



**University of KwaZulu-Natal**

**Motivating factors that influence employees to access  
the study assistance programme at  
Shell & BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd.**

**by**

**Nompumelelo L. Mbambo**

**205511482**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Commerce: Human Resource Management**

**College of Law and Management Studies  
School of Management, Information Technology and Governance**

**SUPERVISOR: MRS J. RAMASAMY-GURAYAH**

**2018**

## DECLARATION

I, **NOMPUMELELO LETTICIA MBAMBO** declare that;

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation/thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
- (ii) This dissertation/thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- (iv) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
  - a) their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
  - b) where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
- (v) Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.
- (vi) This dissertation/thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation/thesis and in the References sections.

Signed:



Date: **24 July 2018**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study explored the motivating factors that influence the employees' decision to access the Study Assistance Programme at Shell & BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd (SAPREF). These factors are key in understanding the main drivers for the success of this programme. They can be used in attracting more employees who have similar needs, to make use of this programme. Employees who have made use of the study assistance programme were participants of this study. A qualitative research methodology was employed as the researcher did not want to predict the possible factors that could have led the participants to access this programme. The qualitative research method offered a way to elicit information in a non-prescriptive manner. Participants were interviewed by the use of semi-structured interviews. This gave the interviewer a structure to follow and focus in order to elicit the relevant responses but also the freedom to probe where there was a need to dig deeper. Data was analyzed using content analysis. This analytic method was used due to its descriptive nature to data analysis in qualitative approaches. It also allowed the researcher to apply low level of interpretation to the data. This was important to achieve in this study as the results needed to be as authentic as possible in order to ensure the validity of the study.

The main themes that emerged from the data collected were; (i) access and availability of funding – all permanent employees have access to this funding opportunity and there are no waiting periods which is often the case in other companies where one has to be in the employ of the organization for a certain period of time before qualifying, (ii) career progression – participants see this as a career progression tool as there is a feeling that opportunities will arise and those that have develop themselves are in a better position to be awarded such, (iii) the need for self-development – participants articulated the need to growth and self-development in order to stay abreast of development and best practice in industry, (iv) career change – this programme was also seen as a vehicle to drive one to a change in career without having to leave employment to study for that new career, and lastly (v) a psychological contract with the company – this was seen a way of committing oneself to the company for a period of time. There are participants who are happy to be tied to the company as they see a benefit in return.

**KEYWORDS:** study assistance programme, employee assistance programme, motivating factors, self-development, employee engagement.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to thank the Lord Almighty; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for giving me the vision and strength to do and complete this programme. Thank you also for keeping me sane throughout the whole process.

My family has been a pillar of strength. I wish to thank my husband Sicelo for his support and understanding. A special mention goes to my children, Thandokuhle and Andile; for always telling me “mommy you have to finish your homework”.

To the respondents; for your time and openness to share your experiences with me.

To my employer; SAPREF, for the opportunity to learn and grow and be supported in that process. For the resources I needed for this learning to happen, I am truly grateful.

To my supervisor; for your support and feedback.

To all those who asked about my progress and encouraged me to keep going; you were heaven sent!

To my Bright Shining Star; my mother. For always wanting the best for me and believing in my abilities, for the seed that you planted in my life, I am eternally grateful.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Description	Page
DECLARATION	II
ABSTRACT	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	IV
LIST OF FIGURES	VIII
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	IX
<b><u>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY</u></b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	1
1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	4
1.3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM	5
1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY	7
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	8
1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	9
1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	9
1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	12
1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	14
1.10 PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF CHAPTERS	14
1.11 CONCLUSION	15
<b><u>CHAPTER 2: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</u></b>	<b>16</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION	16
2.2 UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATION	17
2.3 THEORIES OF MOTIVATION	21
2.3.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	22
2.3.2 Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness, Growth Theory	23
2.3.3 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory	25
2.3.4 Locke's Goal Setting Theory	27
2.3.5 Vroom's Expectancy Theory	29
2.4 EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION FOR SELF-DEVELOPMENT	33

2. 5	EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES	38
2.5.1	The History of Employee Assistance Programmes	39
2.5.2	The Benefits of Employee Assistance Programmes	40
2. 6	EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	43
2. 7	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	46
 <b><u>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</u></b>		<b>48</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION	48
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	49
3.3	DATA COLLECTION	59
3.4	DATA ANALYSIS	63
3.5	ETHICAL CONSIDERATION	67
3.6	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	69
 <b><u>CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION</u></b>		<b>70</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION	70
4.2	RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	70
4.3	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	71
4.3.1	<b>Objective 1:</b> Investigate if expectancy influences the employee's decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme	72
4.3.1.1	THEME 1: Self-efficacy	72
4.3.1.2	THEME 2: Goal difficulty	74
4.3.1.3	THEME 3: Control	75
4.3.2	<b>Objective 2:</b> Ascertain the role played by the value employees place on the performance-reward relationship (instrumentality) in their decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme	76
4.3.2.1	THEME 1: Academic Qualification	77
4.3.2.2	THEME 2: Financial Assistance	78
4.3.2.3	THEME 3: Career Development	78
4.3.2.4	THEME 4: Career Change	80
4.3.2.5	THEME 5: Self-Development	81
4.3.2.6	THEME 6: Employee Marketability	82

4.3.2.7	THEME 7: Employee Engagement	83
4.3.2.8	THEME 8: Additional Employee Benefits	84
<b>4.3.3</b>	<b>Objective 3:</b> Explore the role of value that the individual places on the reward (valence) in their decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme	85
4.3.3.1	THEME 1: Financial Implications	87
4.3.3.2	THEME 2: Role Modeling	87
4.3.3.3	THEME 3: Psychological Benefit	87
4.3.3.4	THEME 4: Functional Development	88
4.4	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	89
<b><u>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</u></b>		<b>91</b>
5.1	INTRODUCTION	91
5.2	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	93
5.3	CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY	95
5.3.1	QUESTION 1	96
5.3.2	QUESTION 2	97
5.3.3	QUESTION 3	98
5.4	RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY	99
5.5	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	100
5.6	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER	101
BIBLIOGRAPHY		102
APPENDICES		
APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE		112
APPENDIX 2: ETHICAL CLEARANCE		114
APPENDIX 3: TURNITIN REPORT		115
APPENDIX 4: GATEKEEPER LETTER		116
APPENDIX 5: INFORMED CONSENT FORM		117

## LIST OF FIGURES & TABLES

No.	Description	Page
	Figure 2.1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs	22
	Figure 2.2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Alderfer's three theoretical construct	24
	Figure 2.3: Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory	26
	Figure 2.4: Vroom's Expectancy Theory	30
	Figure 2.5: Career Anchors	35
	Figure 2.6 Psychological Career Resources	37
	Figure 2.7 Expectancy Theory & Career Anchors	41
	Table 1: Summary of Research Themes	90



## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

EAP	Employee Assistance Programmes
ERG	Existence, Relatedness, Growth
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
PDP	Personal Development Plan
SAP	Study Assistance Programme
SAPREF	Shell and BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd
SMART	Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

Shell and BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd (SAPREF) provide financial assistance to encourage its employees to improve their educational qualifications by embarking on and completing courses of study for professional, technical and/or other recognized qualifications in line with the employees' present position or possible future position within the company. This is in the form of study assistance programme (SAP), on-the-job training and coaching; international assignments, skills programmes, Learnerships, apprenticeships (SAPREF, 2014a, SAPREF, 2015a, SAPREF, 2016a).

Whilst some companies may be reluctant to invest in the development of their staff out of fear that they may leave them for other companies (Hoffman & Burks, 2017), SAPREF embarks on this empowerment agenda despite the threat of losing its employee to other companies. This is a reality for organizations considering developing their staff, as staff can easily be enticed by offers from other organizations.

This is a challenge to organizations that goes beyond just training and development but rather to the broader human resource strategic agenda of an organization. It is not just training that may lead to employees leaving. Cole (2002) asserts that factors such as the relationship with the line manager, autonomy or sense of responsibility and good performance management system may also play a part in the employee's decision to leave an organization. On the other hand, Armstrong (2009) suggests that opportunities for learning and career growth couple

with good working environment are factors that encourage the retention of employees in an organization. It is therefore clear that in order to retain their talent, organizations need to focus on creating good working environments for employees and develop them.

SAPREF's focus on skills development extends beyond permanently employed staff but reaches even unemployed youth that are enrolled into development programmes that are aimed at creating a talent pipeline for the organization and the petro-chemical industry at large. This commitment to skills development is backed by financial investment that SAPREF has put into skills development. In the years 2014 to 2016 SAPREF spent close to R25 million on such development opportunities for staff and unemployed youth (SAPREF, 2014a, SAPREF, 2015a, SAPREF, 2016a).

This financial investment is in line with the spirit of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 in as far as the provision of skills to the South African labour force as well as opening developmental opportunities in the workplace for the provision of skills to the unemployed is concerned (DOL, 1998). It is also in line with the Chemical Industries Sector Education and Training Authority's mandate to formulate Sector Skills Plans and drive skills development programmes that will address the needs of the sector (DHET, 2014). The Skills Development Act is a crucial piece of legislation in that it also provides for the establishment of the National Skills Authority, the process and governance of Learnerships; skills programmes and artisan development initiatives such as trade testing (DOL, 2014). This is in line with SAPREF's strategic vision on skills development as well as its Leadership Improvement Agenda (SAPREF, 2014).

Further to the fulfillment of this vision, SAPREF has a policy that guides the implementation of the study assistance programme in order to facilitate further development for permanent employees. In terms of this policy, assistance is provided in the form of a bursary for all related fees and/or provision of study and exam leave. This bursary is payable back to the company if the employee does not pass his studies or decides to leave the organization within the work back period. This is done through the signing of a contract that binds the employee to these terms and conditions. This is not uncommon; as organization institute training contracts in order to prevent employees from resigning from their current employ early on after the acquisition of new skills to the disadvantage of the organization that paid for the training (Hoffman & Burks, 2017). Back paying the company on account of courses failed work as negative motivation for employees engaged in studies paid for by the company (Gopalan, Bakar, Zulkifli, Alwi, & Mat, 2017). This will be due to the fact that employee would not want to pay back monies to the organization especially as they would still need to pay the institution for the same course when they re-register to repeat the course. This results in employees that are determined to be productive and achieve the highest standards of excellence in their field of operation (Hoffman & Burks, 2017).

Whilst SAPREF's intention for introducing this programme is to develop its workforce in order to achieve the desired levels of productivity, the reasons that lead to each employee accessing the programme have never been explored. These reasons are what motivate employees to make use of the programme and show a degree of alignment between the company's strategy and the employee's developmental plans. It is therefore important to

understand these reasons in order to be able to build on them as an organization for the attainment of the overall business strategy.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

SAPREF has a strong culture of learning that extends beyond its employees to reach even the unemployed youth of its surrounding areas; however, it is noticeable that the intake to the study assistance programme by permanent employees is low. Over the past 10 years (2005–2015), only 81 allocations for study assistance were processed with some recipients accessing the programme more than once, which implies that the actual number of employees is therefore even less (SAPREF, 2015b).

