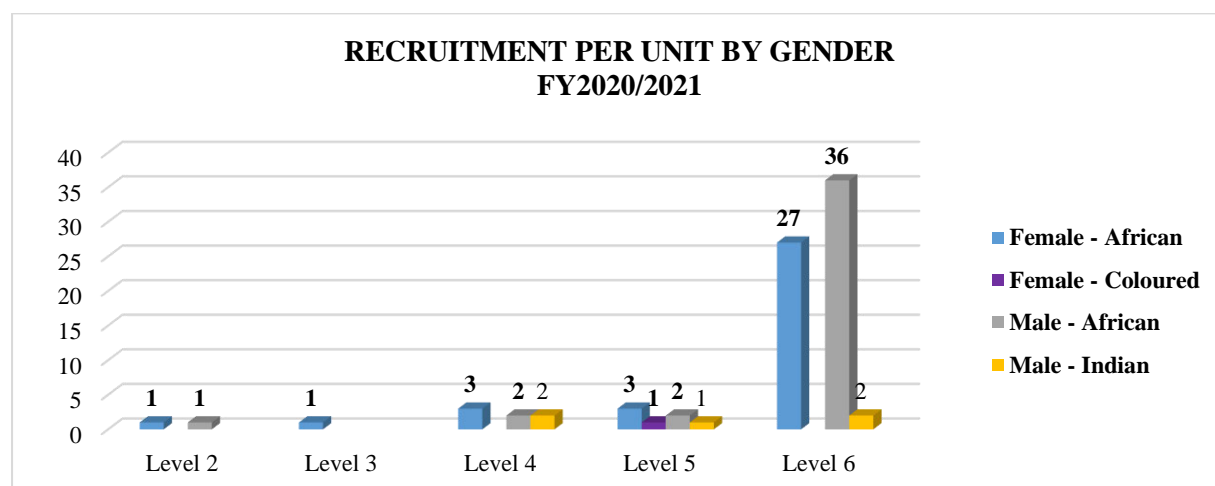
Figure 5.1: Recruitment per occupational level



5.6.2. Cluster recruitment by gender profile

During the period under review 36 African Female candidates were appointed whilst 36 African Males were appointed; five Indian Males and one Coloured Female were also appointed.

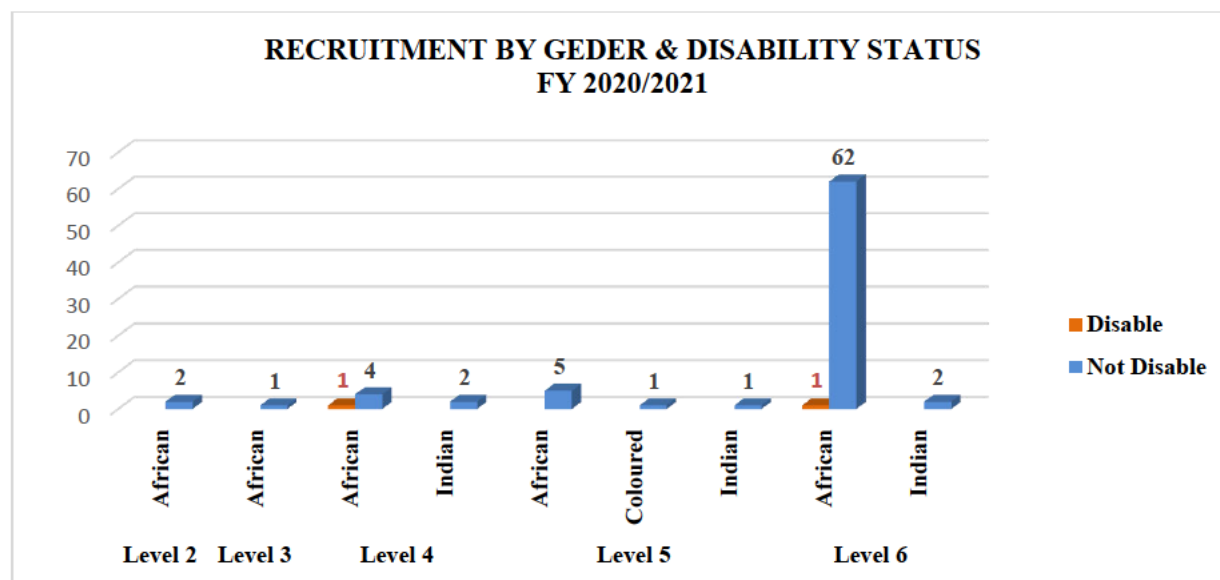
Figure 5.2: Recruitment by gender



5.6.3. Cluster recruitment by gender profile.

During the period under review two people living with disability were employed in occupational level four and occupational level six, respectively.

Figure 5.3: Recruitment by gender and disability.



5.6.4. Recruitment audit report

In July 2020, EMA started collecting data from employees and concluded the audit in June 2021 with sign off from the City Manager in August 2021. The 2020 CoGTA Skills Audit Report was tabled to the Council meeting in October 2022. At this stage, training plans and proposed programmes to close skills gap were not yet developed by Business Units and the EMA Unit. The Internal Audit identified the following areas of concerns as summarised below:

Table 5.10: Recruitment Audit Findings

No	Detailed Audit Findings	New / Repeat	Page
1	Flaws in the recruitment process - Qualification Verification and Job Descriptions	New	8
2	Absence of Integrated System in Human Capital and eThekwin Municipality Academy Unit	New	23
3	Recruitment documents were not presented for review	New	24

5.6.5. Internal audit report on the recruitment processes

5.6.5.1. Standard

In terms of the Recruitment and Selection Policy, section 7.2 paragraph 7.2.5, Qualification Verification

- a) Qualification verification shall be conducted based on the essential qualification requirements of the job and/or any other qualification claimed by the applicant to minimise the likelihood of risk to the Municipality.
- b) If the Department cannot afford to wait for the outcome of the qualification verification, eventual clearance shall be made a condition of employment; and
- c) If the applicant has assumed duties and the outcome of the qualification verification subsequently obtained is unfavourable, the appointment shall be terminated.

According to T.A.S.K. Job Evaluation Policy, Section 6. Roles And Responsibilities of the Municipal Manager, paragraph 6.4, the Municipal Manager shall in terms of Section 66 of the Local Government; Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000 as amended) ensure that there is a job description for each post on the staff establishment of the municipality. According to paragraph 6.5, the Municipal Manager must ensure that the municipality keeps custody of the copies of job descriptions for all posts. Section 7.3 Roles and Responsibilities: paragraph 7.3.4 ensures that all job descriptions are written in the T.A.S.K. format and are duly signed by the incumbent(s)' immediate supervisor/line manager and the Unit Head. Paragraph 7.3.5 checks for the accuracy of the job content and ensures that the job specification is commensurate with the complexities and knowledge of the job. As per Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels, 2007, paragraph 12- Minimum competency levels for supply chain management managers, a supply chain management manager of a municipality or municipal entity must comply with the minimum competency levels required for higher education qualification and work-related experience and be competent in the unit standards prescribed for competency areas.

5.6.5.2. Condition

Employees' qualifications are not always verified by Human Capital. In a sample of 60 employees from TK16 to TK25, there were 31 (52 %) employees appointed without confirmation that qualifications submitted are valid and legitimate. Furthermore, there was one (2%) employee with pending verification results in Matric and Diploma in Nature Conservation for more than three years (verification was captured in May 2019).

Audit also noted that some job descriptions are vague and lack proper specification of required qualifications. There were 22 out of 60 (37%) job descriptions without a specific qualification required.

Table 5.11: Audit Sample

No	Post ID no.	Task grade	Business Unit	Appointment date	Audit comment
24	36005710FS	T16	Engineering	01 Apr 2013	No evidence that qualification was verified
25	36000140F	T16	Engineering	01 June 2009	No evidence that qualification was verified
26	36000264	T17	Engineering	02 Jan 2022	No evidence that qualification was verified
27	36001380	T18	Engineering	15 Jan 2003	No evidence that qualification was verified
28	36004350	T18	Engineering	07 Sept 2007	No evidence that qualification was verified

5.6.5.3. Root Cause

Human Capital Management did not prioritise the process of appointing the new service provider immediately after the old contract ended. Qualification verification is conducted by the Service Provider, and, during appointment of the listed candidates, the contract had ended. Contract periods for Online credential verification services as from 2014 to 2023: 02/10/2014 to 30/09/2017 – MIE & EMPS; 26/03/2018 to 25/03/2021 – MIE; 01/08/2022 to 31/01/2022 – MIE and 01/07/2022 to 30/06/2023 – MIE, thus resulting in gaps during which services were interrupted/ unavailable. The root causes were.

- i. Lack of understanding of the importance of specifying type of qualification required in job descriptions and the impact of not specifying the qualification should the misalignment occur.
- ii. Irrelevant qualifications caused by vague job descriptions.
- iii. Requirements of Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels not incorporated in Supply Chain Management job descriptions; and
- iv. Lack of guidelines to address the issues identified.

5.6.5.4. Potential Risk and Effect

- i. Employees with invalid and fake qualifications may be appointed resulting in poor quality services and negatively impacting the reputation of the city.
- ii. Vague job descriptions may create opportunities of appointing employees with irrelevant qualifications leading to poor performance and service delivery; and
- iii. Potential best candidates may not be appointed.

5.6.5.5. Audit Recommendations

- a) Human Capital Management should plan properly and appoint the new Service Provider immediately to ensure the verification process is always carried out on new engagements. Where appointment occurred without verification of qualifications, Human Capital Management should quantify candidate appointed and ensure their qualifications are verified at least a month after the appointment of the new service provider.
- b) Human Capital Management should ensure compliance with job evaluation policy in terms of developing a complete and accurate job description; and
- c) A standard procedure must be developed to address the identified issues, especially where there are delays in the verification process.

5.7. TALENT MANAGEMENT REPORT FINDINGS.

The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 indicates that the attraction and retention of competent staff must form part of the municipality's talent management framework and strategy. Talent management is an integrated process designed to attract, retain, and develop competent staff. Effective talent management ensures operational continuity and sustainability of the municipality by ensuring that the appropriate people, with the appropriate skills, are in the appropriate job at the right time.

5.7.1. Scarce Skills Posts by Age<54

During the period under review the talent management results indicate that the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Cluster had a total of 312 positions designated as scarce skills and eligible for the payment of scarce skills allowance in order drive employee retention. 160 positions were filled, whilst the remaining 160 were vacant funded positions. Of the 160 filled positions, 129 of those employees were above 54yrs in age. Of the 312 scarce skills positions 35 were at senior management level.

Table 5.12: Scarce skills by Age<54

Cluster	Total Scarce Skills Funded Vacant and Filled	Filled	Age <54	Task 15 below	Task 16-18
COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	49	16	15	4	11
CORPORATE AND HUMAN CAPITAL	10	2	1	0	1
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING	3	1	1	1	0
FINANCE	46	28	25	23	2
GOVERNANCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	2	1	1	0	1
HUMAN SETTLEMENT ENG SERV & TRANSPORT	312	160	129	94	35
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	2	1	1	0	1
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	22	16	16	14	2
TRADING SERVICES	1240	960	809	744	65
Total	1686	1185	998	880	118

5.7.2. Scarce Skills Posts Age 55-59

The municipal staff regulations indicate that recruitment and selection of staff should support and enable the municipality's capacity needs. The results below indicate the number of funded scarce and critical positions both vacant and filled. During the period under review, 23 employees were between ages 55-59. This indicates talent risk exposure to unplanned departures who could consider early retirement at the age of 55 years in terms of different municipal pension fund rules.

Table 5.13: Scarce skills by age 55-59

Cluster	Total Scarce Skills – Funded Vacant and Filled	Filled	Age 55 -59	Task 15 below	Task 16-18
COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	49	16	1	1	0
CORPORATE AND HUMAN CAPITAL	10	2	1	0	1
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING	3	1	0	0	0
FINANCE	46	28	0	0	0
GOVERNANCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	2	1	0	0	0
HUMAN SETTLEMENT ENG SERV & TRANSPORT	312	160	23	10	13
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	2	1	0	0	0
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	22	16	0	0	0
TRADING SERVICES	1240	960	89	82	7
Total	1686	1185	114	93	21

5.7.3. Scarce Skills Post Age 60-63

The identification of scarce, critical, and high-risk skills must form the basis of any talent management interventions. The manager responsible for human resources must develop a framework for the identification of competent staff. The framework must enable the identification of leadership groups and technical talent in the municipality. The talent management plan must be reviewed annually, and the review should coincide with the performance management cycle of the municipality. During the period under review, eight employees would proceed to normal retirement, and potential successors for these positions would have been identified and developed. Two of these employees were at Senior Management level.

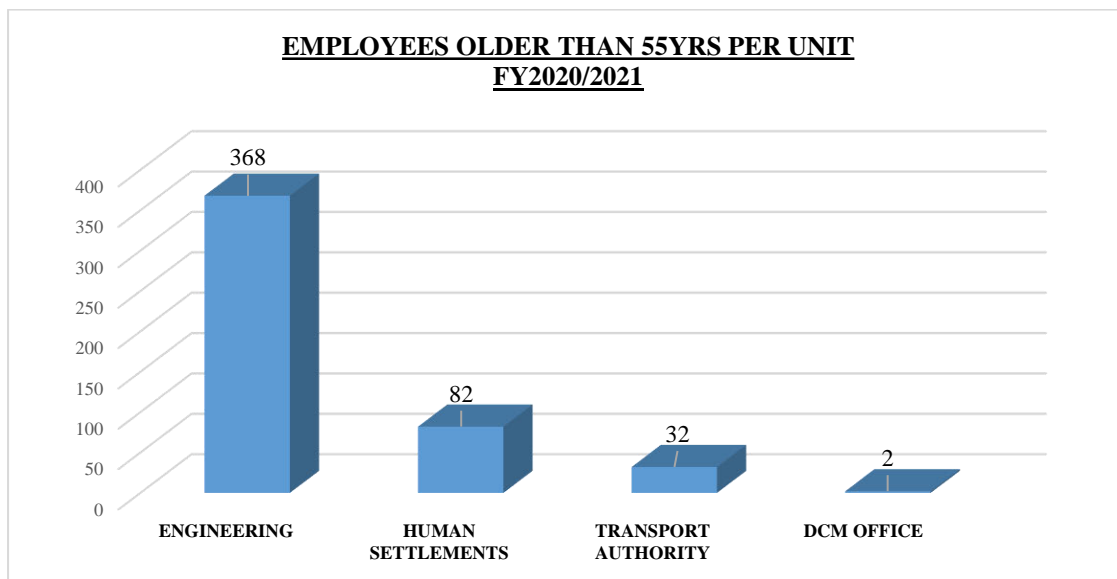
Table 5.14: Scarce skills by age 60-63

Cluster	Total Scarce Skills Funded Vacant and Filled	Filled	Age 60 -63	Task below 15	Task 16-18
COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	49	16	0	0	0
CORPORATE AND HUMAN CAPITAL	10	2	0	0	0
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING	3	1	0	0	0
FINANCE	46	28	3	2	1
GOVERNANCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	2	1	0	0	0
HUMAN SETTLEMENT ENG SERV & TRANSPORT	312	160	8	6	2
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	2	1	0	0	0
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	22	16	0	0	0
TRADING SERVICES	1240	960	55	52	3
Total	1686	1185	66	60	6

5.7.4. Employees Older Than 55yrs Per Unit

During the period under review the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services had a total of 484 employees that were over the age of 55 years old contributing to risk exposure to unplanned exits. The Engineering Unit had the highest risk exposure to unplanned exits followed by the Human Settlements Unit and Transport Services Unit.