This low intake in the company's study assistance programme is the direct opposite of what is happening in the intake of non-employees on SAPREF's learning programmes. The intake of non-employees on learning programmes has been increasing gradually with the demand and impact on the business (SAPREF, 2015a). It is therefore concerning that; the intake of permanent employees on the study assistance programme does not seem to follow the same pattern (SAPREF, 2015b).

Permanent staff may possibly not see the benefit of accessing an opportunity designed for their benefit in as much as it benefits the company. Exam/study leave records indicate that there are employees who are engaged in part-time studies but are choosing to pay for their own studies and not make use of the study assistance offered by the company (SAPREF, 2015c). It is not the intention of this study to focus on employees that are engaged in studies

without the use of SAP. Going this route may lead to the exploration of reasons not to use this programme. This would be the opposite of what this study aims to achieve.

Instead of being problem focused, this study aimed to be solution focused. It is for this reason that this study engaged with those who have accessed the programme to find out what they state as reasons for doing so and to determine if their expectations were met. This information can then be used to come up with campaigns to encourage more employees to access this programme in its current form. Since this programme is mainly aimed at learning that is closely linked to the employees' current position at work, this learning will be in line with the business strategy. Developing skills in line with the business strategy facilitates the achievement of the overall business strategy (SAPREF, 2014).

### **1.3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The aim of this research was to determine how more employees could be encouraged to access the SAP. It was also to ascertain how they could be encouraged to prioritize and align their development with SAPREF's business strategy. Whilst companies cannot force employees to continually develop themselves, they can offer assistance to encourage them to prioritize their development. It is vitally important for SAPREF to offer this assistance in line with its business strategies. Low intake in this programme has an effect on the company's strategic vision and goals. SAPREF is a national and global player in the petrochemical industry. The skills required within this sector are among the most scarce nationally as well as globally. SAPREF has a need to have empowered and developed staff on a continuous basis. SAPREF therefore has to find ways of encouraging its employees to access

such an assistance programme in order to develop and sharpen their skills for the benefit of the individual as well as that of the company. The research problem therefore is the low intake of the participants in the study assistance programme.

SAPREF prides itself on its skills development programmes. The study assistance programme is specifically for the development of permanent staff. The programme funds employees that wish to continue their studies at institutions of higher learning. To have such a low uptake of candidates for this programme whereas all other programmes with external beneficiaries have high appeal is worrying to say the least. Gaining an understanding of the motivating factors for accessing this programme will offer valuable input into future roll-out plans of this programme.

There is a need for going beyond better understanding and instead to extend this to future interventions that will attract a higher intake in the SAP. With an understanding of the reasons and motivators for the intake, the company will be in a position to come up with strategies to encourage other employees who have not previously made use of this programme to do so.

It is important that there is alignment between individuals' developmental goals and the company's growth vision. A misalignment has a direct impact on the organization's ability to achieve its business goals and to contribute fruitfully to its sector skills plan. SAPREF has a responsibility to develop its workforce through informal and formal accredited learning

programmes. It is therefore crucial to understand what motivates current participants of the study assistance programme in order to better extend these motivators to other employees.

#### **1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY**

It is the intension of this study to offer to the organization the employee perspective on the attractiveness of this programme and the benefits that it offers to employees. These can then be used to better market the programme to other employees who have not made use of the programme in the past. It is crucial that this undertaking is done as there is a lack in the body of knowledge that could guide us in better understanding this phenomenon.

There is a need for the individual's developmental needs and the organizations to be aligned (Neault & Pickerell, 2011). The ever-increasing pace of change in industry and technology play a crucial role in the identification of developmental opportunities and the employee's contribution to the attainment of organizational goals (Masson, et al., 2008). Employees' attitudes towards organizational programmes are key in achieving the alignment between the individual's goals and that of the company (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Employee engagement is therefore a two way street (James, et al., 2011). The organization should also reciprocate in a positive manner in order to get the desired results. There is however, a lack in the body of literature when it comes to company funded learning opportunities intake for permanent employees. This study aims to take an initial exploration into this area.

Very little literature is available on workplace learning programmes outside of actual training interventions; the closest one gets to this topic is by seeking to understand the uptake



and use of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP). This study sought to gain insight into the reasons for accessing the programme from those who have benefitted from it. This input will give worthwhile information in terms of targeted planning for this programme. It will be part of a body of knowledge in the area that has not been researched as extensively as other employee programmes. The results of this study will indicate to the field of academia the motivating factors associated with company-funded adult learning.

## **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the factors that motivate employees to access the SAPREF study assistance programme. In line with Vroom's Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964), the following were the secondary objectives of this study:

- Investigate if expectancy influences the employee's decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme.
- Ascertain the role played by the value employees place on the performance-reward relationship (instrumentality) in their decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme.
- Explore the role of value that the individual places on the reward (valence) in their decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme.

## **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION**

The main research question for this study was:

Why do employees access and make use of the SAPREF study assistance programme?

### **Research Sub-Questions**

- What role does expectancy play in the employees' decisions to access the SAPREF study assistance programme?
- What role does instrumentality play in the employees' decisions to access the SAPREF study assistance programme?
- What role does valence play in the employees' decisions to access the SAPREF study assistance programme?

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Human capital is the most valuable asset in an organization (Cook, 2008); as they invariably provide the organization with a competitive advantage over its competitors (Sheehan, 2014). The degree to which they identify themselves with the organization plays a crucial role in the attainment of the organizational goals and objectives (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012). Whilst there is no body of knowledge that exists specifically in the area of this study i.e. reasons why employees make use of a study assistance programme, there is literature available in the area of employee engagement in general. This is the body of knowledge that will be used in order to broadly understand this phenomenon.

The employees' perceptions of Human Resource Development (HRD) practices within an organization can act as moderators between employees' engagement and their citizenship behavior (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012). The development of the human capital in South Africa is legislated under the Skills Development Act (DOL, 1998). This makes a crucial part of the South African Human Resources Agenda. Besides the need for legislative compliance, organizations should view the development of its staff as an investment (Sheehan, 2014). This is certainly the case as SAPREF. Hence, it is worrying when employees do not engage with such a programme aimed at their development. This is the reason why this study aims to find out the employees' motivating factors for accessing this learning programme.

Of greater importance than the transactional contract that the employee enters into with the employer is this psychosocial contract in achieving both the individual's developmental goals and the organizational strategies (Masson, Royal, Agnew & Fine, 2008, & Bal, et al., 2013). In any contract scenario, parties have something to gain by being party to it. This study aims to investigate what the employees see as a reward for entering into this contract and the value they place on that reward.

Employee engagement has emerged as a critical topic in HRD and is regarded as a cornerstone of a successful organization (Shuck & Wollard, 2010; Shuck & Reio, 2011). The employee's appraisal of work meaningfulness and their willingness to engage is the beginning of the engagement process (Cook, 2008). This cognitive engagement is heightened by the degree to which the employee feels comfortable with and identifies with the organization and leads to emotional as well as behavioral engagement (Shuck & Reio,

2011; Neault & Pickerell, 2011). This is the reason behind the exploration of the value that the employees place on the reward associated with being part of this assistance programme.

Organizational citizenship behavior in the context of this study may be understood as the employee's level of involvement in the activities of the organization beyond what their job function requires (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012). Accessing a learning programme that would empower the employee to better perform their function is seen as one such behavior. HRD practices have been found to be useful in career advancement as well as increased levels of employee engagement (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012; Sheehan, 2014). Increasing employee engagement and their sense of citizenship has been found to be a priority in organizations as it bears much rewards for organizations not only in the form of developed staff with reference to study programmes but also in high commitment levels (Bal, et al., 2013). There is clearly coloration between expectancy and commitment levels as literature suggests. This further shows the importance of exploring this research problem in order to better understand how this learning programme can be useful in career advancement and increased employee engagement.

Career engagement can be used as an employee engagement strategy (Neault & Pickerell, 2011). However, employees cannot be forced into taking part in this process as they maybe at different stages in their careers and may not necessarily share the need for development (James, et al., 2011). An environment that encourages connectivity and growth is more likely to produce high returns for the organization (Federman, 2009). It is therefore crucial for this study to take place in order to fully understand the building blocks of this desired state. It is also important to test this theory in order to ascertain whether this is true or not in the SAPREF environment.

Whilst (Cook, 2008) believes that employee commitment as well as satisfaction does not equate to engagement; it is clear from literature that involvement of employees in programmes other than job specific activities is a clear indication of engagement (Masson, et al., 2008; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Bal, et al., 2013; Heitner, et al., 2014). Focusing on engaged employees in terms of those that have access the programme will assist in determining which is true in the learning and HRD space.

Companies really struggle to source talent and retaining it is a challenge (Federman, 2009). It is therefore crucial to get information from them in terms of what appeals to them and ultimately what will keep them engaged for their benefit as well as the company's. It is for this reason that this study shall target employees that have accessed the study assistance programme to be its participants. This study will seek to understand their reasons for engaging in this company programme. This process will render valuable information in gaining meaning and understanding for this engagement.

Engagement levels need to be assessed and evaluated on an ongoing basis in order for the company to be in a position to benchmark itself against others (Cook, 2008). Engagement is not just about engaged employees, it is also about engaged leadership and the creation of an engaging culture within an organisation (Federman, 2009). This is the type of culture that organisations should strive to achieve.

## **1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Delimitations are the researcher's set of choices made during the study. These need to be articulated in order to outline the boundaries that have been set out for the study (Simon & Goes, 2013).

- The Literature – Extensive literature exists in the field of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP). However, most of their focus is on corrective behavior such as alcohol, drug abuse, family issues and counselling (Younger, 2015). The motivating factors that lead to employees to be enrolled in these programmes shall not be explored as they have a different focus than that of the study assistance programme.
- There are employees who are engaged in part time studies that could be funded by the study assistance programme but have not applied for it. The other side of the coin in this study would be to explore what would motivate these employees to access the study assistance programme. This study instead does not concern itself with this quest as it might result in hypothetical responses aimed at changing the current state of the study assistance programme. Therefore, this study limits itself to a population of employees who have accessed the programme in order to ascertain the motivating factors that lead to it.
- Since there were no previous studies that had been conducted into the topic that is being explored; the researcher choose to make use of a theory that suggested possible motivators. Vroom's theory suggests three constructs that were used to frame the study objectives as well as research questions. The data collection tool was also constructed in line with these three constructs. This was a conscious decision by the researcher to leave out all other possible factors that may exist outside of the three in the theoretical framework employed. This was done in order to focus the research and make use of a trusted framework in the field of motivation theories.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Limitations are shortcomings, conditions or influences and all such factors that are beyond the researcher's control. They often flow from the chosen methodology as well as research design choices made (Simon & Goes, 2013).

- Sample saturation - occurs when there is no new information that is forthcoming from research respondents (Suri, 2011). This phenomenon took place during this study as there was no new data that was forthcoming from interviews and therefore there was no need to continue engaging any more participants in the research (Dworkin, 2012).
- Generalizability of the results – Since this study used a qualitative research methodology characterized by non-probability sampling
- Time and resources – This study was conducted over a specified period with submission deadlines and limited resources to be mindful of. This meant that there were potential participants that were outside of the country that could not be accessed due to these limitations.