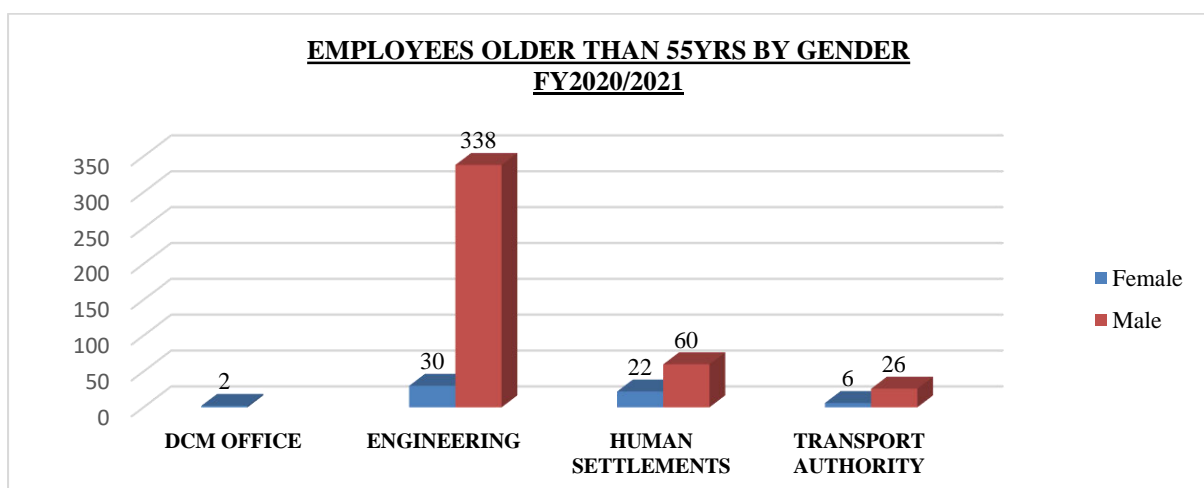
Figure 5.4: Employees older than 55yrs per Unit



5.7.5. Employees Older Than 55yrs By Gender

During the period under review the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services had a total of 424 male employees that were over the age of 55 years old contributing to risk exposure to unplanned exits whilst the female risk exposure remained at 60 females. The Engineering Unit had the highest risk exposure to unplanned exits followed by the Human Settlements Unit and Transport Services Unit.

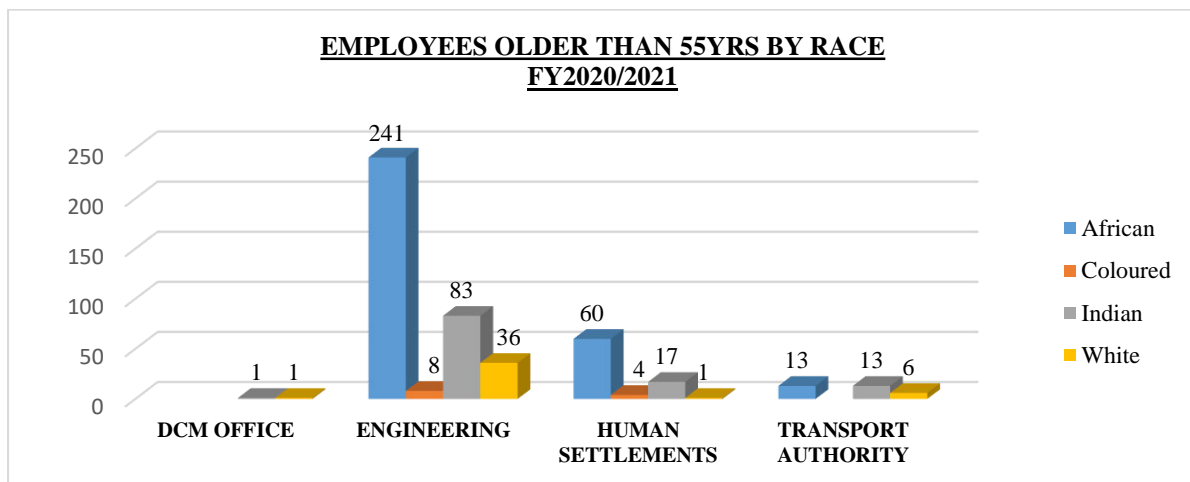
Figure 5.5: Employees older than 55yrs by Gender



5.7.6. Employees Older Than 55yrs By Race

During the period under review the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services African demographic profile had the highest risk exposure to unplanned exits followed by the Human Settlements Unit and Transport Services Unit.

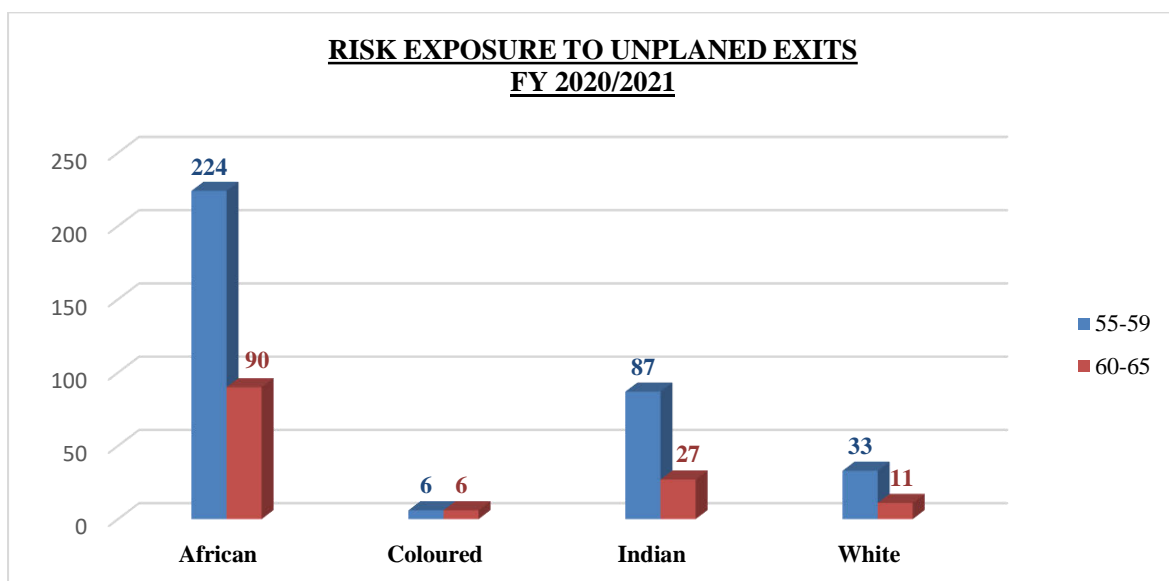
Figure 5.6: Employees older than 55yrs by Race



5.7.7. Employees Older Than 55yrs By Race

During the period under review the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services African demographic profile of age 55-59 years at 350 had the highest risk exposure to unplanned exits followed by the ages 60-65 years at 134 employees.

Figure 5.7: Employees Older Than 55yrs By Race



5.7.8. Overtime Report Results for FY 2020/2021

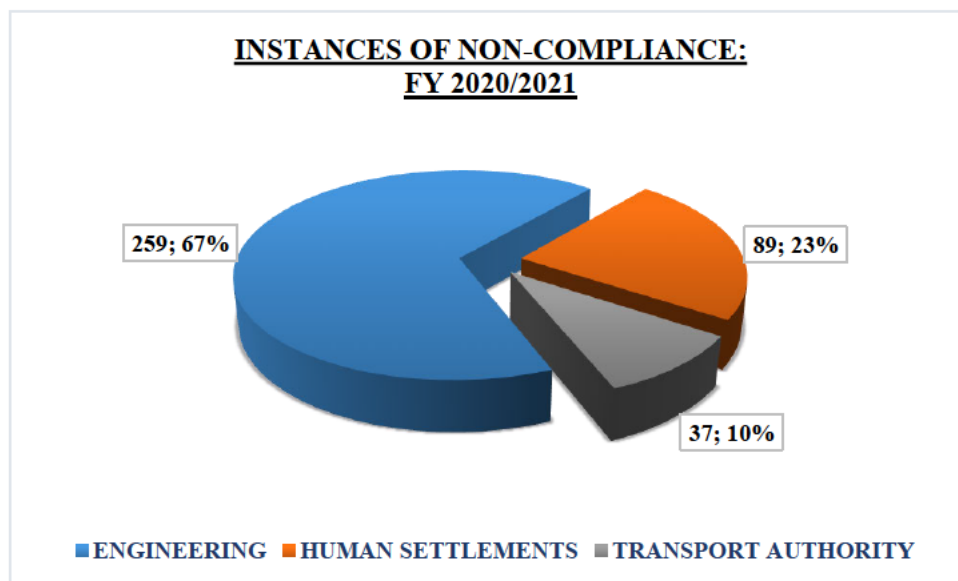
Section ten of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997 indicates that overtime is voluntary and may only be worked by agreement between employer and employee. Maximum permissible overtime is three hours on any one day or ten hours in any one week. Remuneration must be at 1,5 times the normal wage rate except for Sunday work and work on public holidays, which must be remunerated at twice the normal wage rate. Time off, calculated on the same formula, may be granted instead of payment, but only by agreement with the employee. Overtime issues have been a standing item on the Auditor General log for the past few years and it negatively impacts the city and, concurrently, the cluster.

5.7.9. Non-Compliance With Overtime Regulations

Concerns over rampant abuse of overtime in eThekwin Municipality's units have deepened following revelations that one employee claimed R50 000 in overtime pay after working 317 hours of overtime. The unnamed employee is among 70 employees who have been listed as having claimed more than 200 hours of overtime in any single month (Magubane, 2020).

During the period under review there were 385 instances of non-compliance with overtime regulations within the cluster. The Engineering Unit accounted for 259 instances of non-compliance, whilst Human Settlements accounted for 89 and Transport Authority for 37 instances where employees claimed overtime hours more than permissible by the Act.

Figure 5.8: Instances of overtime non-compliance.

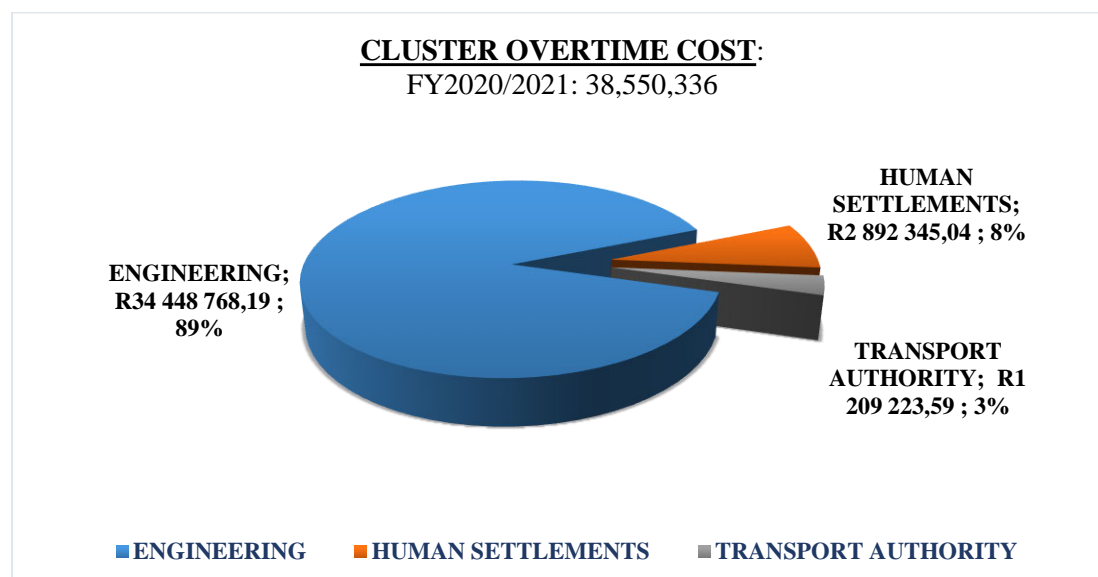


5.7.10. The Cost of Overtime

eThekweni Municipality is battling to control rampant abuse of overtime pay by its employees, with the latest report showing the city paid over a billion rand in overtime in the last financial year. Despite the exorbitant bill, the report revealed a task team set up by the city last year to rein in the abuse met only three times and had done little to nothing, to address the runaway expenditure. A damning report by the city's external Audit Committee, tabled before the executive committee members, revealed the city paid about R1.2 billion in overtime pay in the financial year ending May 2020, an increase of R100 million from the previous financial year (Magubane, 2020).

During the period under review the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Cluster spent R38 550 336 on overtime. The overtime spend was broken down into R34443786 spent by the Engineering Unit which accounted for 89% of budget spending. The Human Settlements Unit spent R2 892 345 which accounted for 8% of the budget and the Transport Authority spent R1 209 223 which accounted for 3% of the overtime cost. The overtime cost for the cluster is a combination of compliance and non-compliance with Section 10 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997.

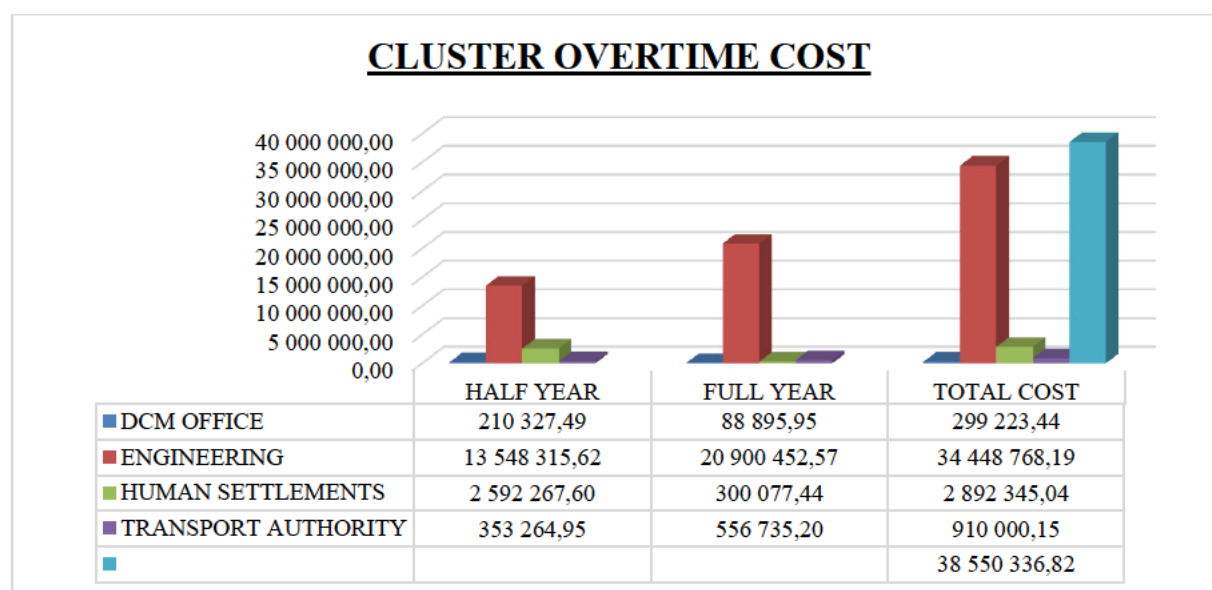
Figure 5.9: Cluster overtime spend per Unit.



5.7.11. The Cost of Overtime Per Half-Year

During the period under review the Engineering and Transport Authority Units spent the majority of their overtime budget during the third and fourth quarter of the fiscal year, whilst the Human Settlements Unit spent most of its budget during the first and second quarter of the fiscal year.

Figure 5.10: Cluster overtime spend per Unit.



5.8. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS REPORT RESULTS 2020/2021

The Municipal Systems Act requires the municipality to establish a PMS that is commensurate with its resources, best suited to its circumstances, and in line with the IDP. A culture of performance must be created throughout the municipality. During the period under review the municipality used a five-point rating scale to measure the performance of the employees within the cluster. The descriptors are indicated below.

Table 5.15: Five-point rating scale

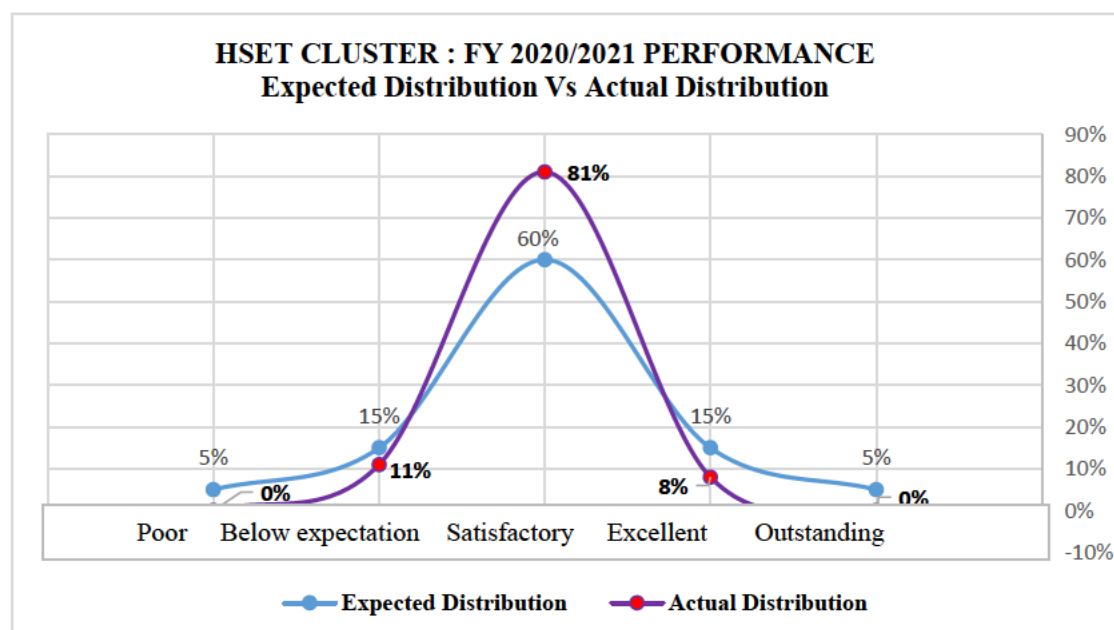
PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTOR	PERFORMANCE SCORE	PERFORMANCE REWARD
Poor	1	No reward
Below expectation	2	No reward
Satisfactory	3	2,4% increase
Excellent	4	2,4% +2days leave
Outstanding	5	4,8%+ 3days leave

5.8.1. Cluster People Performance Report Results

The researcher used a bell curve to link the performance results of the employees directly with the reward. The bell curve refers to a probability distribution which has specific characteristics, one of which is its bell shape. In this system, the employees are categorised based on the ranking given to their performance.