## **1.10 PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF CHAPTERS**

Chapter 1 presents the overview of the research, which encompasses the background to the study, research problem, research question, research question and objectives. It also covers the significance of the study and its limitations and delimitations.

Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature relevant to the study. It presents relevant motivational theories and discusses the concepts of self-development and employee engagement whilst offering a different perspective on employee assistance programmes.

Chapter 3 presents a research methodology section of this study. It outlines the different research methodologies, sampling strategies, data collection and analysis techniques employed during the study.

Chapter 4 offers the discussion around data analysis in line with the research objectives presented in Chapter 1.

Chapter 5 presents the research conclusion and recommendations. It also offers the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the South African skills development landscape in the introduction of legislation pertinent to the field of study. It offered the background to the study under investigation as well as the research problem. This highlighted that there are various reasons why employees choose to make use of the study assistance programme. These reasons need to be understood in order to attract more employees to make use of this programme. Further to this, this chapter presented the study's research question, objectives as well as its significance. The limitations as well as delimitations of the study were also outlined. Chapter 2 shall present an analysis of available literature in this relation to this phenomenon.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Human capital is the most valuable asset in an organization (Fulmer & Ployhart, 2014; Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2016), as the employees invariably provide the organization with a competitive advantage over its competitors (Pennington, 2014; Sheehan, 2014). The degree to which they identify themselves with the organization plays a crucial role in the attainment of the organizational goals and objectives (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012; Pennington, 2014).

The study assistance programme is an employee assistance programme (EAP) which is aimed at developing employees' potential and widening their growth opportunities by giving them funding to further their studies. The aim of this study was to find out the employees' motivating factors for accessing this learning programme, so that these motivators can be used to better attract others to the study assistance.

Training and development of the labor force is very important to the success of any organization as it strengthens the organization through empowered and skilled employees (Cole, 2002 & Armstrong, 2009). It has been found to play a major role in the retention and performance of talent within organisations (Armstrong, 2009). It is a tool by which employees can identify gaps in their skill sets and go about attaining those missing skills for the individual progress and growth as well as for the organisation's success in obtain a competitive advantage in the sector/industry it operates in (Cole, 2002).

Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson (2008) found in their study that the most effective use of the human resource for the achievement of organizational and individual goals is its engagement in strategic human resource management initiatives. Skills development is one such initiative as it has been found to empower employees with competences that result in change in behavior informed by newly acquired techniques and skills (Cole, 2002). Hence, an investment in the human capital of an organization has a capacity of widening the individual's advancement opportunities within the organization as well as in the job market (Armstrong, 2009). Therefore, skills development in this context is a strategic initiative by organisations that benefit not only the organization but also the individual; both in short term as well as long term goals for both parties (Cole, 2002). The strategic disposition of an organization would be to offer such developmental opportunities in line with the company's specific requirements for skills and competences (Armstrong, 2009). This will align with the goals of the organization and ensure that the organization benefits from the acquired competences whether in the employee's current position or in future positions within the organization (Cole, 2002).

## **2.2 UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATION**

In the quest to understand the factors that motivate SAPREF employees to access study assistance, it is important to first gain an understanding of what motivation is. The meaning and relationship amongst needs and incentives or rewards are key in understanding motivation (Shen, Huang, & Li, 2016). These needs and rewards form psychological processes that result in a person's desire to act in a way that is in line with the achievement of certain goals (Berdud, Cabasés, & Nieto, 2016). Motivation is not just about a decision to achieve a particular goal; it is also about the commitment and sustainability of one's energies

to achieve the said goals (Parvaiz & Ahmed, 2016). Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn (2002) define motivation as a set process that propel the individual to act as well as directs the individual to behave in a way that ensures the attainment of a specific goal.

Characteristics of persistent behaviour, drives and tension forces that may not necessarily be monetary; have been described as motivation (Berdud, *et al.*, 2016). These authors asserted that it indicates the individual's intentions in the process of maintaining a voluntary activity aimed at specific goal attainment. Oluwasanya (2016) supports this view as well as Fritz Heider's attribution theory's two motivational concepts, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

### **2.2.1 Intrinsic motivation**

David and Eguzoikpe (2014) asserts that intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual. This is attributed to inherent enjoyment that is unique to an individual. There is an understanding that the results are based upon the efforts put in and are not dependent on luck. This motivation is also be fueled by a genuine interest in the goal to be attained. This view is supported by Gopalan, et al (2017) as they assert that intrinsic motivation is evident where a goal is attained for the individual's own satisfaction and contentment. They further assert that a sense of curiosity and a degree of control are key factors in this type of motivation and that in this type of motivation the individual is likely to sustain their motivational level over a long period of time.

### **2.2.2 Extrinsic motivation**

Extrinsic motivation is dependent on material gains associated with goal attainment. This may be in a form of tangible rewards such as monetary allowances and incentives (David & Eguzoikpe, 2014). On the other hand, there may be penalties associated with not achieving a certain goal. An example of this would be payback clauses found in training contracts (Hoffman & Burks, 2017). This phenomenon, Gopalan, et al (2017) classified as negative motivation; the fear of not achieving the desired goals and the consequences thereof. They further assert that this type of motivation can be extrinsic in the initial stages and can transform to be intrinsic as the learning process progresses. Therefore, the attainment of goals ceases to be about the avoidance of punishment for non-achievement or rewards to be gained on achievement of goals but rather about the individual sense of personal growth, contentment and achievement.

Gopalan, et al (2017) asserts that motivation in learning is reflected on the level of engagement that is displayed. They further assert that highly motivated individuals participate in the learning process without any expectation of reward or recognition.

In the case of engaging in further studies, this may arise from a “love-to-learn” paradigm where an individual has a keen inclination to developing themselves and breaking barriers of knowledge (Oluwasanya, 2016, p. 141). As such, Oluwasanya (2016) insisted that motivation is strongly linked with the level of the person’s productivity as it is viewed as part and parcel of the individual’s state of mind. However, it is viewed as more than the thought processes of the individual and rather as the physical activity the individual engages in as a result of those processes.

There is a strong correlation between motivation and productivity. Motivation in a work environment is crucial to the productivity and overall success of an organisation (Kanfer, Frese & Johnson, 2017). Literature has shown that the motivation of employees has been linked to the overall success and productivity of organisations (Hussein & Simba, 2017).

Qualitative research use of theories is based on the need to broadly explain behavior and provide a theoretical lens with which behavior may be understood (Creswell, 2009). Theory can be used in such a way as to anticipate possible themes that may emerge out of the study. In this case, it offers a theoretical framework, which the research employs in conducting the study especially when it comes to data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009).

A few of them are discussed next in relation to the phenomenon under study in order to better frame the understanding of this concept. These theories fall within two main categories of motivational theories, i.e. content theories and process theories. Content theories work from the premise that people possess similar sets of needs and therefore understand these to be present at certain points in an individual's lifespan. Content theories deal with what motivates people and assume that there are factors within them that energize and direct their behaviour (Odongo, 2016).

On the other hand, process or cognitive theories are concerned with the pursuit of understanding why and how people are motivated. They subscribe to the view that there are differences in individuals' needs and so stress the need to be mindful of cognitive processes that render these differences true (Odongo, 2016).

## **2.3 THEORIES OF MOTIVATION**

Theories of motivation are divided into two main categories, namely; content theories as well as process theories (Ncube, Bussin & De Swardt, 2013, p. 3). Content theories believe that there are energies that exist within employees and these energies direct and sustain the behavior, which leads to change and is what motivates them. Some of the content theories discussed here are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness, Growth Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory.

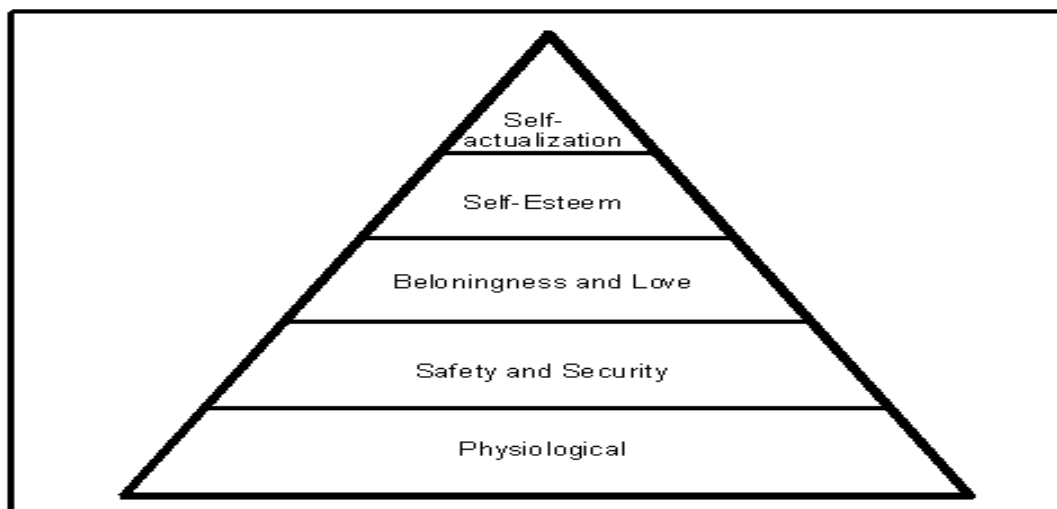
Process theories are concerned with how behavior is energized, directed and sustained over a period of time (Lussier & Achua, 2012). This is an approach that has a focus on the understanding of how behaviors that fulfill the individual's needs are chosen. This approach to motivation is in line with theories proposed by Vroom's Expectancy Theory, Locke's Goal Theory and Latham & Adam's Equity Theory (Hilmarsson, 2009).

Content theories which are discussed next are Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Alderfer's ERG (existence, relatedness, growth) theory, and Herzberg's two-factor theory. The two process theories that are discussed after the content theories are the goal-setting theory and Vroom's expectancy theory. Only issues pertinent and relevant to the objectives of this study are presented and discussed in this section.

### 2.3.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow (1954) outlined a hierarchy of needs, which once satisfied, ceases to motivate an individual and it is the next level of needs that presents a motivation. In this sense, therefore; the theory suggests that whilst employees start with basic needs, their needs and expectations of the employer will grow. Though this theory was not developed specifically for understanding motivation within the work setting, it is relevant in the analysis of organisational behavior (Jerome, 2013).

**Figure 2.1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**



Source: Maslow, A.H. (1954).

Employees' attainment of additional technical skills and academic knowledge may be easily associated with esteem and self-actualization needs. This is because these levels of needs are concerned with goal-setting and decision-making processes as well as the need to display skills and talents whilst gaining recognition for career advancement. Ongoing career development is a crucial element in influencing organisational performance (Dobre, 2013).

Maslow's theory describes employees as always wanting (Conley, 2007, p. 8). This is what causes the individual to move from bottom to higher needs in the hierarchy. Hence, in the field of employee motivation this theory suggests that rewards such as money are only motivators for employees in jobs that are mechanical. Pink (2011) asserts that in tasks that require cognitive thinking; financial rewards lose their motivational effect. Therefore, the question of what motivates employees who have higher-level needs such as esteem and self-actualization remains unanswered.