During the period under review 273 employees in the cluster performed below expectations. Of these, 177 were from the Engineering Unit, 71 from the Human Settlements Unit, and 24 from the Transport Authority Unit. These employees accounted for 11 percent of the total population in the cluster. This figure is four percent lower than the expected distribution curve. 81 percent of the total population demonstrated satisfactory performance which is 21 percent higher than the expected distribution curve and eight percent of the total population demonstrated excellent performance which is seven percent lower than the expected distribution curve.

Figure 5.11: Cluster performance bell curve.



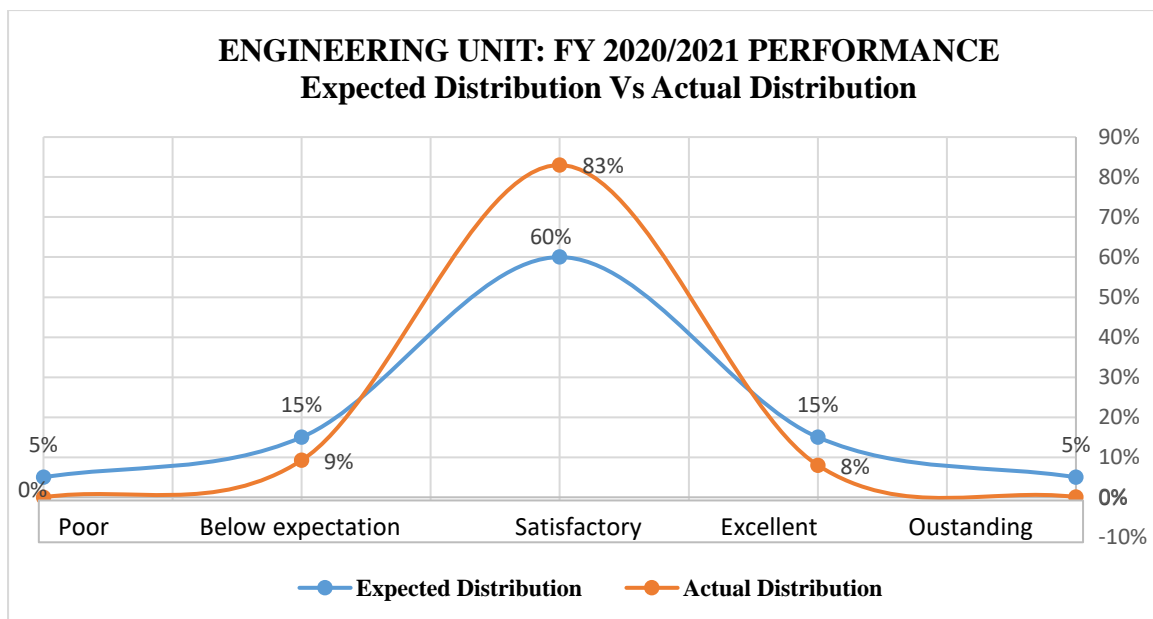
Source: Adapted from Herrnstein and Murray (1994).

5.8.2. Engineering Unit People Performance Results

During the period under review, 1856 employees in the unit were assessed. 177 employees did not meet performance expectations or refused to sign performance agreements.

These employees accounted for nine percent of the total headcount of the unit, which is six percent below the expected normal distribution curve percentage for employees whose performance was below expectations. The majority of the unit's employees' performance was satisfactory at 83 percent which was 23 percent higher than the normal expected distribution curve. Eight percent of the employees who were assessed excelled in their performance. This percentage is seven percent lower than expected from the normal distribution curve.

Figure 5.12: Engineering Unit performance bell curve.



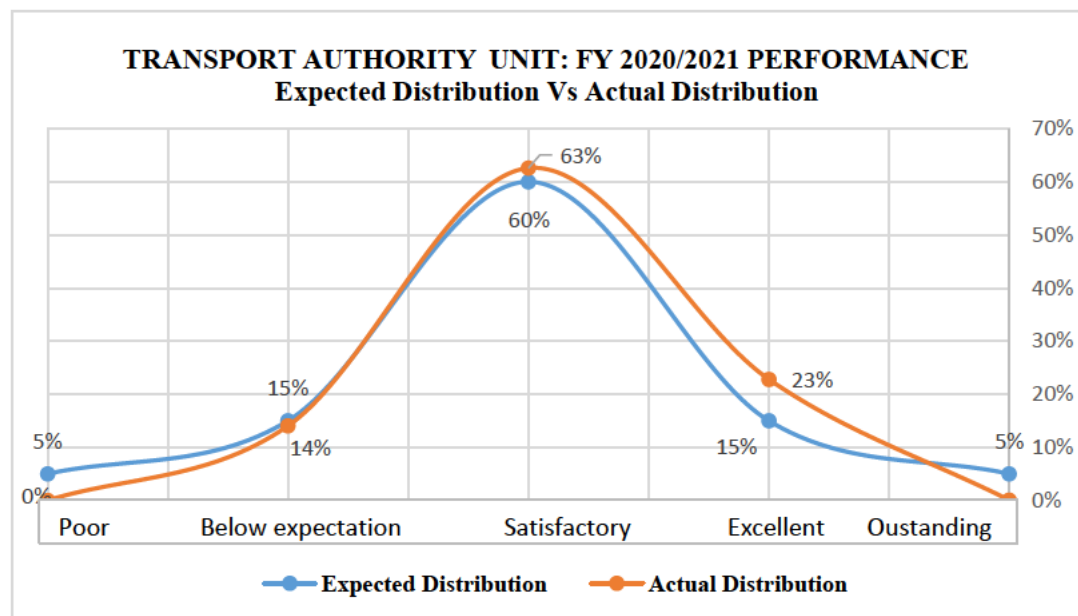
Source: Adapted from Herrnstein and Murray (1994)

5.8.3. Transport Unit People Performance Results

During the period under review, 172 employees in the unit were assessed. 25 employees did not meet performance expectations or refused to sign performance agreements. These employees accounted for 14 percent of the total headcount of the unit, which is one percent below the expected percentage on the normal distribution curve.

The majority of the unit's employees' performance was satisfactory at 63 percent. This three percent higher than the percentage of satisfactory performance expected on the normal distribution curve. 23 percent of the employees who were assessed excelled in their performance which is eight percent higher than the normal expected distribution curve.

Figure 5.13: Transport Authority Unit performance bell curve.



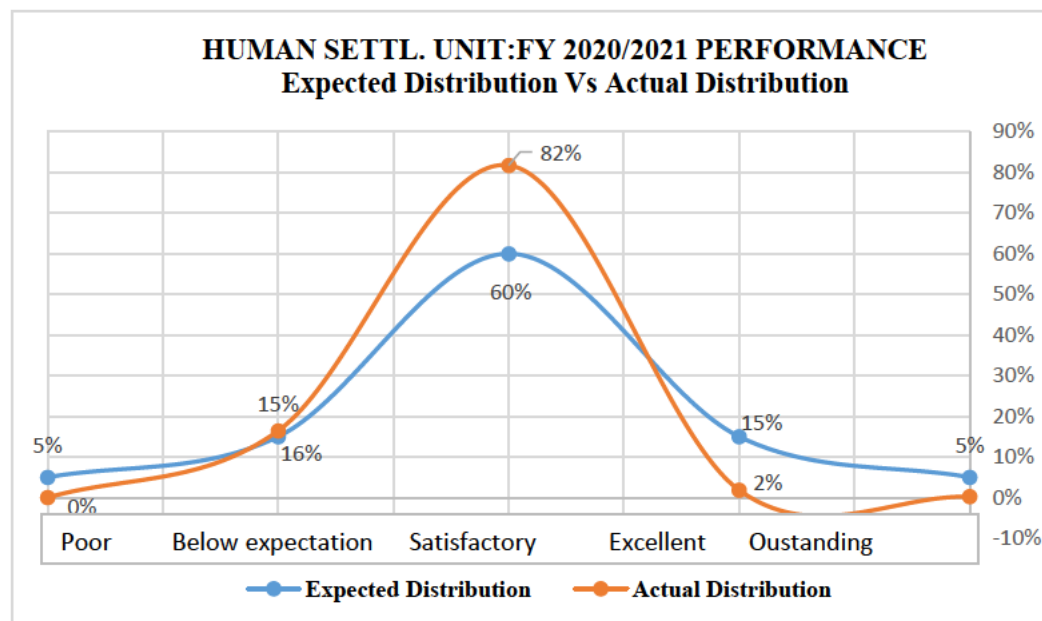
Source: Adapted from Herrnstein & Murray, (1994)

5.8.4. Human Settlements Unit People Performance Results

During the period under review, of the 349 employees in the unit who were assessed, 72 employees did not meet performance expectations or refused to sign performance agreements, these employees accounted for 16 percent of the total headcount of the unit which is one percent above the expected normal distribution curve percentage for employees whose performance was below expectations.

The majority of the unit's employees' performance was satisfactory at 82 percent – 22 percent higher than the normal expected distribution curve. Two percent of the employees assessed excelled in their performance. this is 13 percent lower than the percentage expected from the normal distribution curve.

Figure 5.14: Human Settlements Unit performance bell curve



Source: Adapted from Herrnstein & Murray (1994)

Research findings reveal that the business case against which the rational for the implementation of talent management in the city was outdated. The strategy document was approved in 2011 based on a business case that is no longer applicable. The talent management strategy of the city was approved 12 years ago, and it has not been reviewed since despite living through two different political terms that may have had different strategic priority areas.

5.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter presented research findings from the interviews conducted with 20 research participants. This chapter further presented results obtained from secondary data in the form of internal organisational reports, such as the employment equity report for the Custer, the recruitment and selection report, the talent management report, the demographic report, and the internal audit reports to supplement interview results. The next chapter discusses the results obtained from both the interviews and secondary data sources.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present the analysis of the raw data collected through semi-structured interviews and from internal reports, as discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter analyses and organises unstructured texts, audio recordings, organisational reports, and interview videos. While Creswell (2014) suggests using content analysis to identify, analyse, and report the patterns/themes that emerge from a data set, Braun, and Clarke (2006) recommend six processes for qualitative data analysis. These include data familiarisation, creating codes, searching for codes, examining themes, identifying themes, and writing-up results. Data presentation and analysis in this chapter is carried out in accordance with the study's objectives. The following are the research objectives that will guide the discussion of the major findings:

- i. To understand the rational for the implementation of talent management within eThekwini Municipality.
 - ii. To investigate the impact of talent acquisition practises on service delivery outcomes.
 - iii. To explore how talent management practices contribute to capacity development and employee performance within eThekwini Municipality.
 - iv. To determine if employee performance translates into organisational performance; and
 - v. To explore the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes at eThekwini Municipality and develop a model for monitoring the effectiveness of such practices.
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6.2. DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEW RESULTS

Participants in the study were drawn from the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services Cluster of the eThekwini Municipality. The selection of participants was guided by the city's talent management policy, which only applies to management positions, and scarce and critical roles within the municipality. The majority of participants were at the management level and technically skilled. The fact that some of those who responded were Human Resources Managers contributed to ensuring that there were sufficient skilled talent managers among those who responded.

6.2.1. OBJECTIVE 1: JUSTIFICATION FOR TALENT MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

In respect of the first objective, the research findings reveal that participants had varying experiences with talent management, ranging from a lack of awareness of talent management to its inconsistent application as a strategic enabler across the municipality. The interviews revealed that the main reasons for implementing talent management practices were to attract and retain scarce and critical skills, combat the issues of an ageing workforce, succession management, talent performance, and development, and impact service delivery outcomes positively.

6.2.1.1. Talent management practices

Participants bemoaned recruitment process delays and difficulties in attracting and retaining key talent. They identified the ageing workforce, talent development, and talent performance as critical areas that need to be addressed. The findings on this main theme are supported by literature which indicates that currently, few managers of municipal organisations in local government are aware of HR approaches like talent management. Moreover, attempts to include talent management in policy, are often hindered by managers' a lack of competence to implement it. This is due, in part, to the knowledge vacuum in this field in which little is known about talent management as a strategic enabler in a municipal context (CoGTA, 2018).

6.2.1.2. Sub-theme internal customer experience

To begin answering the study's questions, the researchers sought to learn about the research participants' experiences with the municipality's talent management practises. According to a review of the literature, the success or failure of a municipality is determined by the competence of its political leadership, sound financial management, the strength of its governing bodies, and the calibre of its employees (National Treasury 2011, p. 105).

The primary findings from the interviews reveal that Human Capital Practitioners have an important role to play in effective talent management, the majority of participants indicated that Human Capital Practitioners do not play an active role in preserving the integrity of talent management practices. Instead, they are often seen as complicit in floating internal processes. Other participants saw the Human Capital Unit as a conduit for fraud in relation to recruitment practices for elementary jobs like general workers.

Participants lamented the change in the recruitment process for these role levels as the centralisation to the Human Capital Unit ensures that only certain applications are reviewed to prioritise recruitment for councillor constituencies, senior management's family members, and friends who are not interested in service delivery and refuse any form of accountability. Patronage politics occurs when private and public relationships are used to access public resources and, if available, to maintain political power to further expand these power networks (Schutte, 2018).

Furthermore, the study's findings reveal that in some departments, potential candidates at a general worker level are no longer subjected to the interviews and physical assessments required by the recruitment process. These processes are circumvented to ensure that certain individuals gain employment although they do not have the experience or competencies required for these roles. These practices overlook long serving qualified and experienced employees in favour of unqualified youth league members. This is detrimental to service delivery outcomes. The results further reveal that unethical conduct in talent management practices, such as recruitment and selection, have a direct impact on the performance of the organisation and its future operational sustainability they lead to the appointment and promotion of candidates who do not possess the necessary competencies to drive organisational performance and ensure its sustainability. These results are supported by DPME findings which also identify inefficient and ineffective recruitment practices as a threat to the performance of service delivery by the municipality. The DPME identifies further problems experience by local government, including political interference, poor leadership (administrative and political), weak compliance, the inability of 'local governments' to respond to the complex demands and expectations of the citizens, a declining skills base to deal with socio-economic legacies, and service delivery failures (RSA, 2014).

6.2.2. OBJECTIVE 2: IMPACT OF TALENT ACQUISITION PRACTICES ON SERVICE DELIVERY OUTCOMES

Research results indicate that political interference within the administrative environment is the biggest challenge to service delivery. Several critical vacancies within the Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services Cluster at senior management and technical level were designated to carryout critical infrastructure projects.

The filling of these vacancies was delayed due to political interest in the potential candidates that would be responsible for lucrative capital budget projects. These decisions do not only have short-term effects on the organisation but impact the municipality in the long term. They threaten organisational sustainability because these individuals filter into organisational succession plans and ultimately occupy leadership roles to the detriment of service delivery as they are generally not skilled, or competent to operate at a strategic level. Critics argue that recruitment practices linked to political interference have led to the appointment of inadequate leaders in key positions thus stifling leadership potential and service delivery outcomes (CoGTA, 2018). Research findings further reveal that the quality of professionals is also questionable since senior executives often collude with political principles to water down minimum essential requirements of technical roles to accommodate candidates that are subservient to the principles. This not only demoralises existing qualified professionals, but it also floats various legislative requirements such as the Engineering Act of Southern Africa, which clearly defines the scope of work for different categories of registration, and the Municipal Staff Regulations, which set the minimum essential requirements of job applicants. These findings are supported by this study's literature review which revealed that municipal talent management practices are marked by non-compliance, poor ethics, poor interpretation of HR policies, poor accountability, and a lack of expertise and capacity to manage employees (COGTA 2009, pp. 18-19).