### **2.3.2 Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness, Growth Theory**

In an attempt to build on the limitations of Maslow's theory, Clayton Alderfer came up with the Existence, Relatedness, Growth (ERG) theory between 1961 and 1978 (Nagar & Guha, 2016). This theory is similar to Maslow's in that it too is hierarchal as existence has priority over relatedness, whilst relatedness has priority over growth (Alderfer, 1972). Alderfer's three theoretical constructs are grouped and presented as follows:

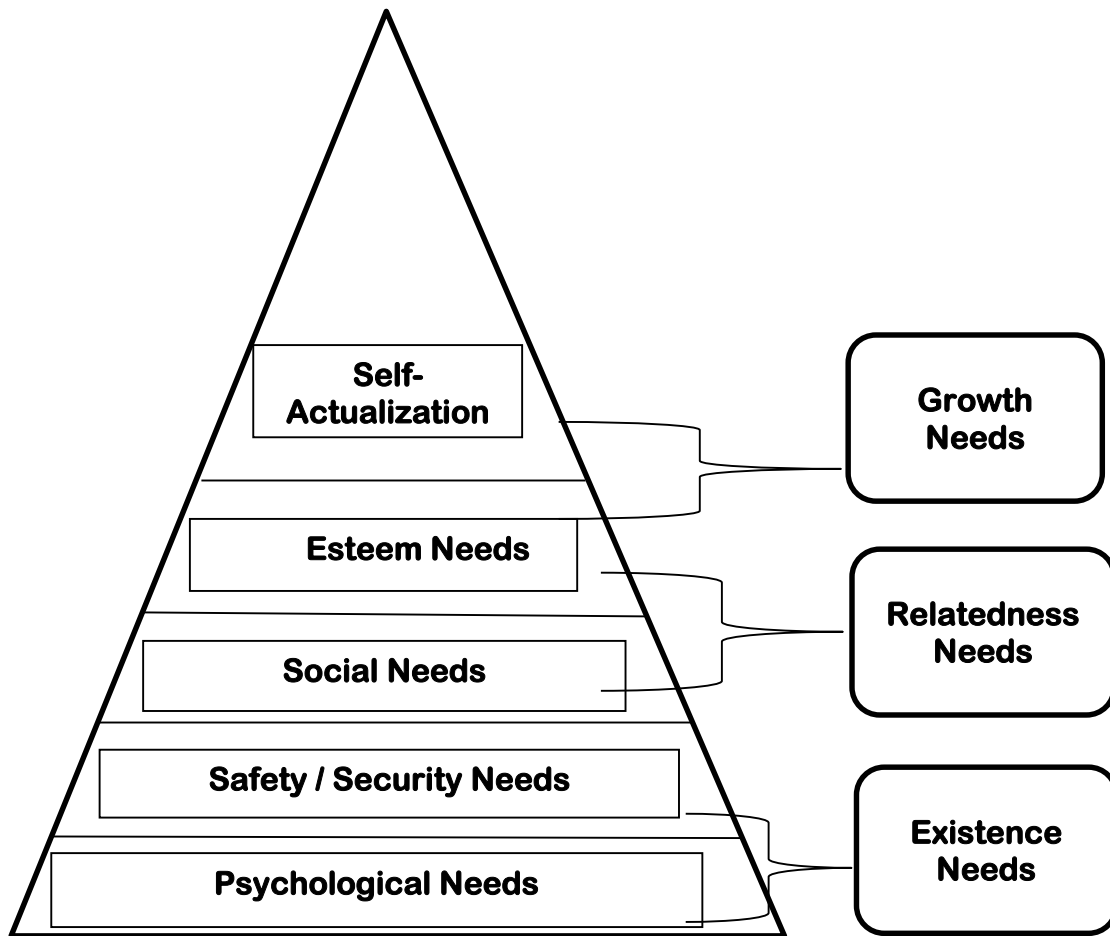
Existence – is equivalent to Maslow's physiological and safety needs.

Relatedness – is equivalent to Maslow's social and external esteem needs.

Growth – is equivalent to Maslow's self-actualization and internal esteem needs.



**Figure 2.2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Alderfer's Three Theoretical Constructs**



Source: <http://businessjargons.com/alderfers-erg-theory.html>

The ERG theory differs from Maslow's hierarchy of needs in that it recognizes that the individual can pursue different levels of needs simultaneously. This theory also presents a concept of "frustration-regression". This is a situation that arises due to priority needs not having been satisfied in due cause and thus rendering the individual frustrated and going back to address those needs at a later stage (Weston, 2016) and so the satisfaction of employees' needs is not necessarily linear (Ncube; et al, 2013, p. 3). A combination of needs can be satisfied at the same time. This means that the one-size fits all approach cannot be applied.

The frustration-regression situation can be understood as having a person already in employment not being satisfied with their position or career and therefore enrolling in studies in order to obtain the relevant qualification for their career aspirations. This then suggests that within the ERG theory, the hierarchy is not rigid and the order can be different for different individuals (Nagar & Guha, 2016). Although this is progress from Maslow's theory, it still does not explain what cognitive processes that renders individuals motivated enough to enroll on the programme.

### **2.3.3 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory**

Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman (1959) presented the two-factor theory also known as the motivation-hygiene theory. This theory suggests that satisfaction is derived from motivators whilst on the other hand hygiene factors produce acceptable working conditions, the absence of which causes dissatisfaction even though their presence does not necessarily ensure satisfaction.

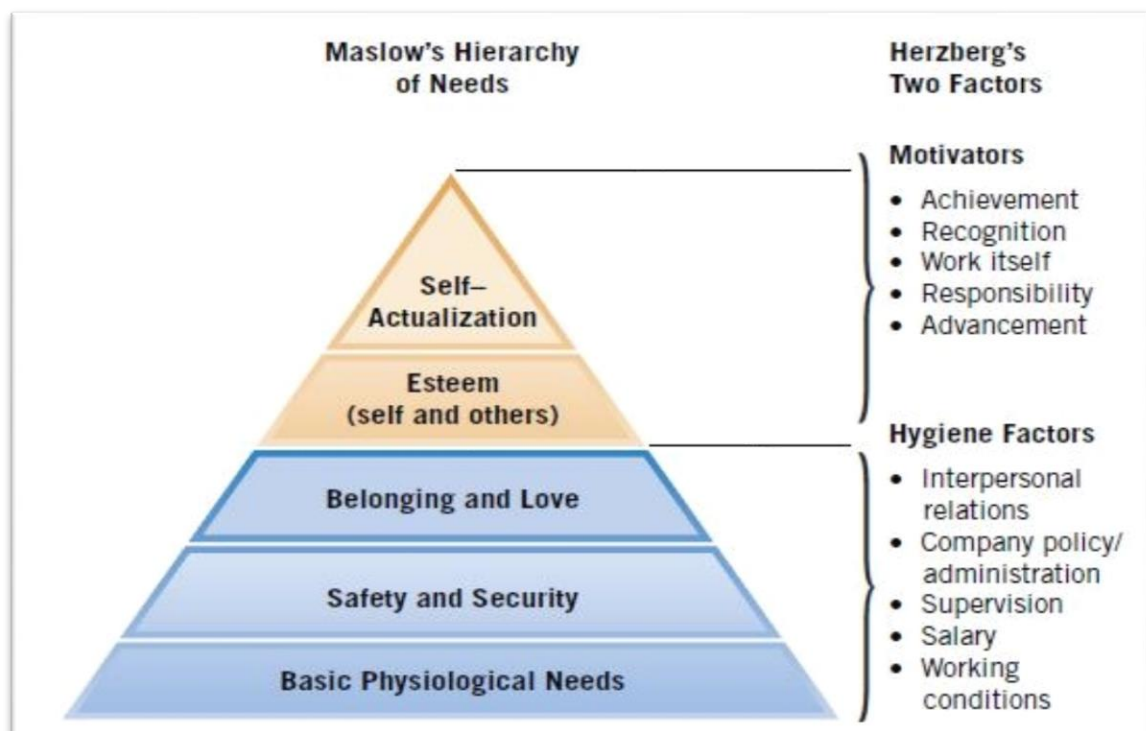
Herzberg's theory described motivation as primarily intrinsic in nature in that it drives human behavior without necessarily being influenced by the environment or surrounding circumstances but rather by a sense of personal growth linked with advancement and achievement, responsibility, autonomy and even the work itself (Herzberg, *et al*, 1959). These intrinsic motivators are seen as residing within the employee; such as affirmations and a sense of accomplishment

Factors that that characterize the work environment and are associated with dissatisfaction in the workplace are called hygiene factors (Khan, Abbas & Zaki, 2017). These are factors such as work policies and procedures, compensation and relationships. Herzberg, *et al*, (1959) asserts that adequately addressing these factors does not necessarily produce satisfied

employees but rather that it is paying focus to intrinsic factors such as achievement and a sense of responsibility that will motivate employees.

In a study concerned with motivating factors, it is important to note that this theory presents achievement, recognition, advancement, growth and responsibility as satisfiers. The presence of these factors influences the emotional attitude of employees whilst interacting with a number of environmental factors (Khan, *et al*, 2017). This suggests that employees can be motivated by the need to acquire these satisfiers or they themselves can be a source of motivation.

**Figure 2.3: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory**



Source: <http://www.whatishumanresource.com/herzberg-two-factor-theory>

The motivators are similar to Maslow's top two needs in the hierarchy whilst the hygiene factors are similar the bottom three needs. Leibowitz (2016) asserted that the psychological basis for motivations is both intrinsic and extrinsic. This has long-term effects and is addictive in nature, which implies that those making use of this programme will do so repeatedly. Interestingly, he sees motivators as too elusive to measure due to their subjectivity (Sanjeev & Surya, 2016). Therefore, these according to this theory can only be understood at an individual level.

As a content theory, this theory describes job attributes that lead to satisfaction and dissatisfaction. However, it falls short in explaining what drives individuals to act upon those motivator or hygiene factors. It is also not clear if there is a standard correlation between the individual's satisfaction levels and their need to engage themselves in career development initiatives (Herzberg, *et al*, 1959).

#### **2.3.4 Locke's Goal Setting Theory**

Edwin Locke developed the goal setting theory in 1968. It is a cognitive theory that attempts to describe how employees endeavor to achieve goals set by their organisations. This endeavor starts from the premise that organisations set realistic and achievable goals for their employees to achieve (Khoveyni & Eslami, 2016), which sets a framework and targets for the employees to achieve.

These targets are said to have more meaning when they are linked to the organisational performance framework and urgent deliverables. They also have to be “SMART”, i.e. specific, measureable, assignable, realistic and time-bound (David, Clutterbuck, & Megginson, 2013, 283). The authors also asserted that to motivate the employees to perform at their best there needs to be a sense of urgency regarding the goals to be achieved.