6.2.2.1. Non-compliance with legislative requirements

The local government industry has been marked by poor talent management decisions which have hindered optimal talent performance and, thus, undermined municipal efforts to deliver impeccable services to rate payers (Barkhuizen 2014; Keketso and Rust, 2012). Although the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) requires all funded vacancies to be filled within six months from the date of advertisement, findings from the interviews reveal that this requirement is often not met. Participants agreed that recruitment lead times adversely affect service delivery outcomes. Long lead times amount to service delivery delays due to constrained capacity. The constraints in capacity often also lead to non-compliance with overtime restrictions and huge financial costs. The majority of the delays described by the participants, particularly in the infrastructure delivery cluster, were attributable to political principles who insisted on contributing to decisions around hiring candidates who would be responsible for major capital budgets.

6.2.2.2. The impact of recruitment delays on service delivery

The results reveal that the majority of participants viewed recruitment as a critical aspect of efficient service delivery in local government. However, recruitment delays hinder service delivery and undermine the effectiveness of talent management strategies within the municipality. Prolonged recruitment processes often lead to critical positions being vacant, which hinders the delivery of public services. Existing employees are required to take on additional responsibilities due to unfilled positions, which often result in increased workload and burnout. These delays lead to frustration and decreased morale among current employees, negatively impacting their productivity and engagement.

Lengthy recruitment process also often led to the loss of skilled candidates to other organisations, limiting the talent pool available to the municipality. These results are supported by literature which indicates that poor recruitment practices linked to political interference led to the appointment of inadequate leaders in key positions thus stifling leadership potential and service delivery outcomes (CoGTA, 2018). Findings suggest that streamlined recruitment processes and reduced bureaucracy would assist to expedite the hiring of new employees. This would involve the adoption of clear, consistent recruitment procedures, setting realistic timelines, and regularly reviewing progress to identify and address any bottlenecks.

Technology that already exists within the city could streamline recruitment processes and improve the overall efficiency of talent management efforts by ensuring that all job applicants are compelled to utilise the recruitment system and do away with the manual recruitment process which provides a fertile environment for maladministration. This could involve the adoption of an applicant tracking systems, utilisation of online job boards and social media platforms for recruitment, and implementation of digital tools for employee training and development. The promotion of diversity and inclusion in recruitment and talent management practices could assist to attract a broader range of skilled candidates and foster a more inclusive work environment. This could involve implementation of diversity and inclusion, engaging in targeted outreach efforts, and providing training on unconscious bias and cultural competence. A shortage of management and technical skills requires an organisation wide talent management framework and competency management process to address the hiring practices of leadership and technical skills. Such a strategy will also assist in meeting diversity and inclusion requirements through accelerated development of successors for senior management and technical positions (Mehale, Govender and Mabaso, 2021).

6.2.2.3. Diversity and inclusion requirements

Research findings suggest that whilst eThekweni Municipality made good strides while in transformation and provides solidly attractive benefits, because of all the lucrative benefits, in recent years recruitment practices have been hijacked by politicians to the detriment of service delivery. Literature indicates that thus far, the implementation of legislative directives addressing employment equity were meant to benefit the majority of South Africans, while, in fact, people with disabilities and women across colour lines in the country have and continue to benefit from the policy disproportionately. This is in contrast to the false impression, often cited as a disadvantage of the policy, that only Black people in the country, that is African males and females, benefit from the policy (McGregor, 2003). Additionally, the findings indicate that the majority of respondents were concerned that the implementation of the City's employment equity plan does not cater for the employers' operational requirements and is applied even at the expense of service delivery. Furthermore, male participants indicated that the employment equity plan can lead to the demoralisation of certain employees as result of their limited promotional opportunities due to designation restrictions. Findings show that this is the case for some men within municipality.

The study's findings identify the interpretation of the requirements of the employment equity plan as its greatest challenge. Respondents mentioned instances where there would be three grades within an occupational level and when males applied for the next grade within that occupational level, in which they are not over-represented as they are already count as internal employees within the level, they were overlooked in favour of females despite women not being under-represented within occupational level. Respondents viewed this as unfair exclusion. Findings reveal that a significant number of non-black employees are completely disengaged or somewhat disengaged because the city has been driving the implementation of employment equity relentlessly. Disengagement stems from the fact that when Black applicants are unsuccessful during the interviewing process, non-black candidates are not recommended for appointment, even when they should be offered the position based on merit, because they are mostly over-represented in several senior occupational levels. These interview processes are declared non-appointments instead. While participants appreciated this approach where external applicants are concerned as those would drive representation numbers up, they do not view this approach as making business sense where internal candidates are concerned. This approach has created an environment of resentment and disengagement in the workplace where promotional opportunities are often exclusively for Black employees.

6.2.2.4. Reputation Management

The majority of the respondents indicated that the most challenging aspect of talent management practices within the Municipality is talent acquisition or recruitment practices. Participants revealed that in the past, the top first risk in the city's risk register was the issue of an aging workforce. However, if you reviewed the risk register today, talent acquisition is higher up on the priorities of the risk register. The city's talent acquisition processes have been marred with controversies and have often been a subject of discussion on the news and social media platforms. These negative reports cause reputational damage to both the employer and current employees by virtue of their mutual relationship. This affects employees' job market prospects and the employer's ability to attract scarce and critical talent into the organisation. Organisation should therefore utilise internal corporate communication effectively to enhance the organisation's reputation among employees as stakeholders, since corporate reputation and values instilled through internal corporate communication reverberate beyond organisations (Mehdiabadi and Li, 2018). According to Schutte (2018), a good corporate reputation sells an organisation to potential employees as a good place to work, one which appeals to emotions.

6.2.3. OBJECTIVE 3: CONTRIBUTION OF TM TO EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE

The findings indicate that the municipality is grappling with the challenges of an aging workforce broadly speaking, the aging workforce has had the highest impact on service delivery clusters responsible for the delivery of infrastructure projects as these portfolios often require scarce skills that are not readily available within the labour market.

The city has made a concerted effort to augment internal capacity through occupationally directed development initiatives. The Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services Cluster runs an internal candidate engineering programme that is designed to provide coaching and mentoring to aspiring professional engineers. The programme acquires these participants from universities as candidate engineers and candidate technicians and provides them with development opportunities as well as practical work exposure. The programme has produced several professionally registered engineers, technicians, and artisans. When these categories of employees qualify as professionals, they are allocated scarce skills allowances aimed at retaining their services within the municipality.

Research findings reveal that whilst the city has made significant progress, there are still gaps in talent management practices. Despite having a healthy pool of professional engineers, technicians, and artisans in different disciplines, the municipality continues outsourcing all major technical projects to external consultants. Research participants argued that the municipality pays them premium salaries and allowances to retain their services yet does not tap into their expertise to deliver complex engineering projects. Instead, these professionals are used by the municipality as project managers to manage outside consultants who often do not meet the contract performance expectations in which case internal professionals are drawn in to attempt to rescue projects not delivered by non-performing consultants. Participants suggested that, in these cases, the municipality should have considered an 80/20 split as a mode of service delivery, where 80 percent of the work is delivered inhouse and 20 percent is delivered by consultants where internal capacity is not able to meet demand. Results further show that outsourcing decisions are usually directly related to the financial benefit of contactors instead of benefiting the citizens and prioritising service delivery.

The study confirms that talent management efforts in the municipality are aimed at addressing organisational issues, such as the aging workforce within the municipality and the generational mix in development, through hiring and promotional initiatives to ensure business continuity. This study provides evidence that shows an increase in the number of business areas embarking on talent management, developing staff, creating work exposure opportunities, and eventually promoting those employees, to varying degrees of success. What is glaringly lacking is the communication of talent management success stories. The communication of these stories could be used to arouse interest in other employees and line managers who are not convinced of the impact of talent management in the organisation.

There are several senior managers who were identified and promoted, others are now executives and leaders of business units, yet these successes are not shared. Participants viewed this as a missed opportunity to embed these practices in the organisation. Inconsistent application across the city remains a challenge, however. Recently, the head of the Engineering Unit retired. Since the position is both strategic and technical there, should have been efforts to create a pool of potential successors. Succession management was blatantly ignored, however, and, consequently, the position has remained vacant for the past 12 months. The unit head of the Transport Authority will also be proceeding onto retirement in the next 18 months, however, there is still no tangible succession plan in place to ensure business continuity.

6.2.3.1. Aging workforce

Findings reveal that employees occupying positions classified as scarce and critical within the cluster often proceed to normal retirement, without potential successors being identified and undergoing development. Two such employees are at senior management level currently with no succession plan in place. The study's results reveal that senior leaders are older than other public servants. This means that the highest positions in public administrations will be impacted much more by the retirement of older workers than other positions.

The public service has become a dynamic work environment where trends such as digitalisation, globalisation, and aging populations have important workforce implications. These trends present the municipality with both challenges and opportunities. Since more older workers are staying on the job, the public service will have to develop novel, creative, and effective ways to deal with age and skills gaps among its workforces. The public service will also have to ensure an effective transfer of knowledge from workers who are leaving the workforce due to retirement to younger and less experienced employees. In this context, greater use of talent management practices can be a highly effective component of age-inclusive workforce development strategies. Many municipalities across the country already use elements of talent management in workforce development, such as providing targeted training to certain groups.

6.2.3.2. Succession management

Research findings indicate that the extensive implementation of employment equity appointments has improved succession planning from a diversity and inclusion perspective in the sense that a significant number of women joined the leadership pipeline. A significant number of units had their talent reviews that have informed the talent development action plans. The municipality also has credible occupationally directed learning interventions to provide support to employees. Employees who lack academic qualifications which are inherent requirements of other job roles are provided with bursaries to bolster the development of talent pools within the municipality. The city has also promoted several employees in different roles and most of these employees have been identified as potential successors in past talent reviews. The impact and the effectiveness of succession planning in the city is not known or well communicated because there is currently no measure in place to highlight the success in this area.

Other findings indicate that succession planning is not effective in some units within the cluster and due to the implementation of employment equity plan to appoint previously disadvantaged individuals into posts that already have identified successors. Technical and professional posts are mainly occupied by non-black employees and the current stance that only Black people must get promoted hinders succession planning efforts in technical and professional posts.

6.2.3.3. Employee value proposition

The public service is in competition for talent with other employers; it is under pressure to be attractive so that it can retain current talent and attract future talent. To this end, the public service needs to project itself as an ‘employer of choice’. It also needs to gain a better understanding of the motivations and goals of recruits to select those with the highest public service motivation, and related potential for personal and organisational performance (Weske et al., 2020). However, evidence suggests that many countries across the OECD experience difficulties filling public sector vacancies – particularly in hard-to-recruit fields such as the digital sector where there is broad a range of alternative employers (Christensen, Paarlberg and Perry, 2017).

Findings indicate that talent management practices are effective and impactful, and the municipality has often prioritised technical skill to improve the quality of services rendered through these employees. The employer has even taken a step further to ensure that recruitment packages within the municipality are comparable to other employers. These packages include the recruitment and retention motor vehicle allowances aimed at attracting talent into the organisation. The municipality also offers scarce skills allowances for occupations within the built environment, critical skills allowances for impactful support functions, and favourable benefits associated with rest periods like annual leave, sick leave, and family responsibility leave. Furthermore, findings reveal that the strong focus on transformation and the preference for women and people living with disability when it comes to appointments for leadership and technical roles had drastically improved diversity and inclusion within the city. Other findings suggest that ongoing professional development was one positive aspect of the talent management value chain (Ritz and Waldner, 2018).

The municipality provides numerous work exposure programmes and development programmes from the basic to the most complex. Some of these initiatives include the driver training programme for the elementary occupational level, artisan programmes, professional development for technicians, police in training, and fire fighters, just to name a few. Furthermore, the municipality has created work exposure opportunities through acting appointments, secondments, and graduate and in-service training which are occupationally directed learning initiatives. The majority of the respondents indicated that job security with benefits such as medical aid, pension, and bursaries for institutions of high learning, are the most significant aspects of talent management practices, although they wished they could be allowed greater operational scope with a view to contribute meaningfully towards service delivery. Findings indicate that there is far greater benefit to individual employees than to the organisation. This requires proper alignment for mutual benefit.

6.2.4. OBJECTIVE 4: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE.

Performance management is the foundation of talent management practices, however, there is strong continuous misalignment between people performance and organisational performance within the city. Talent management flows from performance management practices, and, if these are not corrected, the city runs the risk of identifying, developing, and promoting incompetent people into high impact positions with a direct impact on service delivery requirements (Warnich et al., 2018). Performance management of people does not necessarily translate into organisational performance. Findings of the study highlight the significant misalignment between the implementation of performance management and service delivery in the municipality. There is also a lack of coordination between the units in charge of monitoring service delivery and those that deliver the service, namely the Performance Management Unit and Human Capital Unit, which impedes effective organisational performance in service delivery outcomes. The study identifies the crafting of performance agreements and their input-based nature, which measures elements that do not translate into effective service delivery, as two major challenges to organisational performance. Another challenge identified by the study is the application of different performance structures for municipal executives from Task Grade 18 to Task Grade 25 and the rest of the organisation.

The municipal performance executives' performance agreements are expressed in terms of an 80/20 split, 80 percent representing their key performance areas whilst the remaining 20 percent representing demonstrable behaviour competencies. Their performance is tracked and monitored by the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Unit responsible for organisational performance. On the other hand, this study finds that the performance of employees at Task Grade 1-18 is tracked and monitored by the Human Capital Unit. The performance agreements of all these employees are made of 100 percent key performance areas without any measure for behavioural or technical competencies. There is a clear disjoint between the two, which means that employee performance at Task Grade cannot flow from executive performance to achieve the desired service delivery results.

6.2.4.1. Performance monitoring and evaluation

A successful talent management application is not only a means of measuring performance but also provides benefits by increasing the behavioural competence of employees. Getting the right people in pivotal roles at the right time is a key factor in achieving success (Shaikh, 2021). Findings suggest that managers do not consistently monitor the performance of employees. Thus, there is little input into succession and development management. There have been several incidents in which municipal employees were not engaged in meaningful work that were widely reported on social media. In some of the incidents, municipal employees were seen lying under trees in full uniform during working hours, in the other cases municipal employees were recorded by public officials driving municipal vehicles under the influence of alcohol. These are clear indications of poor to non-existent ongoing management of employee performance.

This issue filters all the way up to executive management because of impunity within the municipality. Findings reveal that there has been no consequence management against the employees' supervisors' who failed to oversee the work and brought the organisation into disrepute. If those employees had closer supervision, their conduct would have been identified and addressed by the line managers as opposed to members of the public. Sekgala and Holtzhausen (2016) emphasise that performance evaluation is obligatory in public affairs. Public officials must be accountable to their citizens on all issues pertaining to service delivery (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2017).

Furthermore, investigations into public officials' performances must be the main method for judging their suitability to the positions they occupy and to justify their authority. Various municipalities in South Africa are failing to prioritise performance management, leading to a range of serious problems. It seems wiser to utilise performance management as an on-going process involving techniques such as continual training, departmental support, and certification and education initiatives. The goal is to provide resources that motivate cadres (Calista and Melitski, 2013).

6.2.4.2. Performance assessments

Few jobs allow for purely objective performance evaluations; most jobs require subjective evaluations. Concerns about disparity aversion, manifested as leniency and centrality biases, may collaborate to reduce heterogeneity in performance evaluations (Aina and Atan, 2020). Research findings indicate that performance assessments are marred with subjectivity. As reported by participants, several line managers award performance scores to employees in a manner that is not congruent with legislative and policy requirements. Managers and supervisor in the municipality are not equipped to engage in difficult conversations with poor performing employees because employees often involve their Unions in those performance engagements. This results in line management awarding acceptable performance scores to all employees to avoid conflict with trade unions. Line management frequently demonstrates leniency and centrality biases in their assessments which amount to subjective assessments. There is literature addressing these issues. According to Bol and Smith (2011), subjective performance assessments are affected by cognitive limitations. These manifest in the form of inaccurate evaluations of others that results in distorted ratings (Voußem et al., 2016). Inaccuracies in the evaluations of others are the most common type of cognitive bias responsible for damaging relationships (Tsipursky, 2020). Centrality bias is one form of distorted ratings resulting from cognitive bias in subjective performance assessments (Bol and Smith, 2011; Ruggeri, 2012).

6.2.4.3. Performance rewards

Literature addresses how centrality bias can have a negative influence on many areas of an organisation, including employee performance incentives, especially for those whose performance exceeds the average (Bol and Smith, 2011; Trapp and Trapp, 2019). This literature supports the findings that a majority of municipal employees met performance whilst others exceeded performance expectations in the FY 2020/2021.