Locke and Latham (1990) presented the following key principles of the goal setting theory; these are principles that are crucial in the setting of goals and in motivating employees to obtain them (MTD Training, 2010):

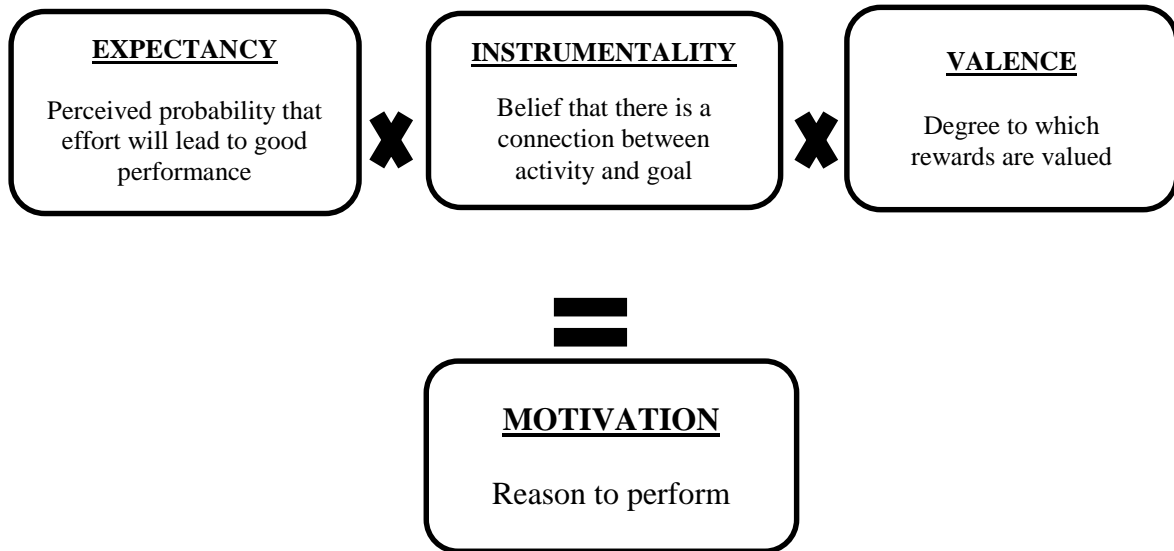
- Clarity – Goals need to be clear enough for the employee to understand in order to be able to work towards attaining them.
- Challenge – Goals have to offer a challenge to the employee. They need to stretch the employee to perform and achieve the goals.
- Commitment – whilst the goals are the organization’s goals, it is important for employees to be involved in the process of formulating these goals in order to obtain their understanding and commitment to the achievement of the set goals.
- Feedback – managers have a responsibility to give feedback to the employees on their progress in order to be able to stay on course for the achievement of their goals.
- Task complexity – the goal has to be challenging enough to the employee to motivate action and offer a real work challenge. This also allows the organization to stretch the performance of the employee.

The main limitation of this theory in as far as this study is concerned is that the goals being set belong to the organization and are therefore not that sustainable (Neubert & Dyck, 2016). The alignment of personal and organizational goals cannot be assumed. In understanding the employees' motivations, it is important to use a theory that explores goal motivation from an employee's perspectives on things that the employee deems important and not imposed on them by an organization. It is for this reason that this study chose to adopt Vroom's expectancy theory.

### **2.3.5 Vroom's Expectancy Theory**

A model of behavioral choices to better understand employees' behavioral direction that lead them to access study assistance is crucial in gaining the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Vroom's model suggests that there is a 'motivational force' behind an individual's decision (Vroom, 1964). This motivational force leads to the behavioral direction taken by each individual. It also suggests that it comprises expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. These constructs were investigated in this study in order to better understand this phenomenon as it is believed that there is a relationship between effort and reward (Gopalan, et al, 2017). According to Vroom, intrinsic factors, the individual's effort and extrinsic rewards all play a role in motivation.

**Figure 2.4 Vroom's Expectancy Theory**



**Source:** Adapted from Vroom (1964).

The role that each of these constructs play in the employees' decision making process was explored with the understanding that they individually and collectively contribute to the behavioural direction and decision making of employees. Whilst these constructs have been investigated in relation to retaliation and performance (Chen & Miller, 1994) goal setting (Tubbs, Boehne, & Dahl, 1993) and managerial motivation (Kominis & Emmanuel, 2007), no literature is available on the phenomenon under investigation in this study.

### **2.3.5.1 THE EXPECTANCY CONSTRUCT**

The expectancy theory perspective is a useful tool in understanding behavioural choices (Baumann & Bonner, 2016). It is also recommended in understanding factors that influence a worker's motivational levels (Yeheyis, Reza, Hewage, Ruwanpura, & Sahiq, 2016). It was tested in this study's exploration as a recognised theory in organisational behaviour rather than adopting a view of developing a new theory, due to lack of literature which may lead to a pseudo theory (Cucina & McDaniel, 2016).

In this theory there is a perceived effort-performance relationship, with the belief that the higher the effort, the better the chances of goal attainment (Gardner, Diesen, Hogg, & Sergio Huerta, 2015). This belief is often based on past experiences such as what happened with others in similar situations in the past.

This study enquired whether or not expectancy has contributed to the decision of making use of this programme. Self-efficacy, goal difficulty, and control are said to play a critical role in expectancy (Vroom, 1964). It was crucial for this study to gain an understanding of the individual's own perceived level of competence in relation to the skills required to successfully execute the task/s. The level of difficulty in executing the tasks was also investigated as the model employed suggests that it plays a role in the decision-making process (Vroom, 1964). The degree of control that each participant perceives himself or herself to have was investigated in order to better understand this phenomenon in relation to the overall motivational force.



### **2.3.5.2 THE INSTRUMENTALITY CONSTRUCT**

Instrumentality is the belief that there is a reward for meeting performance standards and goals (Vroom, 1964). It is based on a perceived performance – reward relationship as well as motivation for goal commitment through self-regulation strategies (Lee & Turner, 2016). This study investigated what the participants deemed as a reward for accessing this programme as well as how big or small those rewards were perceived to be. The Expectancy Theory suggests that the greater the reward the higher the effort that will be put in (Vroom, 1964). It was therefore important to get the employees to articulate what this reward was for them individually and probe if this had any relationship with the effort that they put in.

Lee and Turner (2016) suggested that instrumentality is a significant factor in the use of self-regulation strategies such as goal commitment. Even though it cannot be assumed that all employees that engage in self-development initiatives such as the use of study assistance are guaranteed career advancement prospects, it is important to understand this construct and the role it plays in increasing the motivational force that influences employees' decision-making processes.

### **2.2.5.3 THE VALENCE CONSTRUCT**

The value that the individual places on the reward is described as valence (Vroom, 1964). The perceived reward for self-development is what drives the conversion of motives to the pursuit of the individual's goals (Wright, 2016). The goals pursued vary in strength and importance and can be a number of things ranging from the qualification itself to possible career progression. Undertaking studies when one is already employed full time and with the demands of a family at times may not be an undertaking to be taken lightly. It was therefore important for this study to investigate whether using study assistance has a reward

that is worth all the sacrifices and commitment that the investment in self-development requires.

Vroom's expectancy theory presents motivation as a process that governs how each individual makes voluntary behavioural choices. The motivational force is informed by the presence of the three motivational constructs. The needs are not hierarchal in any way. However, what the theory suggests is that where the motivational force is higher, the need will arise for acting in a certain way and/or having an orientation towards the achievement of a certain goal (Vroom, 1964).

## **2.4 EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION FOR SELF-DEVELOPMENT**

It is important to note that employees' personal and professional lives are inextricably intertwined. Training and development required by the employee may range from intrinsic job requirements to career progression aspirations or even career change (Walker, 2016). The need to develop oneself goes beyond normal societal expectations of someone who has already managed to secure himself or herself employment.

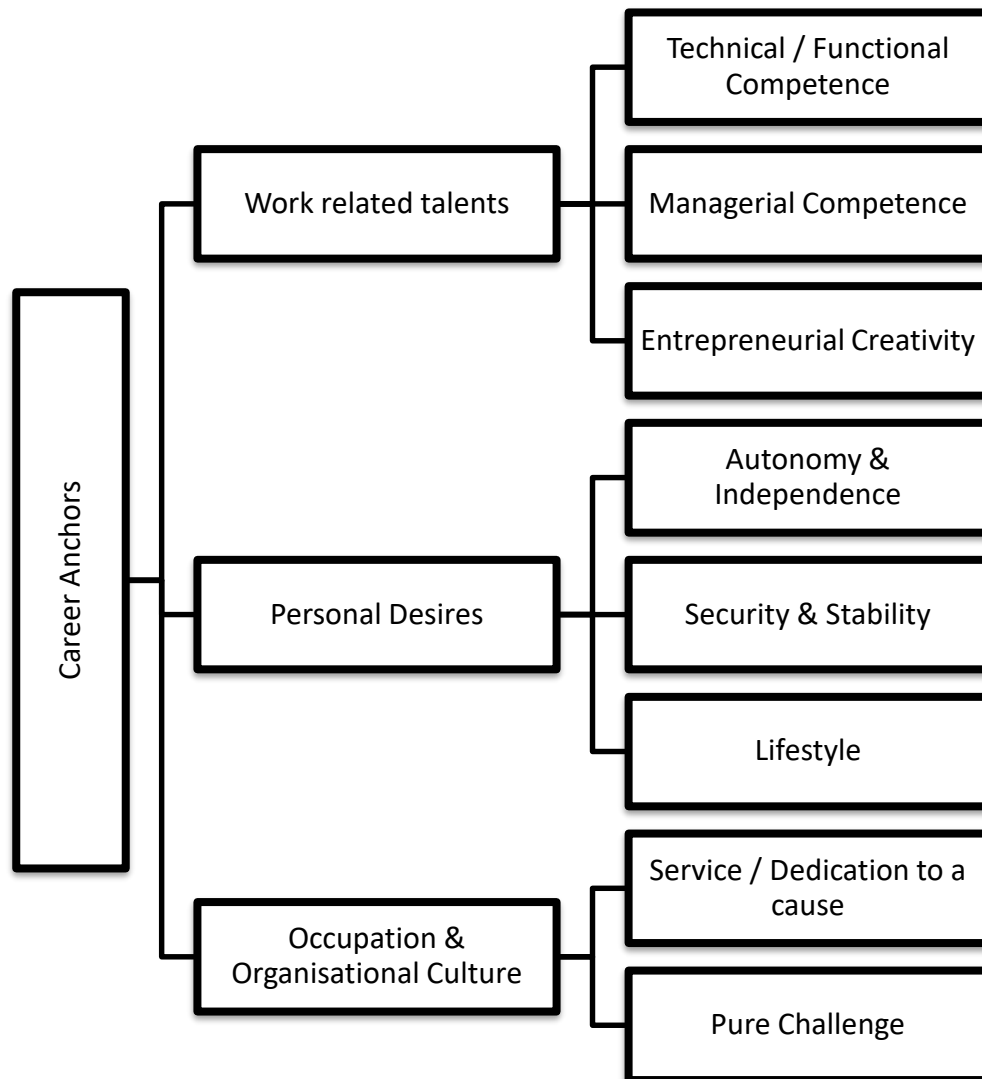
Employees spend years in training and learning programmes with the aspiration to be employed. Once this goal is achieved, there seems to be no need to go beyond it. For the employer, employee development brings with it prospects of more productive employees in terms of their work performance leading to a more profitable business (Kanfer, *et al*, 2017). Factors that motivate employees to develop themselves further need to be investigated and explored in academic literature in order to inform theory and understanding in this body of knowledge.