The municipality had a low number of employees that did not meet performance expectations according to research participants. Findings indicate that there is a complete misalignment between the municipal performance at a service delivery level and employee performance. Municipal performance has been marked with service delivery protests, infrastructure failures, an inability to spend grant funding for infrastructure development, and poor maintenance of existing infrastructure. These are clear indicators that employee performance has not translated into service delivery outcomes.

Findings from this study suggest that the ineffective monitoring and assessment of performance has demoralised employees that provide discretionary effort to the municipality since line managers are not objectively measuring performance. These findings add the literature which finds municipal managers tend to fail to distinguish performance levels between employees (Chen, 2014; Moers, 2005) by creating disproportionate pay-to-performance ratios because compression is achieved by understating above-average employee ratings and inflating below-average employee ratings (Bol and Smith, 2011).

6.2.4.4. Managing poor performance

Research findings indicate that line managers are not effectively assessing employee performance and linking that performance to service delivery outcomes. In some instances, line managers do not assess employee performance at all. They allocate a score of three for the majority of the employees out of concern that they would need to engage with union where employees had been rated as poor performers. The city has very few employees that have been identified as poor performers and there are no performance improvement plans in place for poor performing employees. Employee performance is not linked to services delivery outcomes, it is more linked to outdated job descriptions, which were not aligned to service delivery requirements. Findings further suggest that employees are only motivated to meet their performance scores so they can access performance bonuses. These scores, however, are not aligned to the outcomes of integrated development and the service delivery budget implementation plan. Line managers are required to assess these challenges and implement corrective action. Findings show a number of contributors to these challenges. These include, lack of employee accountability, lack of proper performance management, supervisors' fear of being challenged by their subordinates, lack of moderation of performance scores, and the use of performance to compensate for incorrect initial salary offers.

These challenges further include a lack of transparency and accountability, financial mismanagement, corruption, fraud, and generally poor performance as indicated by service delivery backlogs in the provision of infrastructure, water, housing, and sanitation. This situation has resulted in limited skills available within the municipality to render basic goods and services which result in service delivery protests, poor governance, and other related conflicts (CoGTA, 2009).

Findings reveal that the review of all these challenges highlights the alarming degree of deterioration in local government structures. Structural challenges include financial mismanagement, lack of strategic planning, poor human resource strategies, and ineffective labour regulations. These all have negative influences on performance management and service delivery. Butler (2010) argues that several municipalities across the county continually fail to plan their work effectively, manage their projects skilfully, and plan their budgets wisely, and that a lack of qualified experts in technical fields inhibits their capabilities.

6.2.5. MAIN THEME: ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

Ndevu and Muller (2017) contend that performance measurement is essential to the delivery of improved services. The expectation on performance management to ensure that objectives are accomplished is rooted in the fundamental principle that management structures should rely on their own capacity to unite various individuals within organisations and arouse them to work together towards the realisation of goals and achievement of shared targets (Balogun, 2003).

Research findings reveal that there are limitations in the application of the service delivery budget implementation plan. The Human Settlements, Engineering, and Transport Services Cluster had an overall Capital budget of R2.4 billion for the 2020/2021 financial year, and a staff complement of approximately 2 800 staff. Today, 56.2 percent of the global population resides in cities. Increased urbanisation has impacted the city fabric, community livelihoods, economies, urban spaces, and the natural environment. This cluster is entrusted with the mandate to ensure access to housing, implementation of sustainable transportation systems, the provision of engineering infrastructure, primarily roads, stormwater, coastal, and catchment management, and architectural building services. There has been a significant backlog in the provision and maintenance of these assets. The reduction in revenue collection has negatively affected budget allocation for infrastructure maintenance.

Findings reveal inadequacies in strategic prioritisation of capital projects given the financial constraints within the city. Executive leaders within the cluster have continued to accept unfunded mandates that negatively impact the capital budget allocation. This translates into underperformance that prevents the achievement of planned capital projects. Research findings also reveal underperformance against budgeted revenue in the 2020/2021 financial year. This indicates that municipality was not able to bill and generate the revenue that it budgeted for, therefore, resulting in less funding available to cover the planned budgeted capital expenditure, whilst at the same time there was spending against unfunded mandates, pointing to a clear misalignment of priorities. Unfunded mandates included the disrepair of provincial roads within the city that were ultimately the responsibility of provincial government which city cluster leaders prioritised instead of planned and funded municipal projects.

6.2.6. SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES

Research findings indicate that there are several factors that attribute to the overall underperformance against capital projects.

6.2.6.1. Underperformance against grants

Grant funding was made available for the construction of reliable public transport in municipalities. The GO! Durban project has faced serious problems, with the taxi industry refusing to allow it to be launched over an ownership dispute with the metro. Material deviations that were raised as red flags against the GO! Durban project could further delay the project by halting grant transfers. Some of the project failures have related to internal capacity issues. For example, in the 2019/20 financial year, R300-million in transport grant funding was returned to National Treasury because the municipality failed to spend it properly in the allocated period. Despite significant grant funding from the national government, the Go! Durban project is years behind where it should be. Work stoppages, sabotage, disruptions, poor planning, and poor management have all played a role, and deadlines are repeatedly moved. Underspending of the conditional grants in the 2020/2021 financial year may be attributed to factors that include the Covid-19 restrictions and related delays to the procurement in the supply chain management processes, the November 2021 local government elections, and the late submissions of business and implementation plans, amongst others. In the findings, a significant decline was notable for the Public Transport Network Grant, Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (Capital Grant) and the Municipal Emergency Housing Grant.

The 2020/2021 expenditure on the rollover of conditional grants on which the municipality did not fare well on reporting of roll-over approvals against the unspent conditional grant rollovers, is concerning as there is a great need for basic services. These factors contributed to under performance of conditional grants and reduced allocations during the budget adjustment process.

6.2.6.2. Supply chain management challenges.

Findings reveal that the city had regressed in terms of procurement and contract management, and in maintenance and repairs. In the 2020/2021 financial year, it spent only 6.59 percent of its budget on maintaining assets and 5.14 percent on capital expenditure. There were a lot of structural problems that hindered these departments' ability to deliver this year. These challenges ranged from delays caused by non-compliant bid submissions, contracts that expired before renewal, local content requirements not being met, and lack of accountability in relation to managing contract non-performing contracts. Other challenges related to lack of accountability and consequence management on the part of leaders. There have been several incidents reported where SCM practitioners deliberately delayed the issuing of letters of appointments for service providers to solicit bribes. These employees were not held to account for these unnecessary delays. These delays set back service delivery significantly. For instance, delays in the SCM processes resulted in thousands of employees in the Engineering Unit sitting and idling in their depots because there were no contracts in place for the materials, equipment, and servicing of vehicles required for road repairs.

6.2.6.3. Contact centre challenges.

Research findings suggest that there is a serious fragmentation of service and duplication of service in so far as customer contact centres are concerned. The customer contact centres are dysfunctional and marked with poor performance by contact centre agents. Contact centre agents are not effectively managed, and they contribute to the frustration of residents that cause reputational damage to the municipality. Service delivery complaints are not effectively captured and directed to the correct service departments for implementation. Furthermore, residents experience long call waiting periods, a high percentage of calls are dropped, and contact centre agents are not able to provide quick responses and effective solutions to residents.

6.2.6.4. Business forums

Findings reveal that business forums significantly impede service delivery. This study indicates that there are several dedicated employees within the municipality who are passionate about service delivery. However, when they attempt to deliver services to community members, they are often at risk since the eruption of business forums. These forums disrupt community service delivery, confiscate city employees' work tools, and highjack municipal vehicles to instil fear in employees and ensure that services are outsourced by the municipality. These business forums have political alliances that make it difficult for them to be held accountable; as a result, their interference causes project delays and underspending.

Members of the business forums demand a stake in government tenders and in major private construction and development projects. This causes major delays and increased expenditure in projects. For example, the multi-billion-rand Ntshongweni Urban Development is a project between eThekweni Municipality (82 percent) and sugar giant, Tongaat Hulett Developers (18 percent). The project aims to create a mixed-use zone on the outer west of Durban which will consist of a shopping mall, a private hospital, commercial real estate, and residential properties. Once the project is completed, it is estimated that it will bring in R1 billion a year in rates revenue for the municipality. Phase one of the project was initially approved by eThekweni Municipality council in October 2018 at a cost of R328 million which was later revised to R650 million in June 2021 due to project delays caused by business forums.

6.2.6.5. Leadership and accountability

Within departments, there is a propensity either to exclude the human resource component entirely from strategic planning processes or to include it only minimally. The role of human resources is viewed as operational and transactional rather than strategic. This tendency has the greatest impact on service delivery because experts in human capital issues are at the forefront of developing service delivery solutions that are centred on human capability, despite the fact that all service delivery-related challenges are linked to an organisation's human capital. As a result, other line managers fail to recognise how important the human resource function is in supporting the department's main operations.

This lack of senior management buy-in and support results in the non-approval of HR Plans and support for other key human resource functions. Line managers do not own the HR planning process as part of their management responsibilities, and this function is delegated to junior officials, who feel disempowered and out of their depth because they cannot make strategic decisions. As a result, there is instability and internal conflict in senior positions in the public sector, as well as a loss of trust in the leadership. All of this has a negative impact on service delivery, undermining public servant morale and reducing citizens' trust in the state. This human resource issue, which needs proper management, has an impact on the provision of goods and services. Accountability means being held responsible for one's actions. Public servants' actions must be above reproach, carried out in the open, and not shrouded in secrecy as this may give rise to suspicion in violation of the Batho Pele Principles (1997)/ Labour Relations Act (66 of 1995).

6.3. DISCUSSION OF INTERNAL REPORT FINDINGS

According to Thornhill and Cloete (2014), the Employment Equity Act established the Commission for Employment Equity and prohibits employers from treating employees unfairly on the basis of their race, sex, gender, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation, culture, language, opinion, or religion. As a result, Section 15(2)(d) mandates that employees from specific groups be retained and that they develop their skills through the use of suitable training procedures. Section 20 requires all employers to have equity plans that include targets for achieving employment equity in the public institution or department as well as plans for promoting the employment prospects of employees from designated groups. According to the findings, the municipality's talent management strategy also seeks to ensure diversity and inclusion by accelerating the development of previously disadvantaged employees for participation in succession management. Furthermore, findings reveal that the municipality has six different occupational levels (as shown below) that are critical areas for diversity and inclusion, and transformation plans have already been submitted to the department of labour for compliance and tracking.

- i. 01 (TK19-25) Top Management
- ii. 02 (TK 16-18) Senior Management
- iii. 03 (TK 14-15) Experienced Specialist and Middle Management
- iv. 04 (TK09-13) Skilled Technical and Junior Management
- v. 05 (TK04-08) Semi-Skilled and Discretionary Decision Making
- vi. 06 (TK01-03) Unskilled and Defined Decision Making

6.3.1. CLUSTER TRANSFORMATION REPORT RESULTS FY 2020/2021

According to the findings, retention of staff refers to a process that uses various techniques to ensure that human capital with valued skills (high in demand in a scarce critical field or from designated groups) do not leave a public sector institution. According to Vermeulen (2007), staff retention entails attracting talented employees through appropriate recruitment processes and retaining those who are deemed critical to the organisation's success. Research findings reveal that there are still significant imbalances in employment equity figures. Targeted talent management would ensure the identification and accelerated development of successors for senior management and technical specialist positions. The shortage of management and technical skills requires an organisation wide talent management framework and competency management process to address the leadership and technical skills gap.

6.3.1.1. Occupational Level 1: Representation results

Results reveal that, in terms of the municipality's employment equity plan for occupational level one (top management), white and African males were under-represented, whilst Indian males and African females were over-represented. According to these results, the municipality needs to concentrate its talent acquisition efforts on the underrepresented groups in this occupational level. According to the view of the talent acquisition report for the same time period, there was a glaring misalignment between the hiring practices and the employment equity plan requirements. Findings demonstrate that no recruitment took place to fill the gaps within this occupational. For example, the head of engineering position, which is classified as both scarce and critical for service delivery, remained vacant and funded for a period of 12 months. The delay in filling such a critical vacancy contradicts the city's talent management strategy, which indicates that such positions are critical to the business and in short supply as determined by criteria used to identify scarce skills positions. These include advertising success, number and suitability of candidates, evidence of a shortage in the national market, and reasons why those employees are lost by the municipality.

6.3.1.2. Occupational Level 2: Representation results

The recruitment and selection of staff forms part of the municipality's staff attraction strategy and its broader talent management framework. The recruitment and selection of staff should support and enable the municipality's capacity and transformation needs.

Recruitment strategies should be designed to attract and retain diverse, qualified applicants, including persons with scarce skills (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2021). Findings reveal a congruence between the Municipal Staff Requirements (MSR) and the application of recruitment practices within occupational level two of senior management. The demographic had an over-representation of white males and females, and Indian males whilst Coloured and African males and females were grossly under-represented. These findings necessitate a closer examination of how recruitment practices are being used to address the shortage. The findings suggest that targeted recruitment strategies were used during the review period, resulting in the appointment of two senior managers from the under-represented demographic profile of Coloured and African Female; these appointments improved representation but did not completely address the gap. According to Phayaphrom (2021), it is critical that a legal and fair system be used for recruitment in order to provide every candidate an opportunity and ensure that all potential candidates are treated fairly by the recruitment process.

6.3.1.3.Occupational Level 3: Representation results

All demographic profiles within this professionally qualified and middle management level were found to be over-represented, with the exception of African males, females, and people with disabilities, who were all found to be under-represented. The review of recruitment practices within this occupational level reveals that while the city did prioritise the appointment of under-represented demographic profiles, it also deviated in the same occupational level and continued to appoint over-represented Indian males. These findings indicate that, while the city is aggressively driving transformation, it is not exclusively employing candidates who are aligned with the under-represented demographics in terms of the city's employment equity plan.

6.3.1.4.Occupational Level 4: Representation results

These findings also suggest that internal applicants' concerns about absolute exclusion in recruitment and selection may be unfounded. These findings also highlight the importance of ongoing transparent engagements regarding hiring practices in order to reduce the risk of aspiring employees experiencing poor internal mobility. Crosby (2014) agrees with this balanced approach to the recruitment and selection process, stating that the "public sector should have a balanced approach to recruitment and selection focused on diversity and inclusion as an enabler of talent management practises. According to O'Connor and Crowley-

Henry (2019), an effective transformation strategy can result in effective employee recruitment and retention as well as increased organisational engagement.

6.3.1.5. Occupational Level 5: Representation results

According to the findings, Indian males and African males were over-represented at the semi-skilled and discretionary decision-making occupation levels. Moreover, results indicate that white males and females, as well as females in general were under-represented at this occupational level. This could be due to the labour-intensive nature of the work performed at this occupational level in the cluster. The review of the recruitment report reveals that efforts were being made to improve female representation; however, the results suggest that over-represented African and Indian males were continuously employed, further dispelling the assertion of absolute exclusion of over-represented demographic profiles within the municipality. According to Bullard (2007), there is nothing inherently wrong with the concept of addressing past inequalities, but it is wrong when employment equity overlooks economic realities in favour of vote-winning social experimentation. Balancing the South African labour force demographics with incompetent candidates is not only a threat to the development and progress of South African society, but it is also an insult to the democracy that South Africans have fought for.

6.3.1.6. Occupational Level 6: Representation results

The findings reveal that African males were grossly over-represented at occupational level six, while all other demographic profiles remained under-represented. A review of the recruitment report for this occupational level reveals that significant progress has been made in the inclusion of African females, although the over-representation of African and Indian males continued. These findings indicate the need to improve sourcing channels in order to attract under-represented demographics. So far, the majority of South Africans have benefited from the implementation of legislative directives addressing employment equity. At the same time, it is expected that those who benefited from previous policies will recognise that it is time for designated groups to benefit as well (Mello, 2004). While people with disabilities and women of all races in the country benefit from the policy, the false impression is often created that the policy's disadvantage is that it only benefits the Black race in the country (males and females). Municipal councils must follow the provisions of the constitution to ensure that municipal administrations are representative (McGregor, 2003).

Public administration in the Republic of South Africa should be as effective and efficient as possible. Such administration should be accomplished through measures that ensure that appropriately qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are represented in all occupational categories and at all levels in the workplace.

6.3.2. RECRUITMENT REPORT RESULTS FY 2020/2021

According to the findings of the recruitment and selection report, the city produced good progress in the promotion of woman and previously disadvantaged groups in general. The findings also indicate significant progress in the appointment of people with disabilities to senior management and executive positions. Based on the findings of the recruitment report, the cluster did not perform well in terms of including people with disabilities at levels below management. Aside from diversity and inclusion issues, the recruitment processes were plagued by other flaws revealed by an internal audit, which discovered that employee qualifications were not always verified by human capital.

In a sample of 60 employees ranging in rank from TK16 to TK25, 31 (52 percent) were appointed without confirmation that their qualifications submitted were valid and legitimate. Furthermore, one (2 percent) employee had pending matric and diploma verification results for more than three years (verification was captured in May 2019). The audit also discovered that some job descriptions were vague and lacked proper qualification specifications. There were 22 job descriptions (37 percent) without specific qualification requirements. The risk exposure associated with these deficiencies could result in the appointment of employees with invalid and forged credentials, resulting in poor quality services and a negative impact on the city's reputation. Because of the ambiguity of the job descriptions, it is possible that employees with irrelevant qualifications were hired, resulting in poor performance and service delivery. These job descriptions may have also created an opportunity for good candidates to be overlooked. The majority of the job descriptions had not been reviewed to ensure their relevance, which was a violation of the municipal systems act, which requires all job descriptions to be reviewed within five years or if the job changes by more than 20 percent regardless of whether it is newer than five years.

6.3.3. OVERTIME REPORT RESULTS FOR FY 2020/2021

According to section 62(1) (b) of the Municipal Finance Management Act, the Accounting Officer of a municipality is responsible for managing the municipality's financial administration and must, for this purpose, take all reasonable measures to ensure that complete and accurate records of the municipality's financial affairs are maintained in accordance with

any prescribed norms and standards. Following revelations that one employee claimed R50 000 in overtime pay after working 317 hours of overtime, findings suggest that issues in widespread overtime abuse in eThekweni Municipality's units are increasing. The unnamed employee is one of 70 workers who, according to Magubane (2020), claimed to have worked more than 200 hours of overtime in any given month.

The internal overtime report findings reveal 385 instances of noncompliance with overtime regulations within the cluster during the period under review. The Engineering Unit was responsible for 259 instances of non-compliance, while Human Settlements was responsible for 89, and the Transport Authority was responsible for 37 instances where employees claimed overtime hours that exceeded the legal limit. Section 10 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997 states that overtime is voluntary and may only be worked with the agreement of the employer and employee. Overtime is limited to three hours per day or ten hours per week. Remuneration must be at 1,5 times the normal wage rate except for Sunday work and work on public holidays, which must be remunerated at twice the normal wage rate. Time off, calculated using the same formula, may be granted in lieu of payment, but only with the employee's agreement.

Overtime has been a persistent issue on the Auditor-General's log for several years, and it has a negative impact on the cluster. According to the research findings, year on year overtime cost and hours worked for overtime increase dramatically, but the increase in overtime hours and cost does not translate into elevated service delivery outcomes. The city's performance has continued to deteriorate in several areas, and the disparity between indicators suggests serious abuse of overtime and insufficient oversight by leaders and management within the municipality. Within the municipality, there seems to be a serious misalignment in key indicators. Although recruitment in the municipality has been increasing, which ought to be helping to reduce overtime, the opposite is true in the city.

6.3.4. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS REPORT RESULTS 2020/2021

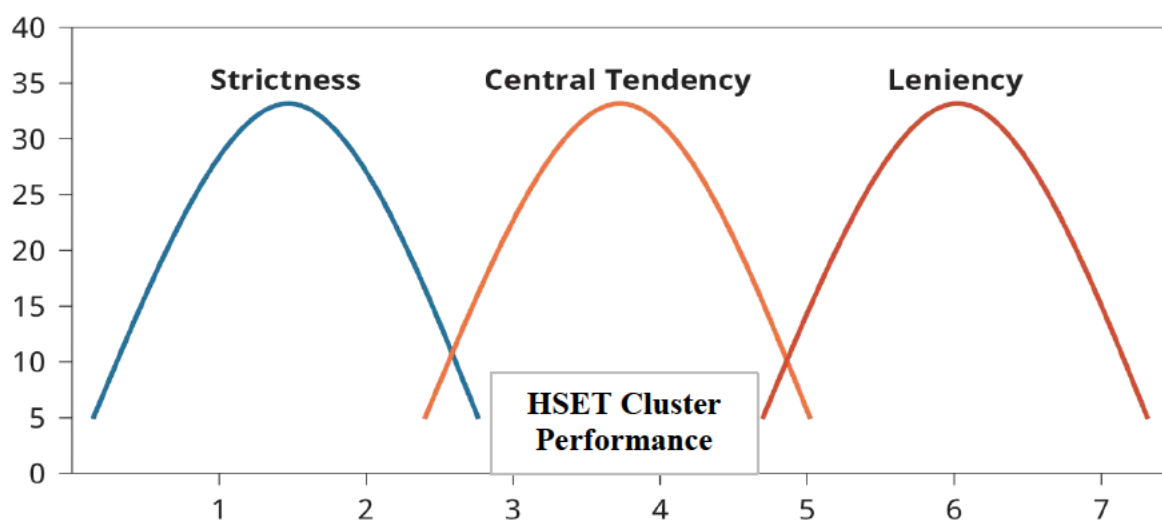
A performance appraisal and evaluation are the first step in talent development. Through this process, a person's strengths and weaknesses are determined, and their training needs are identified. This information is then used to inform learning programmes and career planning (Lambert et al., 2003). The relationship between identifying training needs and

meeting them often breaks down in organisations, which may ultimately result in future surplus talent acquisition (Nobarieidishie et al., 2014). According to research findings, there is a mismatch between the municipality's upward trajectory for overtime, hiring, and performance rewards, and the delivery of basic services, which has been declining. According to the findings, there is a systematic breakdown in the evaluation and appraisal of employee performance in the city, which leads to poor talent development strategies. Talent development strategies are critical to organisational performance because they help to close the skills gap and build internal capacity. According to Cappelli (2008), talent management is a strategic enabler for identifying high performers who can significantly contribute to organisational performance. Employees with high learning potential can learn new skills and improve their performance in the future. In the absence of effective talent management, the municipality wastes the potential of such employees to improve service delivery and overall organisational performance.

6.3.4.1. Cluster people performance report results

Findings indicate that performance results in the cluster were affected by central tendency error. The management team in the cluster rated their employee performance within a narrow range regardless of how employees performed. In addition, managers failed to distinguish significant differences among employees and lumped everyone together in an “average” category. This is the failure to recognise either very good or very poor performers with serious implications for service delivery outcomes.

Figure 6.1: Cluster performance central tendency.

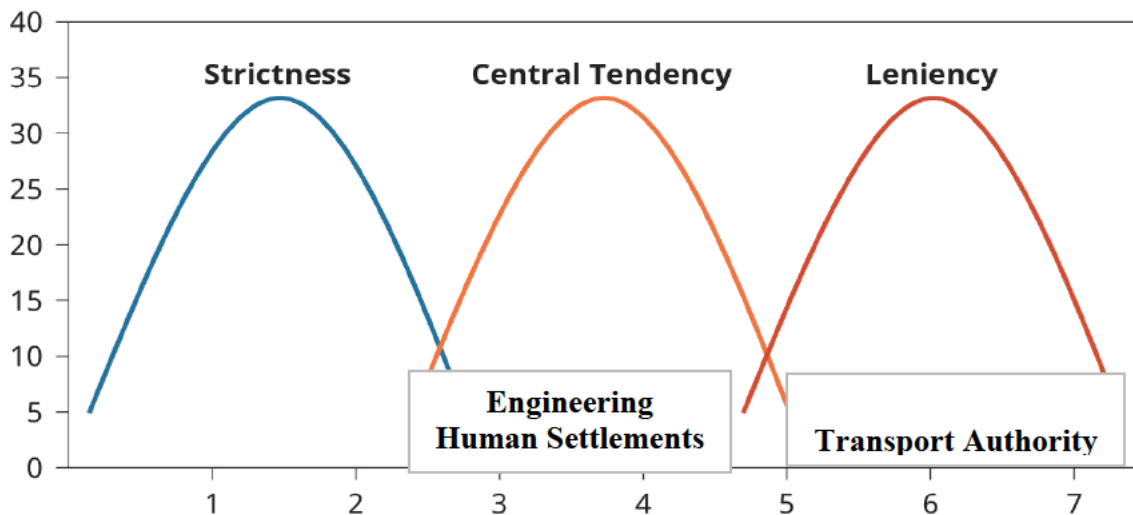


Source: Adapted from Herrnstein and Murray, (1994).

6.3.4.2. Human Settlements and Engineering Unit people performance results

The results show that the two units replicated the performance evaluation of the cluster in that management teams in the units evaluated employee performance within a constrained range regardless of how well they performed. The managers also failed to recognise important differences among employees and grouped everyone into the "average" category.

Figure 6.2: Human Settlements, Engineering central tendency & ETA Leniency



Source: Adapted from Herrnstein and Murray (1994)

6.3.4.3. Transport Unit people performance results

According to the findings, the Transport Authority Management Unit was overly lenient in evaluating employee performance.

Some managers believed that most of their subordinates deserved higher ratings. As with central tendency, leniency error indicates management's failure to differentiate adequately between good and bad performers, instead relegating everyone to the same or related categories of meeting or exceeding performance expectations. These findings are supported by this study's literature review, which indicated that few jobs allow for purely objective performance evaluations; most jobs require subjective evaluations. Concerns about disparity aversion, manifested as leniency and centrality biases, may work together to reduce performance evaluation heterogeneity (Aina and Atan, 2020)

The people's performance results of the unit are not aligned with the business performance results, indicating that grant funding made available for the development of dependable public transport in the municipality has not been effectively utilized. Due to internal capacity issues,

R300 million in transport grant funding was returned to National Treasury in the 2019/20 fiscal year because the municipality failed to spend it properly within the allocated period. Despite huge costs and significant grant funding from the national government, the Go! Durban project is years behind schedule and deadlines are repeatedly pushed back. Work stoppages, sabotage and disruptions, poor planning, procurement management process delays, and poor management have all played a role.

The GO! Durban project was flagged for material deviations, which could have resulted in the suspension of grant tranche transfers, further delaying the project. Although all these problems are related to business performance, they are the result of subpar human capital management strategies, and employee performance assessments ought to have reflected these challenges.

6.3.5. TALENT MANAGEMENT REPORT FINDINGS

According to the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, attracting and retaining competent staff must be part of the municipality's talent management framework and strategy. Since talent management is an integrated process for attracting, retaining, and developing competent employees, effective talent management supports the municipality's operational continuity and sustainability by ensuring that the right people, with the right skills, are in the right job at the right time. The findings reveal that the cluster had 312 positions designated as scarce skill that lacked effective succession plans during the period under review.

The municipality's official retirement age is 65 years old or 63 years old, depending on the pension each employee obtains. Employees may retire early at the age of 55, according to the municipality's pension fund rules. This means that the municipality should have plans in place to deal with risk exposure for unplanned retirements beginning at the age of 55. The retirement age analysis for the scarce skills positions revealed that 160 positions were filled, while the remaining 152 were funded positions that were not filled. Of the 160 filled positions, 129 were over the age of 54, and 35 of these were at senior management level. Findings indicate that the cluster has applied a forward-looking approach because it does anticipate how demographic changes may affect its workforce and has sort to align workforce management to ensure that it is able to renew skills and develop talent effectively. The cluster has good workforce data to understand aging, retirement, and other departure patterns, to identify areas at risk of losing knowledge and experience, and to put in place knowledge management strategies.

To ensure business continuity, the cluster implemented bi-annual talent management reviews in which potential successors are identified and developed. Talent management reviews are carried out with a long-term vision of the skills and competencies that the organisation will require, as well as to ensure that a pipeline of these skills is available so that departing workers do not result in low productivity or poor service delivery. Political interference in the recruitment and promotion of employees within the municipality remains a challenge in the implementation of succession plans.

These challenges frequently manifest themselves in the hiring of candidates who lack appropriate experience or academic qualifications, which is detrimental to business continuity and service delivery. The sum of knowledge in the city is greater than the information contained in tangible documents and data. Individual employees hold a significant amount of city knowledge. Experienced employees, who are frequently older employees, are often invaluable to the city. Nonetheless, not enough emphasis is placed on ensuring that they can transfer their knowledge and experience within the organisation. Gay and Sims (2006) agree that talent management is concerned with investing in people development to identify and developing talented individuals for leadership positions. Furthermore, research shows that talent management is implemented in most organisations to address knowledge gaps (Collings and Mellahi, 2009; Mellahi and Collings, 2010).

eThekwini Municipality and the cluster lack talent management strategies to address potential knowledge gaps and encourage knowledge transfer between older and younger, or experienced and less experienced workers. The strategies exist, but implementation is frequently hampered by political interests in infrastructure delivery, as they carry high budgets associated with capital projects which are frequently linked to tendering processes. The lack of effective implementation of talent management strategies reduces the city's competitive advantage. Empirical research backs up the findings of this study, for example Boxall and Purcell (2000), Cappelli (2008), and Lewis and Heckman (2006). The goal of talent identification and attraction is to attract a pool of talented employees who will be required to compete in a competitive business environment.

6.4. DISCUSSION OF OBJECTIVES

The first objective of the study was to establish the rationale for implementing talent management in the city. The empirical findings reveal that the main reasons for the implementation of talent management within the city are talent attraction, talent identification, talent development, and talent retention to ensure basic service delivery, and business continuity. The issue of knowledge transfer and retention is especially difficult because it demands a long-term outlook and commitment to succession management. According to the findings, poor talent acquisition practices have a negative impact on service delivery outcomes. These findings are supported by King and Vaiman (2019) who contend that acquiring the best individual talent will strengthen and essentially improve operational effectiveness resulting in an increase in financial performance.

The findings reveal that talent management practices contribute to capacity development through various occupationally directed programmes and development, which have resulted in the production of several professionally registered engineers, technicians, and artisans. These programmes are designed specifically to help employees develop and improve their skills and competencies so that they can perform at their best. Madlabana, Mashamba-Thompson and Petersen (2020) agree that training and development is essentially a path by which organisations use methodical approaches to transform employees' competencies and behaviour, thereby assisting the organisation in achieving all of its strategic goals and objectives.

The effectiveness and efficiency with which public employees carry out their duties determines the success of the city in achieving its mandate, and operational and development goals (Munzhedzi, 2017). Findings reveal that the city has not been successful in translating employee performance into service deliver outcomes because the performance process is seen as a way to pay people rather than as a tool to facilitate effective service delivery. Performance management is a key component of managing talent. Like relationship building, individual talent identification and planning for developmental prerequisites to successfully carry out mandated tasks are the foundations of performance management (Kibui, Gachunga and Namusonge, 2014).

6.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed in detail the research findings from the interviews and internal reports, such as performance management reports, employment equity reports, and overtime reports. The findings provide a clear indication of the impact of talent management practices on services delivery outcomes. The empirical findings reveal that the main reasons for the implementation of talent management within the city are talent attraction, talent identification, talent development, succession management, and talent retention to ensure basic service delivery, and business continuity. The results further reveal that failures in the different talent key indicators have a negative impact on other processes and ultimately have an adverse impact on service delivery outcomes. The next chapter provides a summary of the study, its conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the study's overall conclusions and recommendations based on the empirical evidence. The study's goal was to investigate the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes in the eThekweni Municipality. This goal was accomplished by assessing talent management, talent acquisition, local government, succession planning, and performance management as mediating variables in the link between talent management practices and service delivery. The study's research questions and objectives were thoroughly investigated and met. This chapter discusses how content analysis was used to identify patterns in recorded interviews and internal reports; data was systematically collected, analysed, and themes that emerged from the data were reported; and key findings of qualitative research were presented, along with their implications for practice. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and future research directions. The following are the research objectives that guide the conclusions and recommendations:

- i. To understand the rational for the implementation of talent management within eThekweni Municipality.
- ii. To investigate the impact of talent acquisition practices on service delivery outcomes.
- iii. To explore how talent management practices contribute to capacity development and employee performance within eThekweni Municipality.
- iv. To determine if employee performance translates into organisational performance; and
- v. To explore the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes in eThekweni Municipality and develop a model for monitoring the effectiveness of such practices.

To demonstrate interrelated objectives and fundamentals, the study used a talent management conceptual framework. The research objectives defined the study's goals while the underlying concepts of talent acquisition, talent development, career management, and talent retention aided in the achievement of the objectives.