### **2.4.1 CAREER MANAGEMENT**

Career management has to take a proactive approach in the current and future work environments for the benefit of both the employer and the sustainability of the employee's employability (Chudzikowski, 2012). Unclear career development paths pose a challenge in this quest to sustain one's employability (Van Der Heijde, 2014). Psychosocial career meta-capacities are crucial in assisting employees to manage their development (Coetzee, 2014).

It is therefore the responsibility of employers to have career management practices that assist employees in gaining awareness of the opportunities that exist in aid of sustainability of their employability (Van Der Heijde, 2014). This requires a stable career self-concept; otherwise referred to as a career anchor (Oosthuizen, Coetzee & Mntonintshi, 2014, p. 3). Career anchors are viewed as crucial career meta-capacities in career development (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2014) in that they enable the individual to make decisions that are in line with the individual's career identity (Ndzube, 2013). Career-capacities refer to an individual's career-related psychological capital as well as social resources that enable the individual to be self-directed and proactive in the design of their career as well as their employability (Coetzee, 2014).

**Figure 2.5: Career Anchors**



**Source: Adapted from Schein (1990).**

Career anchors as presented in Figure 2.5 are divided into three categories, namely; work related talents, personal desires as well as occupational and organisational culture. In these three categories are eight career anchors which Wils, Wils, & Tremblay (2010) found to be

significantly related to work values. Coetzee and Schreuder (2011) found positive associations with self-perceived employability.

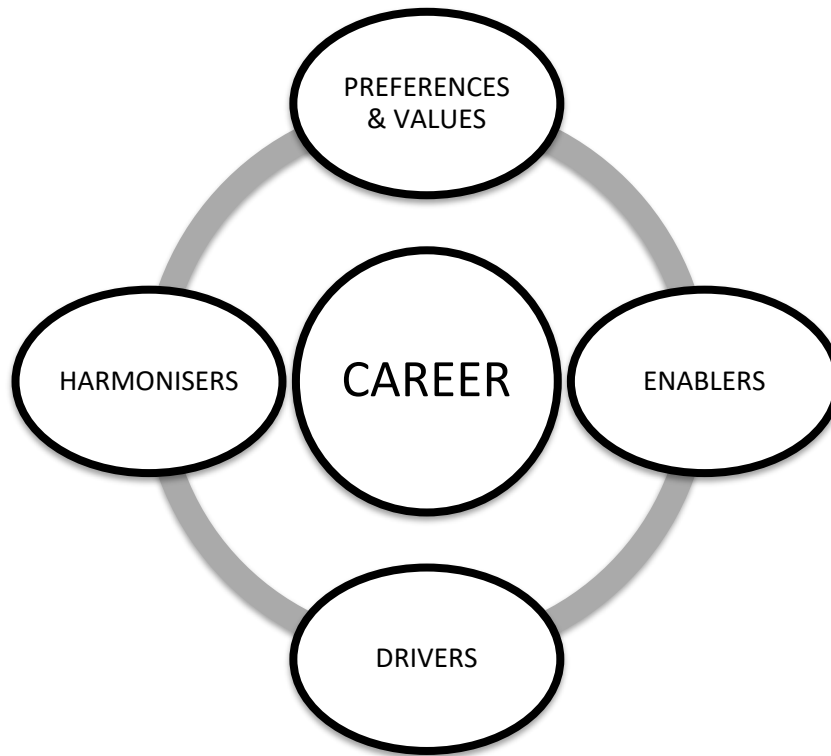
The expectations of career progression through promotions and better career prospects within the company and in other companies through change in career is a theory that still needs to be tested (Speer, 2016). The relationship between the individual and their self-determination also needs to be explored as a critical factor in this decision-making process (Walker, 2016). The management of one's own career development is an important element in one's willingness to set one's career goals and set about finding ways to achieve those goals (Botha, 2014).

#### **2.4.2 CAREER RESOURCES**

Whilst there are physical and tangible resources that one needs in order to management one's career development; there are also psychological career resources that are required in this process (Coetzee, 2008, 2014). These refer to attributes that influence the facilitation and promotion of the individual's career development. These are attributes such as career orientation, self-insight, behavioral adaptability and a sense of purpose (Coetzee, 2008, & Ferreira, 2012).

The psychological career resource model presents a holistically integrated career framework in the provision of a view of career enablers, drivers, harmonisers as well as preferences and values (Coetzee, 2014). This is model is presented in Figure 2.6 below.

**Figure 2.6: Psychological Career Resources**



**Source: Adapted from Coetzee (2014).**

- Career preferences and values – although intertwined they are distinct from each other in that values represent an expression of ideas and philosophies that have significant meaning for the individual whilst preferences represent a pathway that the individual perceives to have meaning for their career growth and development (Coetzee, 2014).
- Career enablers – are a collection of the individuals skillsets and abilities that can be applied across different settings in order to bring about career progression and success (Coetzee, 2008, & Coetzee, 2014).

- Career drivers – are the individual's motivational enablers that encourage career purpose, direction and venturing. They drive experimentation and risk taking behavior.
- Career harmonisers – promote flexibility and resilience as well as bring about a sense of control. They are attributes such as social connectivity and behavioral adaptability.

Coetzee, Ferreira & Shunmugum (2017, p. 1) assert that the use of these psychological career resources will equip employees to actively seek opportunities to learn, develop new skills, sharpen and transfer their existing knowledge to others. This promotion of a proactive career development behavior has to be met with opportunities that will foster growth and development in the workplace. One such initiative designed to achieve this goal in the development of the workforce is employee assistance programmes.

## **2.5 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES (EAP)**

An EAP can be defined as a formal intervention system that identifies and assists organisational members with a wide range of personal problems that may be affecting them. There are a number of EAP programmes. Most of their focus is on corrective behavior such as alcohol, drug abuse, family issues and counselling. Enrolling into these traditional programmes is through referrals by line manager or the human resources departments in organizations (Younger, 2015).

The concept of EAP's is traditionally based on a framework that assumes an employee that is not able to handle their personal problems such that they begin to affect their productivity in the workplace (Hollman, 1982). Whilst the study assistance programme is regarded as an EAP; it cannot be explained and understood in the same context as other traditional forms of employee assistance programmes. However, Rajin (2012) presents EAP objectives that can be extended to the study assistance programme.

- Employer's duty to care obligation – study assistance can be viewed as an employer's way to show that they care about the employees' developmental goals.
- Employee wellbeing support provision – the provision of structural and logistical support for employee engaged in studies.
- Employee retention and productivity improvement – Functional and career development.

### **2.5.1 THE HISTORY OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES**

EAP's started in the United States in the 1940's with a key focus on alcohol programmes. The 1960's saw a rapid development in programmes offered which included occupational welfare as well as chaplaincy services. The 1970's saw the emergence of a broader approach to EAP. This new model of EAP offered a broader range of services which included marital counselling as well as dealing with financial and work problems (Buon & Taylor, 2007).



EAP's are relatively new in the South African context. Their definition in relation to specific practices within South African organisational frameworks is lacking (Sieberhagen, Pienaar & Els, 2011) as it does not cover the developmental classification or category of an EAP such as study assistance programmes. Employers are more aware of their responsibility in the provision of integrated EAP offerings. The well-being of employees is increasingly viewed as related to healthy workplaces, which is not limited to one type of EAP (Sieberhagen, et al., 2011).

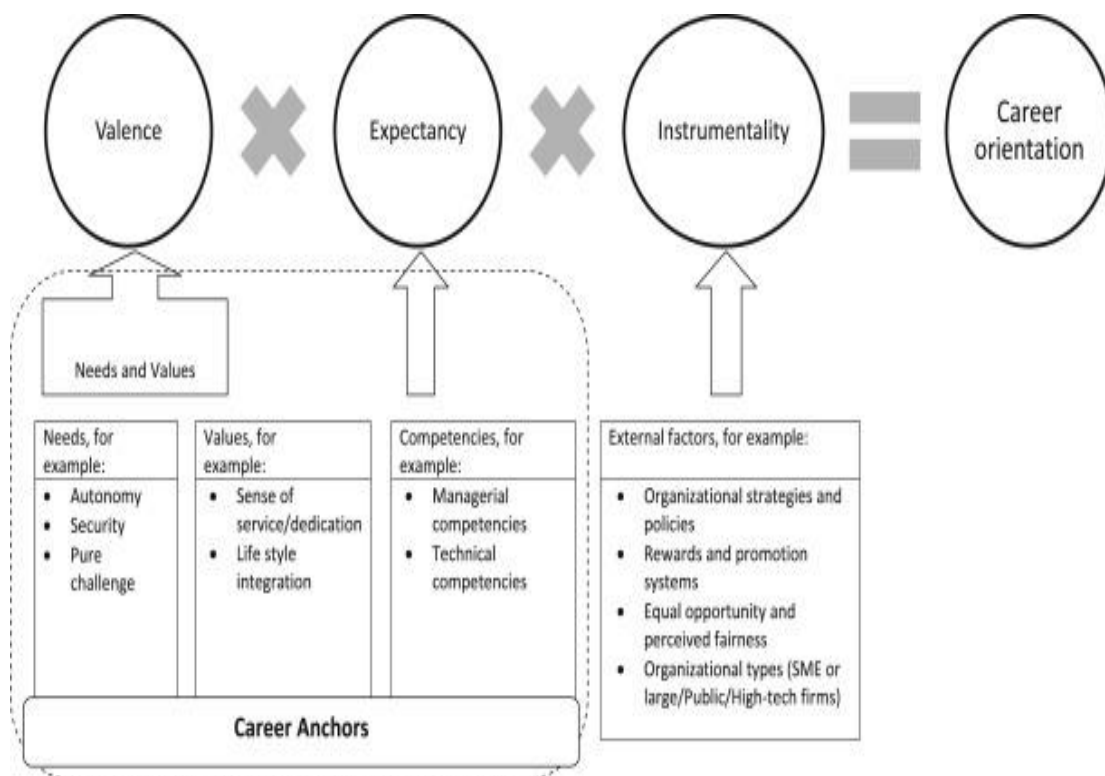
### **2.5.2 THE BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE ASSSISTANCE PROGRAMMES**

Factors that motivate employees to access an EAP need to be thoroughly understood in the attempt to attract more employees to make use of the EAP. This is especially so in this case as the study assistance is unlike other EAPs where an employee can be referred (e.g. alcoholism and drug abuse problems) (Younger, 2015). The study assistance is a voluntary programme that requires the employee to commit themselves to the developmental process without referral by line management or human resource department (SAPREF, 2015b). Its benefit is the realisation that there is organisational support available to the employees should they need it (Eisnberger, *et al.*, 2016). This support makes it easier for employees to cope with work and personal challenges that they face. The programme can also empower them to make decisions that are positive for their future and indirectly for the benefit of the company.