7.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study consists of seven chapters which are summarised below, each chapter comprised an introduction and conclusion. The chapters were set out as follows:

a) Chapter One

This chapter outlined the introduction to the study and presented the background to the study, research problem, aim of the study, research objectives, research question, significance of the study, research methodology, delimitations of the study, limitations of the study, justification/rationale, the proposed structure of chapters and ethical consideration. The goal of this chapter was to give the reader an understanding of the study's focus, goals, and rationale.

b) Chapter Two

This chapter presented and discussed literature relevant to the impact of talent management on organisational performance from a local government context and perspective. The construct and theory of talent management and organisational performance which underpin the study guided a detailed discussion of the literature. The chapter expanded on the talent management conceptual framework and on elements such as recruitment, employee development, performance management, succession planning, and organisational performance.

c) Chapter Three

This chapter explored literature relevant to the impact of talent management on organisational performance from an international perspective. The talent management framework guided a detailed discussion of the literature.

d) Chapter Four

This chapter presented the research methodology used in the study. The chapter explained the research design, research approach, study site, target population, sampling, research strategy, sample size, sampling method, data collection method, data quality control, and measurements.

e) Chapter Five

This chapter presented data collected from participants in the study. The presentation of data in this chapter set a foundation for chapters five and six.

f) Chapter Six

This chapter analysed and discussed the results of the study. The chapter also indicated where the study met its objectives and answered its questions.

g) Chapter Seven

The chapter following presents the summary and recommendations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

7.3. KEY FINDINGS THAT EMERGED FROM THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

The study investigated the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes in eThekweni Municipality utilising a qualitative study. Research findings indicate that poor talent acquisition practices have a direct negative impact on service delivery outcomes and the municipal reputation. Soliciting feedback on talent management practices in the city through employee engagements would allow the city to identify and address talent gaps. Unfortunately, the city has no strategies in place to assess employee engagement, and the last engagement survey was conducted 12 years ago. The findings reveal that eThekweni Municipality's talent management is based on both exclusive and inclusive talent philosophies. The exclusive talent philosophy assumes that exceptional human capital is rare and difficult to replace, especially in positions of leadership and high technicality. Because the underlying assumption of this philosophy is the scarcity of the skill, direct recruitment searches make the most sense for the city's talent management approach, according to the findings. Furthermore, because talent is assumed to have scarce or critical skills in this approach, there is a strong differentiation in resource allocation as more talent management budget is allocated to a subset of employees who are expected to generate a disproportionate return on investment. This includes the allocation of substantial budget towards attraction allowances and scarce skills allowances within the municipality. It is directed mostly towards external hires.

The findings also suggest that when it comes to internal talent pools, the city takes an inherently inclusive approach that is more concerned with identifying and developing employee potential through occupationally directed programmes. The findings reveal that several factors influence talent practices in local government and eThekweni Municipality, including leaders' failure to recognise talent management as a strategic enabler, political interference, a lack of knowledge and understanding of talent management practices, reputation management, poor leadership

commitment, organisational culture, and legislative requirements. According to the research findings, the city's inclusive talent management philosophy, which primarily focusses on the identification and development of internal employees, is highly effective for technical streams requiring professional registration. Several internal programmes, including the candidate engineers, technicians, and artisan programmes, produce registered professionals with a strong emphasis on coaching and mentoring, which lead to improved performance outcomes in their current jobs.

Findings contend that in the period under review, the city failed to do an adequate job of translating some of these accomplishments into internal mobility because of the city's employment equity requirements. This led to the loss of some of the professionals produced by the city to competition, particularly men. The findings also indicate that the city does not engage in deliberate strategic career management or succession planning, despite the municipality conducting annual talent reviews and succession planning. Findings also point to several instances where internal talent pools were overlooked when it came to promotional opportunities due to political interference or line management's inability to link recruitment practices with internal talent mobility. Incidents like these result in the promotion of underserving candidates filtering into the organisation's succession plans as these individuals progress to form part of incapable talent pools which undermine the service delivery efforts. Findings further suggest that the introduction of unions in recruitment practices would improve transparency of the processes and have a positive impact on the reputation of the municipality. Union representatives are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement to maintain the integrity of the process.

The findings reveal a significant lack of accountability in leadership when overseeing employee performance, which frequently manifests in overtime abuse, poor service delivery, procurement delays, project delays, along with budget over and under expenditure. As evaluations of performance by leadership are often subject central location or leniency biases which provide homogenised ratings that inflate poor performers scores while decreasing the scores of above average performers. Aina and Atan (2020) confirm that disparity aversion, manifested as leniency and centrality biases, may collaborate to reduce heterogeneity in performance evaluations. These poor leadership practices have serious financial consequences, as the city is forced to pay performance bonuses for services not rendered. Findings also suggest that there is double dipping in the city's performance reward system, where the city pays

performance bonuses to employees for simply meeting the performance standard already covered by the salary, rather than for exceptional performance on the part of the employees. Furthermore, where poor employee performance is recognised by line managers, the city does not have performance improvement plans in place to address the poor performance. This has a corresponding impact on service delivery outcomes.

7.4. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

This section of the study makes recommendations which can be generalised to similar departments of the same size within the same grade municipalities.

7.4.1. Review of talent management business case recommendations

The eThekweni Municipality's strategic framework for talent management was approved by Council in 2012 and was due for review in 2021 to ensure the right people with the right skills were in the right roles at the right time to deliver the 2020 vision and IDP. The framework outlines talent definitions, approaches, and principles, as well as the strategic imperative and outcomes that are required for talent management. Moreover, the talent management strategy has been used to improve the pool of managers/leaders and technical specialists in all fields, as well as in fields where there is a critical shortage of skills. The strategy identified the following as strategic talent issues that required attention in 2007:

- i. Attraction and retention of scarce and critical skills as the number one risk out of 19 top enterprise risks.
- ii. Significant imbalances in employment equity figures requiring targeted talent management to ensure the identification and accelerated development of successors for senior management and technical specialist positions.
- iii. Talent management and succession planning as the top talent risk identified by the 2007 Internal Perception Survey; and
- iv. A need for a culture of high performance to improve project management and service delivery outcomes to achieve the projected 2020 vision and IDP goals.

According to research findings, the municipality's talent management strategy may no longer be relevant to today's business because it was developed to address business issues identified in 2007. Time, global changes, technological advancements, and new business requirements render the strategy obsolete. The city's risk profile has also shifted from scarcity of talent to recruitment and selection as a more prominent risk area, alongside procurement, poor service

delivery, and financial viability. Findings demonstrate that the talent management strategy has performed well in addressing the diversity and inclusion challenges identified in 2007 through targeted selection of previously disadvantaged candidates, though more effort is needed. The development of technical specialists has also made significant strides, to the point that some categories of engineers are no longer viewed as scarce within the municipality. This is another area of noteworthy achievement. Despite having a wealth of strong technical skills, however, the city continues to outsource significant projects that call for these skills, which has resulted in a decline in the quality of services provided. This is because the city does not realise the advantages of paying the premium cost to have these skills in-house.

The findings also indicate that the strategy has failed and continues to fail to use performance management, which is the backbone of the strategy for achieving a culture of high performance. The study suggests that the city reviews its talent management strategy to ensure that its implementation is informed by a current business case that is linked to the organisation's strategic objectives. In addition, the review will necessitate a strategic alignment of business objectives with talent management policies and practices. To be more effective, the talent management strategy should be owned and driven by the line function business, with Human Capital Practitioners serving as architects and advisers on strategy implementation.

7.4.2. Recruitment and selection recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is clear that poor hiring practices have a negative impact on the entire talent management value chain, eventually leading to the appointment or promotion of ill-equipped potential successors at the expense of positive service delivery outcomes. To address political interference in recruitment and selection practises, this study suggests that there should be a clear distinction between administrative and political functions in the municipality. To improve transparency and credibility, the inclusion of labour unions in the recruitment process as observers should be extended to the scoring and selection processes, and participation should not be limited to interviews only, as limited exposure provides no oversight value. According to the Municipal Staff Regulations (2021), all positions within the municipality must be accompanied by corresponding competencies.

The research findings reveal that, while competency requirements are expressed in advertisements, they are not assessed during the interview process; thus, this study

recommends that the interview process be a competency-based interview to improve the quality of the recruits. Furthermore, this study recommends that eThekweni Municipal Academy, a unit within the Corporate Human Capital Cluster, takes a proactive approach through its councillor development programmes in which political principles are educated on their rights, responsibilities, and the service delivery implications that arise from political interference in administrative processes, as espoused in the provisions of the municipal systems act. Section 11 of Schedule 1 of the Code of Conduct of Councillors in the MSA states that a councillor may not:

- i. Interfere in the management or administration of any department of the municipal council unless mandated by council.
- ii. Give or purport to give any instruction to any employee of the council except when authorised to do so.
- iii. Obstruct or attempt to obstruct the implementation of any decision of the council or a committee by an employee of the council; or
- iv. Encourage or participate in any conduct which would cause or contribute to maladministration in the council. Section 117 of the MFMA prohibits councillors from taking part in tender decisions.

The study also suggests that certain services be provided in-house rather than outsourced, as this would reduce exposure to political interference while also creating jobs. The human resources department should handle staff appointments independently and without political interference to ensure that suitably qualified candidates are appointed in order to achieve positive service delivery outcomes. The background literature for this study contends that it is common knowledge among modern-day South Africans that those with political connections occupy senior positions in public service departments, despite their lack of expertise and competency to manage their public offices (Swanepoel, 2018). According to Schechter (2017), cadre deployment in the public sector has become a route to upward mobility at the expense of service delivery. Regarding the findings of maladministration in recruitment and selection processes, the study recommends that the municipality commit to clean administration and use technology as an enabler of good governance. The municipality has a recruitment system in place which is not fully utilised.

Consequently, the human capital departments continue to use a combination of manual and automated recruitment processes. Due to the lack of an audit trail, the use of a manual application process creates a fertile environment for maladministration and corruption in recruitment practises. Furthermore, findings reveal that the slow adoption of recruitment technology is being driven by political leaders who see the systems as a threat to their ability to influence recruitment outcomes.

According to the findings of this study, at an operational level, the municipality has several libraries in the communities that are equipped with computers and community Wi-Fi; additionally, the city has rolled out and continues to roll out several centres of excellence throughout the city that are equipped with computers and Wi-Fi access. These centres of excellence should act as online recruitment hubs, with consultants assigned to train system users. The municipality should discontinue the use of manual application processes to drive clean governance and equip the centres with generators to ensure uninterrupted services during load-shedding.

7.4.3. Recommendations on performance monitoring and assessments

Findings reveal that leaders and managers fail to create competency-based performance agreements that are directly linked to service delivery, owing to a misalignment between the performance management system of employees at TK 18 and below and the performance management system for executives. While the former only measures inputs and does not incorporate the assessment of competencies and proficiency levels of participants, the latter does incorporate the assessment of competencies and proficiency levels of participants.

As a result, this study recommends that all employee performance be aligned with executive performance to ensure an aligned competency-based performance management system, as required by the Municipal Systems Act. The study findings further indicate that performance monitoring is not an ongoing process in the city, but rather a box-ticking exercise when it comes to rewarding performance, and that management does not see the process as a service delivery enabler, but rather as an administrative burden. The Municipal Staff Regulations passed in 2021 makes it mandatory for the managers within the municipality to conduct biannual performance reviews. These will provide an opportunity for ongoing coaching and mentoring.

This study recommends that the human capital team plays an active monitoring and evaluation role in the process implementation and expected outcomes. This study further recommends that the municipality regularises the performance reward system to align with the Municipal Staff Regulations which indicate that performance rewards should only be paid to employees who have achieved a performance score of four and above.

7.4.4. Leadership development and succession planning recommendations

Through the implementation of the city's employment equity plan, the municipality makes policy provisions for succession planning and provides a direct link between succession management and diversity and inclusion. According to the findings of this study, the city should divide its talent demands between internal and external hires to ensure a blended approach to succession management that accounts for internal talent mobility as well as the introduction of new talent and skills through external hires. Succession planning, according to Rothwell (2010), is a factor in career success and influences employees' attitudes towards learning, training, and development.

According to Mattone (2013), succession planning plays a unique role in combating the loss of key personnel within an organisation. Due to political interference, the municipality tends to prioritise external hires over internal hires. Once hired, these new hires require support and development from their internal counterparts who are unwilling to cooperate because of the unjust treatment to which they have been exposed. The city's recruitment policy allows for the internal advertising of positions only when there is an adequate supply of successors to protect internal talent pools, and the application of these provisions should be encouraged. This study suggests that, as opportunities arise, the city should review its talent pool and prioritise promotional appointments within the talent pool with the highest levels of readiness to improve employee engagement and productivity. As noted by Wilfred (2008), succession planning is essential for identifying a pool of talented employees who are able to meet the organisation's future leadership needs. In order to reduce the risk of an aging workforce, the study suggests that the city seriously consider a generational mix in its hiring practices. According to Nolan-Flecha (2019), talent management practices are able to promote more effective collaboration between older and younger generational workers through mentoring programmes and enable a two-way knowledge transfer process in the context of multigenerational workforces.

7.4.5. Strategic alignment recommendations

According to the study's findings, the city's business talent management case has three main motivators: operational, relational, and strategic drivers. The first driver relates to achieving operational benefits, such as lowering costs and increasing the effectiveness of human resource management; the second driver denotes satisfying urgent demands from line managers and business partners; while the third driver denotes the contribution of talent management to the achievement of organisational strategic goals (Sareen and Subramanian, 2012). The improvement of both employee performance and service delivery outcomes through the enhancement of employee ability to meet organisational objectives is noted as a critical element of the alignment of the organisational strategy and the human capital strategy. Delivering fundamental services, exercising good governance, managing finances, building infrastructure, and combating corruption are the goals of the city. The corresponding talent management goals include using the talent approach as a strategic enabler to create a high-performing culture, recruit and keep top talent, offer opportunities for career mobility, and promote diversity and inclusivity, this study recommends merit-based recruitment, supplemented by compulsory use of occupational assessments to validate interview panel decisions.

7.4.6. Talent management review recommendations

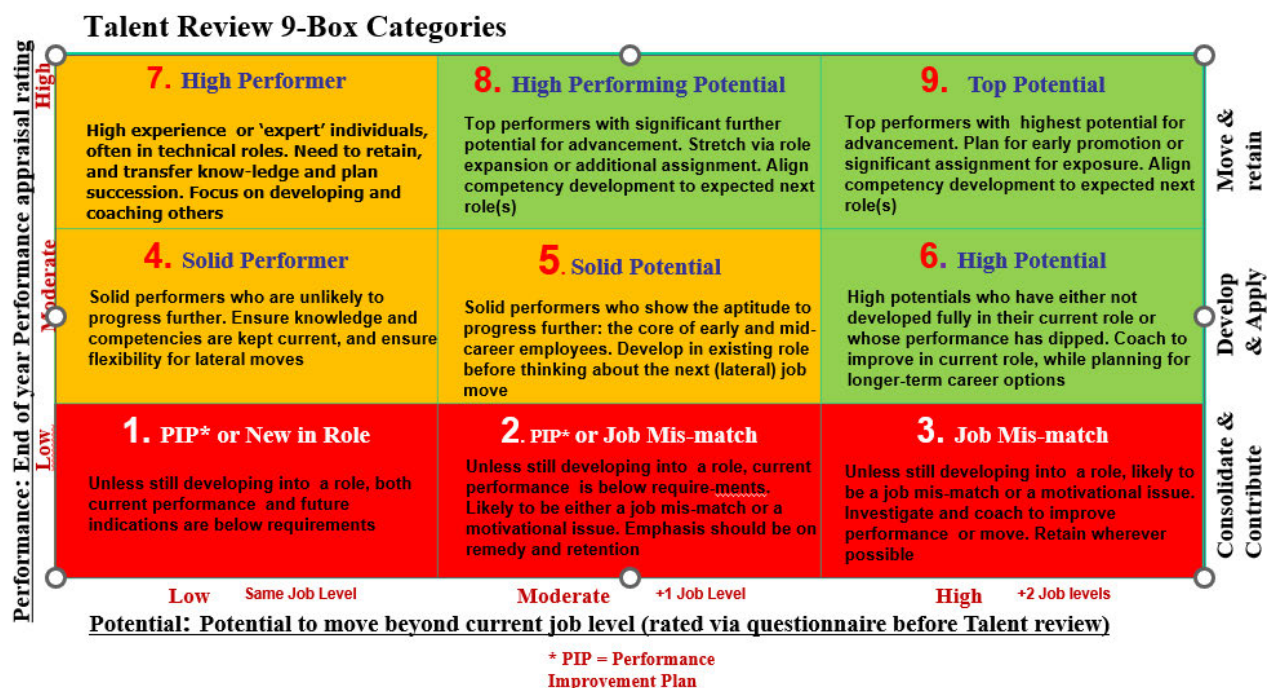
At the unit and cluster levels, the municipality already has talent management committees in place. In order to inform workforce planning strategies and offer mitigation strategies, these committees are required to analyse the workforce for potential talent risk areas like scarce, critical skills, and planned and unplanned exists. The committees also assess employee performance as an indicator of potential future performance and succession readiness. The committees suggest acting appointments, coaching, mentoring, secondments, additional and added responsibility assignments, and other occupationally directed development opportunities to stretch the talent pool in accordance with the results of the reviews. According to research findings, the city conducts talent reviews as soon as committees are available. This study suggests that, in accordance with the new municipal staff regulations, all talent management practices be competency-based, and that the talent review process be coordinated within the fiscal year and the performance management cycle from June to July of each year.

7.4.7. Talent performance recommendations

This study recommends that line managers supplement performance planning and performance agreements at the start of the fiscal year with a career discussion with employees to understand their career aspirations in order to achieve alignment between operational requirements and employee career mobility planning. The first step in talent management would be a career discussion, which would be combined with the first step in performance management. The development of key performance indicators and competency indicators would be the next step.

Furthermore, the study recommends that all employee performance agreements be aligned with executive performance, the budget service delivery implementation plan, and the municipality's integrated development plan. The signing of performance agreements should be followed by continuous monitoring, on-the-job coaching, and mentoring, and reviewed during the first half of the year as well as at the end of the fiscal year. These reviews must be combined with talent reviews because performance management is the foundation of talent management. In addition, this study supports the continued use of the talent Nine Box matrix to evaluate talent objectively; deficiencies in performance must be recorded and addressed through performance improvement plans and exceptional potential must be reinforced through stretch assignments.

Figure 7.1: Nine Box matrix

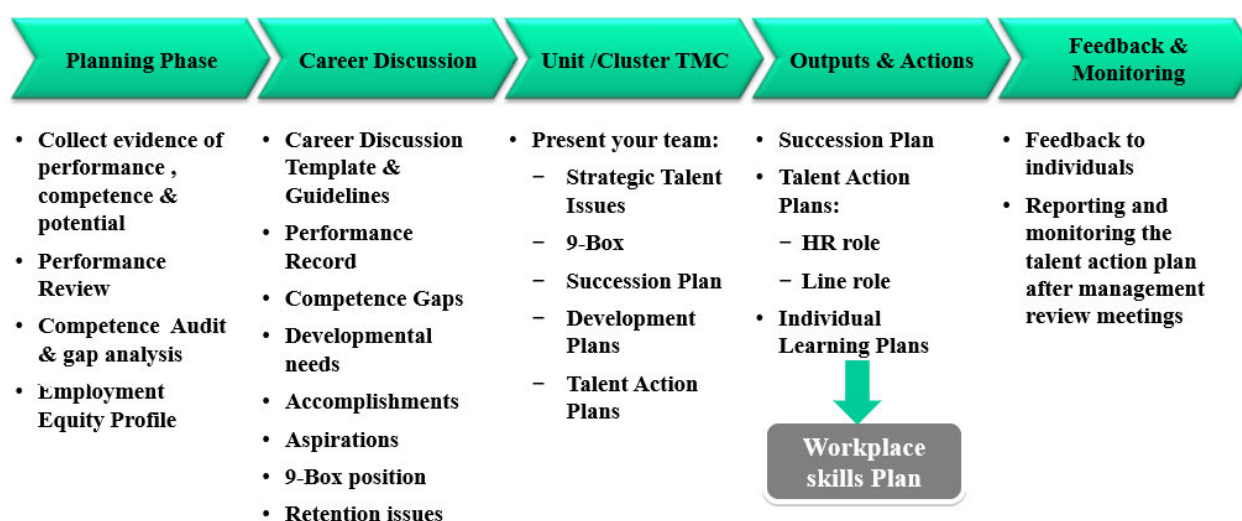


Source: Adapted from McKinsey (2016).

7.4.8. Talent feedback recommendations

The annual talent management committee serves as the culmination of a series of actions that make up the talent management process. The following succinct descriptions of these activities include preparation, career discussions, TMC, outputs and actions, and feedback and monitoring. The talent cycle is suggested by the study as a vital component of talent decisions when compared to the performance management cycle. The performance measures are formally reviewed in June of each year after being formally agreed upon in July of each year. The study recommends that TMCs are conducted simultaneously with performance reviews.

Figure 7.2: Talent Management Process Flow



Source: eThekweni Municipal Talent Management Strategy (2011).

Findings reveal that the talent management process takes a strategic approach to balancing talent demand and supply, as well as ensuring a shared framework, process, common language, and an integrated approach. The process aims to foster a culture and mindset of strategic talent management, as well as to create conditions for all employees to harness the potential and creativity through succession planning, the creation of talent pools for mission critical positions, and the allocation of scarce skills by ensuring the placement of high-impact people in high-impact positions.

7.5. MODEL FOR EVALUATION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

To drive organisational performance, this study recommends that talent practices be integrated into or aligned with the organisational strategy. Aligning talent management and business strategies will allow the city to improve long-term service delivery outcomes. Monitoring and evaluating talent management practices on a regular basis is critical for assessing the performance and impact of a programme of action. In contrast, this study revealed that poor talent management practices have a detrimental effect on service delivery outcomes. Based on these findings, the study recommends quarterly monitoring and evaluation of talent practices in accordance with the Municipal Staff Regulations to ensure compliance, monitor deviations from plans, and take corrective actions.

Furthermore, the Municipal Staff Regulations require all municipalities to establish performance moderation committees in addition to existing talent management committees; this is likely to be viewed as an administrative burden by line management. The following model is proposed by this study for monitoring the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes. The model will aid in tracking progress on key talent-related challenges, as well as the efficacy of solutions that have been implemented. The model suggests that the following specific talent measures be tracked and reported on quarterly.

7.5.1. Time to full productivity per hire

This is a critical indicator for the city as every new employee in the municipality will require several months to become fully productive. During these months, new employees learn the ropes, get to know their co-workers, and build a strong network that will help them do their jobs well. Talent management practices are required to shorten this period. This will be monitored through the probationary period as required by the Municipals Staff Regulations.

7.5.2. Time to hire.

This is another important recruitment metric to track. It will be calculated as the number of days between the opening of the vacancy and the signing of the new hire's contract. This indicator is closely related to the Municipal Staff Regulations requirement that all positions be filled within six months of posting.

7.5.3. Talent distribution

Another insight that the city should keep an eye on is talent distribution. This will be accomplished using demographic variables such as age, nationality, gender, and so on. A better understanding of talent distribution will help the city develop better talent strategies. For example, if the average age of the city talent is rising, it may want to reconsider its recruitment strategy.

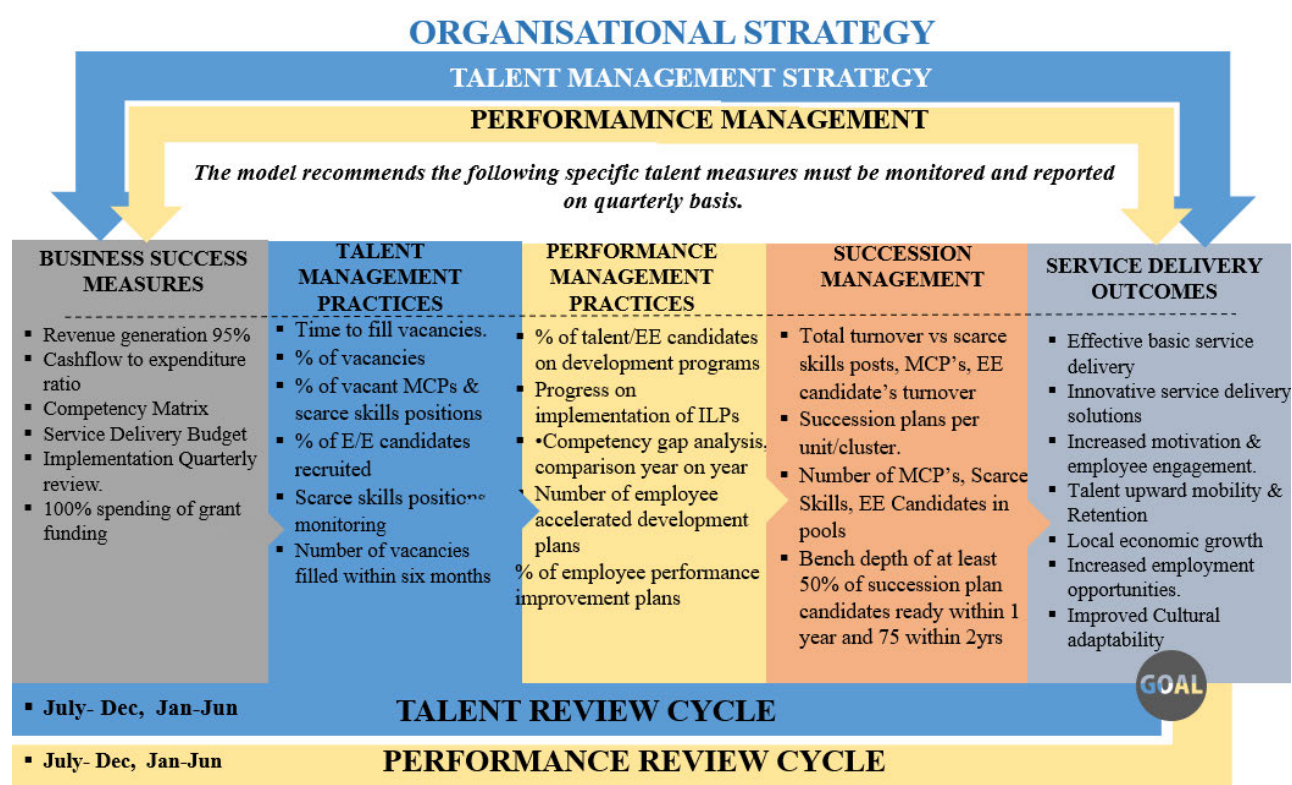
7.5.4. High-potential talent

Another critical talent management metric for the city is determining the percentage of the workforce that qualifies as talent. The city should set a fixed percentage for talent. This makes good business sense because it forces the city to select only the top employees as high potential employees for succession.

7.5.5. Talent mobility

Talent mobility is a metric that keeps track of the mobility of employees. Mobility can be both internal and external. Internal mobility is desirable to prevent external mobility as discussed in findings.

Figure 7.3: Model for evaluation of talent management practices



7.6. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study used a qualitative approach to investigate the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes at the eThekweni Municipality. As a result, the study's findings must be restricted to South African local governments only. Furthermore, the findings reveal that talent management practices such as succession planning, competency-based recruitment, and performance management are poorly implemented due to a lack of proper monitoring and evaluation of their efficacy. As a result, this research suggests a model for tracking the impact of talent management practices on service delivery at eThekweni Municipality. The challenge is exacerbated by the continued use of manual recruitment processes, which foster control evasion and perpetuate maladministration. eThekweni municipality should investigate the automation of recruitment and selection practices in order to reduce political interference, maladministration, and improve the process's effectiveness; this recommendation is closely aligned with the smart city project, which seeks to automate major operations and service offerings within the municipality. Because the majority of talent management practices are now legislated for municipalities by the Municipal Staff Regulations, the findings of this study and the proposed monitoring model may be generalised to other municipalities in Southern Africa.

7.7. CONCLUSION

The study explores how the eThekweni Municipality's service delivery outcomes are impacted by talent management practices. As demonstrated in chapter five, the study's formulated objectives have been thoroughly investigated and met. In chapter six, the themes that emerged from the qualitative study were presented thematically. The qualitative results show that talent management practices have a direct impact on service delivery outcomes. This impact is negative and manifests as excessive use of overtime, procurement delays, project delays, budget over- and under- expenditures, and subpar service delivery outcomes. The study reveals a positive outcome in the city's concerted effort, through occupationally directed talent development initiatives, to strengthen internal capacity. The programme has produced several professionally registered engineers, technicians, and artisans. These professionals, however, have been underutilised, resulting in a loss of return on investment for the city. The study's findings also reveal that the city is aggressively driving transformation, and while internal applicants are concerned about absolute exclusion in recruitment and selection, such concerns are unfounded.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: GATEKEEPERS LETTER



HEAD HUMAN RESOURCES
14th Floor, Shell House
221 Anton Lembede Street, Durban, 4001
P O Box 5892, Durban, 4000
Tel: 031-311 3016
www.durban.gov.za
3RD November 2020

Gate Keepers' Approval Letter

To: The Research Committee
School of Management: IT and Governance
College of Law and Management Studies
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Westville Campus)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research

This correspondence serves to confirm that Sindy Olive Ngcobo (Student Number: 216076649), has been granted permission to conduct a research study title: Exploration of the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes at eThekweni municipality.

Should you require further clarity on the contents of this correspondence, please do not hesitate to contact us on the details provided above.

Regards,



Reginald Mkhize
Acting Head Human Resources

APPENDIX C: LANGUAGE EDITOR CERTIFICATION



St Charles College,
Harwin Road,
Scottsville
Pietermaritzburg 3201
Tel: 083 593 2855
admin@kznlanguageinstitute.com
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Registration number: 131 804 NPO

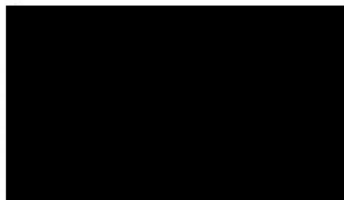
Certificate of editing

22 November 2023

Name: Sindy Olive Mbele

Title: Exploration of the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes at eThekweni Municipality

This serves to confirm that the above document was edited substantively by members of the KZN Language Institute's professional English language editing team. The document was returned to the author with tracked changes and comments intended to correct errors and to clarify meaning. It was the author's responsibility to attend to these changes.



J. A. Kerchhoff

Director of the KwaZulu-Natal Language Institute

KZN Language Institute - Transforming Words

APPENDIX D: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Exploration of the impact of HR management practices on service delivery outcomes at

Your participation in the study is anonymous, voluntary and by participating, you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in the study. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, I.T. & Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study.	
Business Unit	
Job Title	
Grade	
Participation Consent	
Full Research Title	Exploration of the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes at eThekweni municipality
Data Management	
All data, both electronic and hard copy, will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this time, all data will be destroyed. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the study, please contact me or my research supervisor.	
Date of completion	

eThekweni municipality.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What has been your experience of the HR Practices within the Municipality?
2. What has been the most challenging aspect of the human capital practices and what kind of improvement would you like to see.
3. What has been your experience of recruitment practices, the impact on service delivery and the workforce at large?
4. If we are recruiting on a continuous basis, why is overtime on the increase? What is the impact of the increase in overtime on service delivery outcomes?
5. In your view does our performance as a workforce translate into service delivery?
6. Why are majority of employees meeting performance expectations on their performance agreement, receiving a bonus yet there is an increase on service delivery dissatisfaction?
7. Would you say that employees you are productive and engaged? Or are your teams productive and engaged?
8. Is succession planning effective within the Municipality, your Unit or Department if not what are the challenges.
9. What services delivery issues are you currently facing and how are you addressing them? Are your customers satisfied with the level of service you are providing?
10. Is the organisational culture conducive for service delivery, what you would you like to see improve?

APPENDIX E: INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

UKZN Humanities Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC)

Application for Ethics Approval

For research with human participants

Date: 12 October 2022

Greetings,

My name is Sindy Olive Ngcobo from eThekweni Municipality Human Capital Unit, I am the Senior Manager Human Capital Services, currently pursuing a PHD study on the impact of talent management practices on service delivery at eThekweni municipality. I am located at 166 KE Masinga Road, Third Floor City Engineers Building room 325.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research on talent management practices within the municipality. The aim and purpose of this research is to understand the impact of these practices on service delivery and to develop a model that will measure the effectiveness of such practices. The study is expected to include twenty participants in total from within the Human Settlements, Engineering and Transport Cluster.

It will involve gathering information from participants through interviews. The duration of your participation if you choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be 2 hours. The study will not require personal information of participants, we hope that the study will create the following benefits better understanding of the impact of talent management practices on service delivery. This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number: 00019499).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at
166KE MASING ROAD, CITY ENGINEERS BUILDING
Third Floor, Room 325
Sindy.mbele@durban.gov.za,
tel. 0313117714 or

the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your participation in the study is voluntary and by participating, you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in the study. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, I.T. & Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study. All data, both electronic and hard copy, will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this time, all data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the study, please contact me or my research supervisor at the numbers listed above.

Sincerely

Sindy Mbele

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I _____ have been informed about the study entitled the impact of talent management practices on service delivery at eThekweni municipality by Sindy Mbele.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study the impact of talent management practices on service delivery at eThekweni municipality.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher at sindy.mbele@durban.gov.za; 031322-7714 or 0817808310.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview YES

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARENCE



13 January 2023

Sindy Olive Ngcobo (216076649)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Westville Campus

Dear SO Ngcobo,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00005065/2022

Project title: Exploration of the impact of talent management practices on service delivery outcomes at eThekweni municipality

Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 14 November 2022 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 13 January 2024.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,