The monetary investment of organisations that offer such assistance to their employees is expected to yield returns in the form of increased level of competence and productivity

(Phillips, 2011). It is expected that employees who engage in skills development programmes will be in a position whereby they can implement the new knowledge and display the newly acquired skills for the purposes of sharpening and deepening their competence levels (Wang, Dou, & Li, 2002). Organisations can only benefit from this if they have environments that are ready to receive and embrace new ideas and new ways of operating in line with new technologies that may have entered the sectorial domain (Phillips, 2011).

**Figure 2.7: Expectancy Theory & Career Anchors**



Source: <https://www.sciencedirect.com> (22 February 2018).

The provision of employee assistance programme in the form of a study assistance for employees coupled with career anchors as discussed in Section 2.4 is expected to create an environment where learning is encouraged and supported as illustrated in **Figure 2.7**.

### **2.5.3 THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

According to Section 29, 1(b) of the South African Constitution under Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights, everyone has the right to further education which government must make available through reasonable measures. In order to finance this; the South African Government passed into law the Skills Development Levies Act (1999) whose main aim is to provide for the imposition of skills development levies to employers. The levy is calculated to be 1% of total payroll for each company.

The Skills Development Act No.97 of 1998 provides for a framework to implement national, sectoral as well as workplace strategies aimed at developing skills of the South African labor force. This Act is concerned with the provision of Learnerships as well skill programme opportunities that are occupationally based. It is envisaged that once these learning programmes are completed they should constitute a credit towards an accredited qualification in terms of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) of the South African Qualifications Authority Act.

The study assistance offers further education opportunities as articulated in the Bill of Rights. This is in line with the provisions of the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998.

This Act moves beyond the provision of basic education as articulated in the Bill of Rights Section 29; 1(a) but extends the need for learning and development into further education.

## **2. 6      EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

Employee engagement can be defined as a positive psychosocial contract that leads employees to invest actively in the life of the organisation that they are associated with (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012). Of greater importance than the transactional contract, that the employee enters into with the employer is this psychosocial contract in achieving both the individual's developmental goals and the organisational strategies (Bal, Kooij, & De Jong, 2013). In any contract scenario, parties have something to gain by being party to it.

According to Girivas and Uma (2016), motivation can be defined by the use of four sub-concepts. These are 1) an employee's expression of a need that is aligned to their preferences; 2) alignment with the employee's state of mind; 3) perceived satisfaction that arises from the employee's activities at work; and 4) the distinction between the job and organisational engagement. Importantly, the authors highlighted that the factors that lead to engagement, the engagement itself and its outcomes are crucial in the overall understanding of this concept.

Employee engagement has emerged as a critical topic in HRD and is regarded as a cornerstone of a successful organisation. The employee's appraisal of work meaningfulness and their willingness to engage is the beginning of the engagement process. This cognitive engagement is heightened by the degree to which the employee identifies and feels

comfortable with the organisation, which leads to emotional as well as behavioural engagement (Eisenberger, *et al.*, 2016).

There have also been a number of benefits associated with having an engaged workforce, such as an increase in productivity, a decrease in absenteeism, and case of injury as well as inventory shrinkage (Girivas & Uma, 2016). Having engaged employees is also said to have a positive ripple effect on how the organisation's customers get treated as well as on the ecosystem.

Organisational citizenship behaviour in the context of this study may be understood as the employee's level of involvement in the activities of the organisation beyond what their job function requires (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012). Accessing a learning programme that would empower the employee to better perform their function is seen as one such behaviour. HRD practices have been found to be useful in career advancement and they often result in increased levels of employee engagement (Rurkkum & Bartlett, 2012; Sheehan, 2014). Increasing employee engagement and employees' sense of citizenship have been found to be a priority in organisations as this engagement and sense of citizenship bear many rewards for organisations not only in the form of developed staff but also in high commitment levels (Bal, *et al.*, 2013). There is clearly coloration between expectancy and commitment levels as literature suggests.

There is a need for the individual's developmental needs and the organisation's strategy to be aligned (Neault & Pickerell, 2011). The ever-increasing pace of change in industry and

technology plays a crucial role in the identification of developmental opportunities and the employee's contribution to the attainment of organisational goals (Eisenberger, *et al.*, 2016). Employees' attitudes towards organisational programmes are key in achieving the alignment between the individual's goals and those of the company (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Employee engagement is therefore a two-way street in that it requires the participation of both the employer and the employee (James, McKelnie, & Swanberg, 2011). Career development can be used as an employee engagement strategy (Neault & Pickerell, 2011). However, employees cannot be forced into taking part in this process as they may be at different stages in their careers and may not necessarily share the need for development (James, *et al.*, 2011). An environment that encourages connectivity and growth is more likely to produce high returns for the organisation (Eisenberger, *et al.*, 2016).

Whilst Cook (2008) believes that employee commitment and satisfaction do not equate to engagement, it is clear from literature that involvement of employees in programmes other than job-specific activities is a clear indication of engagement (Bal, *et al.*, 2013; Pennington, 2014). Focusing on engaged employees in terms of those that have accessed the programme will assist in understanding their reasons and motivations for engagement.

Companies really struggle to source talent and retaining it is also a challenge (Vivek & Satyanarayana Rao, 2016). It is therefore crucial to get information from employees in terms of what appeals to them and ultimately what will keep them engaged for their benefit as well as the company's. It is for this reason that this study targeted employees that have accessed the study assistance programme to be participants in the study.

## **2.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter discussed the concept and types of motivation and motivation theories as they relate to the factors that influence the employee's decision-making processes. It presented both categories of motivational theories i.e. process and content theories. The need to understand motivation within a theoretical framework was also highlighted and the distinction between the two categories of motivational theories made.

Theories from both categories were discussed in relation to the phenomenon under study in order to better frame its understanding. The basic assumptions underpinning each theory were also explored. The theories that were discussed in relation to this study phenomenon are Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Alderfer's ERG theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory, Locke's goal setting theory as well as Vroom's expectancy theory.

The discussion on Vroom's expectancy theory unpacked the theory's three key constructs that are crucial in understanding the motivating factors that influence the employees' decision to make use of the study assistance programme. These key constructs are expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. These constructs are part of Vroom's expectancy theory, which was used in this study as it best provides for the exploration of these motivating factors.

This chapter also explored the concept of motivation in relation to self-development. This included discussion on career management and career resources. The career management discussion included the concept of career anchors which are divided into 3 categories of work related talents, personal desires as well as occupational and organisational culture (Schein, 1990). The discussion on career resources presented physical or tangible as well as psychological resources that facilitate the individual's career development (Coetzee, 2014).

This chapter also presented the study assistance programme as a voluntary employee assistance programme. It highlighted the employer's duty to care obligation in the provision of structural and logistical support to employees. The history and benefits of employee assistance programmes were also discussed in line with career anchors whilst linking them to Vroom's expectancy theory. The legislative framework that supports the development of the South African workforce was highlighted and the link between motivation and employee engagement explored.

Chapter 3 will present the methodology section of this study, highlighting methods and instruments used in gathering and analysis of data. It will discuss the sampling strategy employed in this study as well as the reasons that underpinned the decisions taken.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study explored factors that motivate SAPREF employees to access their study assistance programme. As no literature exists to give guidance as to what could be expected, this study was therefore an exploratory one. It depended on the expectancy theory to frame and inform itself of possible explanations for this phenomenon. This chapter sets out to outline the research methodology employed during this study. It sets out to show the appropriateness of the research design and data collection methods used.

Research methodology can be defined as a systematic way of problem solving (Rajasekar, Philominathan & Chinnathamb, 2013). It can also be defined as a total set of appropriate means and methods that are used to discover new information as well as confirm existing information in line with the objectives of the study (Flick, 2015). Qualitative research methodology is concerned with qualitative data such as reviews and interviews (Silverman, 2016). This methodology was employed in this study as it was seen to be in line with the exploration of the phenomenon under investigation. This chapter further covers elements such as the site where the research was conducted in order to bring about the context as well as sampling techniques used to recruit respondents; highlighting the criteria used in this process.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A good research design is one that is appropriate to the study and allows the researcher to achieve the research results through a systematic enquiry (Bloor & Wood, 2006) rather than a treasure hunt (Rugg & Petre, 2007). This study shall use qualitative research approach, as it is an approach that does not seek to statistically quantify the responses (Marczyk, et al., 2005) but rather aims to conduct an in-depth examination and use the findings as a source of hypotheses for future research and other interventions.

Thomas (2017) maintains that a research design is a research plan that a researcher needs in order to carry out the research study. A good research design is one that is appropriate to the study and allows the researcher to achieve the research results through a systematic enquiry rather than a treasure hunt (Flick, 2015). As this study was exploratory in nature, it used an exploratory research design. This design allowed for the exploration of the respondents' opinions on the phenomenon under investigation. Exploratory research study design is most suitable for the investigation of factors as well as generating new insights and knowledge where none or very little exists (Maxwell, 2012). It made use of the qualitative research approach, as it is an approach that does not seek to statistically quantify the responses but rather aims to conduct an in-depth examination of factors and use the findings as a source of hypotheses for future research and other interventions. This type of research is described as an empirical inquiry into the meaning of phenomena (Flick, 2015).

Creswell (2009) suggests three research methods. They are the qualitative research method; the quantitative research methods and a combination of the two known as the mixed method. He maintains that qualitative research method is concerned with texts, words and meaning

whereas the quantitative research method concerns itself with numbers, stats and correlations. These methods are not necessarily opposites of each other as their use is dependent on the field of study that best suits them as well as the fact that they can be combined in what is known as mixed method, where they can complement each other in one study (Creswell, 2009; Thomas, 2017).

The quantitative research method focuses on quantifiable data that can be presented in number formats and stats (Creswell, 2009). This method concerns itself with the objective testing of existing theories and also aligns itself with the use of structured questionnaires that assign numerical values to the respondents' answers (Creswell, 2009; Thomas, 2017). The mixed method uses both text and numbers in order to allow both types of data to complement each other. This is achieved when there is a clear relationship between the two and is used as a way of increasing the credibility and validity of the results of the study (Creswell, 2009).

The qualitative research method was chosen for this study as it is concerned with variables that vary in kind (Silverman, 2016) and not necessarily in amount as is the case of a quantitative paradigm (Flick, 2015). It also best suited the intentions of this study in undertaking in a semi-formal approach for an investigation that will provide meaning (Silverman, 2016) on the motivating factors for employees to access the study assistance rather than numbers. As this study dealt with subjective constructs that an interpretive paradigm requires, the qualitative approach was better suited. The meaning of the participants' responses and the use of open-ended questions allowed for rich insightful qualitative data to emerge (Sobo, 2016), whereas close-ended questions would have not been appropriate for this research paradigm (Dierckx de Casterlé, Gastmans, Bryon, & Denier, 2012). The qualitative research paradigm is an appropriate paradigm for situations where

subjective experiences of individuals are the object of exploration and where not enough knowledge exists in the phenomenon under study (Flick, 2015; Sobo, 2016).

### **3.2.1 RESEARCH APPROACH/PARADIGM**

The qualitative research paradigm has been chosen for this study as it is concerned with variables that vary in kind (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000) and not necessary in amount as it in the case of quantitative paradigm (Marczyk, et al., 2005). It also best suits the intentions of this study in undertaking in a semi-formal approach an investigation that will provide meaning (Mouton & Marrais, 1996) on the reasons for employees to access the Study Assistance Programme.

A research paradigm is the best way to think about the social phenomenon to be studied (Thomas, 2017). There are different ways to view the world and to think about social phenomena; as such, there are a number of research paradigms. There are three research paradigms proposed by (Creswell, 2014). The first paradigm is a more traditional one in research in that it is based on quantifiable data drawn from experiments in order to test a hypothesis (Creswell, 2014, & Thomas, 2017). This paradigm is most suitable to research where the field of study is objective and can be measured and tested against an already formulated hypothesis drawn from existing body of knowledge (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2015, & Thomas 2017). It assumes predictable relationships (cause: effect and correlations) in the constructs as well as researcher objectivity and neutrality (Creswell, 2014). This results in quantitative data that can be used to generalize as the sample is representative of the entire population (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2015, & Thomas 2017).

The second research paradigm is concerned with an individually constructed reality (Creswell, 2014). This paradigm has an appreciation for the individual's experience rather than the social. It takes the individual's experience as unique, involves a high degree of researcher reflexivity, and can therefore not be generalized at all (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2015, & Thomas 2017).

The third research paradigm is based on socially constructed experiences (Creswell, 2014). This paradigm mostly uses words and observations as its knowledge source and identifies three main types of research that fall under this qualitative research approach. They are the following:

Ethnography – concerned with the analysis of cultures and communities in their natural setting.

Discourse Analysis – concerned with data in written format as well as in conversations.

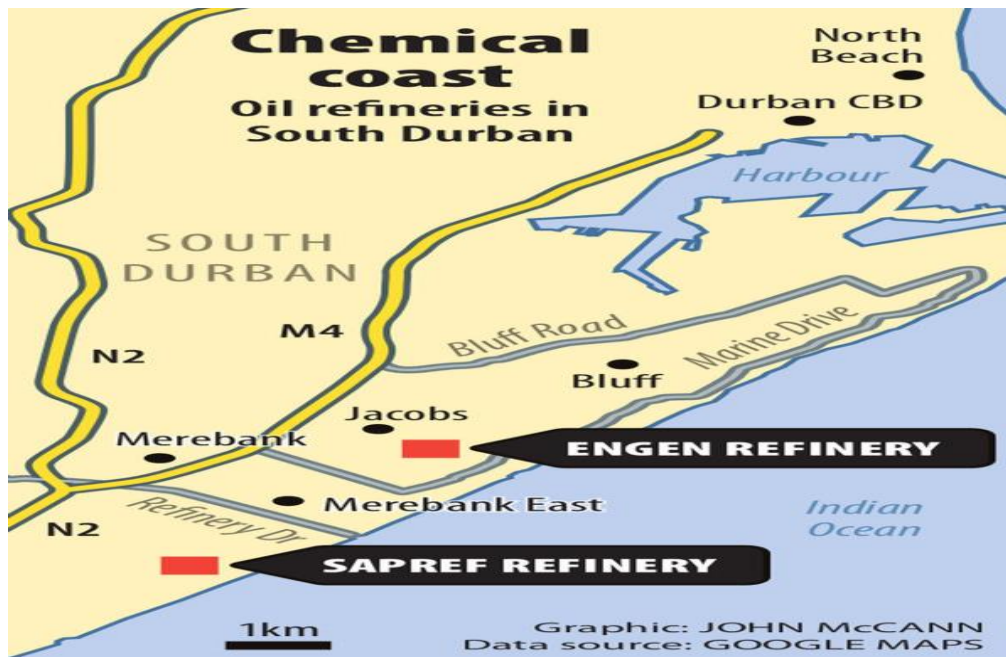
Grounded Theory – concerned with the development of theoretical paradigms based on people's experiences.

The key factor of this paradigm is that the research is inductive and based on what the respondents attach meaning to (Maxwell, 2012; Boddy, 2016, & Silverman, 2016). Since this study was concerned with shared experiences of employees who have accessed the study assistance programme, the most suitable paradigm to employ was the last one presented here. As grounded theory is concerned with the development of theoretical paradigms based on people's experiences, it was identified as the most appropriate approach for this study in that it recognized the shared experiences of staff that can be used to inform future research and theoretical frameworks. This research paradigm was also found to be flexible concerning the

number of participants that could be part of the study as well as the lengths of the interviews. Rich qualitative data was collected from a meaningful sample of people with shared experiences.

### 3.2.2 STUDY SITE

A study site is a place where the research will be conducted (Gall, et al., 1996) and collected (Flick, 2015). This study was conducted at SAPREF premises. SAPREF refinery situated at Prospecton in the South of Durban. This is on the East Coast of South Africa along the Indian Ocean. This is represented in the map below.



Source: Google Maps

### 3.2.3 TARGET POPULATION

A target population can be described as all individuals of interest to the researcher (Marczyk; et al., 2005). These are individuals that have an experience that is relevant to the addressing the research question (Creswell & Poth, 2017). All employees that have accessed the study

assistance programme at SAPREF are of interest to the researcher in the case of this study. There is a total of 61 employees that have accessed the programme in the past 10 years. Six (6) of those have since left the company. Therefore; only 55 participants are the target population of this study.

#### **3.2.4 SAMPLING STRATEGY**

Since it is not always possible to study the entire population, a representation of the population is engaged. These representatives are called a “sample” (Marczyk, et al., 2005). This research will only engage the sample in the collection of data relevant for this study for the same reason stated by (Marczyk, et al., 2005). The selection of research participants as well as the manner in which they are selected is an important part of a research project.

Non-probability purposive sampling has been chosen as the appropriate sampling method for this study. It is in line with the qualitative research methodology employed and it is very targeted in its approach (Marczyk, et al., 2005). This means that potential research participants will be identified, approached and invited to be part of the study.

Convenience sampling is about sampling participants that are easily accessible to the researcher within the time available (Marczyk, et al., 2005). This sampling method shall be used as it provides a source for participants that are easily accessible (Marczyk, et al., 2005) taking into account that SAPREF works on a shift system and that some of its employees from time to time are sent on assignments across the country in shareholder companies as well as overseas. It is a reality that not all the participants for the programme are expected to be available during the data collection period. Achieving the research timelines and deadlines is the main reason for the engagement of convenience sampling.

Sampling in the context of a research study refers to a process of selecting individuals that will participate in the research (Creswell, 2009). These individuals (the sample) are selected from the target population (Murnane & Willet, 2011). The target population is made up of all the individuals that meet a certain criteria or experience that the researcher is interested in (Creswell, 2009). They offer data that is collected and analysed in order to answer the research question (King & Horrocks, 2010). The sampling strategy used by a researcher is closely linked to the research question as well as the research paradigm undertaken by the research (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research has a sampling strategy that is different to that used in quantitative research (King & Horrocks, 2010).

Quantitative research makes use of probability sampling as it is concerned with quantifiable data (Creswell, 2009). This is in line with its need to have a sample that represents the target population, which will allow generalizations to be made (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Qualitative research has a preference for non-probability sampling as it is concerned with in-depth textual data more than it is concerned with statistical inferences (King & Horrocks, 2010). Since it is not always possible to study the entire population in both methods, a representation of the population is recruited to be part of the study. These representatives are called a sample (Flick, 2015, p. 100). The selection of this sample or research participants as well as the manner in which they are selected forms an important part of a research project and has to be aligned to the research paradigm and methodology employed (Creswell, 2014).

Probability Sampling – research participants are selected by chance or probability guided by the principle of random selection (Flick, 2015). The researcher begins the process by



establishing the sampling frame; which is a list of all people in that particular target population (Thomas, 2017). The size of the sample is then calculated to ensure adequate representation of the population (Creswell, 2009). This allows research to be conducted with samples drawn from large populations where it would not be feasible to include everyone in the study and yet still generalize about the entire population (Creswell, 2009; Flic, 2015, & Thomas, 2017).

Non-Probability Sampling – the researcher uses their judgement to determine which participants meet the sampling criteria (Glaser & Strauss, 1999; Creswell, 2009, Creswell & Poth, 2017). This criterion is determined by the experiences of the participants in relation to the research question and whether or not they can offer insight into understanding the phenomenon under investigation better (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Sampling therefore is not by chance as in probability sampling but rather by choice (Creswell, 2009). Non-probability sampling is recommended for exploratory studies dealing with an area that has not been well researched and where there is little or no body of knowledge established (Boddy, 2016). It enables new knowledge to be produced through the number of sampling techniques (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Snowball Sampling – the researcher may identify one person that fits the criteria of the required lived experience and recruit them for the study. The researcher would then ask the initial participant to recommend other participants with similar experiences. The researcher continues to ask for recommendation from subsequent participants until the required sample size is reached or there are no further referrals received (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). This

method was used in order to get referrals in the case of employees who were no longer engaged in part-time studies but had access the study assistance programme in the past.

Purposive Sampling – the selection of research participants is done with a purpose in mind (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). The understanding and lived experience of the phenomenon under study is core to this purpose determination. Participants who have made use of the study assistance programme were of interest to this study. Even though some employee know about this programme and are studying part time; if they had not made use of the programme they were excluded from the study. Only those who accessed the programme and financially benefited from it were targeted to be part of the study.

Convenient Sampling – research participants are selected due to their proximity and accessibility to the researcher (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). This means that these research participants are readily and easily available to the researcher. This sampling method was used as it accommodated for the limited resources that the researcher had. Some participants are hard to reach as they are on overseas assignments. Some are hard to find due to the shift work system. Therefore, participants that were available on site during the day were targeted to be part of the study.

Non-probability purposive sampling was chosen as the appropriate sampling method for this study. It is in line with the qualitative research methodology employed and it is targeted in its approach (Flick, 2015). Non-probability purposive sampling was chosen as it can be used to generate themes for future research exploration (Mabhala, Ellahi, Massey, & Kingston,

2016) as well as its usefulness in information-rich research (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). This sampling technique does not require statistical randomness as the sample depends on the availability and willingness of participants. However, it can be used in studies where the researcher would like to reflect the perceptions of the target group (Palinkas, 2015). This type of sampling was therefore appropriate, as there could be no guarantees for the willingness and availability of participants in such a limited target population and respondents' feedback will be used to gain an understanding of what the shared reality of this phenomenon is.

Convenient sampling is about sampling participants that are easily accessible to the researcher within the time available (Flick, 2015). This sampling method was used as it provided a source for participants that is easily accessible, taking into account that SAPREF works on a shift system and that some of its employees from time to time are sent on assignments across the country in shareholder companies as well as overseas. It is a reality that not all the participants for the programme could be expected to be available during the data collection period. Achieving the research timelines and deadlines is the main reason for the engagement of convenience sampling.

### **3.2.5 SAMPLE SIZE**

Sample size is the number of research participants in the study that represent the entire population (Flick, 2015). Creswell (2014) recommended a sample be between five and 25 whilst Morse (1998) asserted that a sample as small as six participants is enough in a qualitative study. Boddy (2016) asserted that qualitative sampling is contextual and that the size of the sample as low as one can be justified. The total number of people that participated

in this study was six. This was due to data saturation. Due to the research methodology employed in this study as well its nature and research question; this sample size was deemed adequate.

Sample saturation occurs when there is no new information that is forthcoming from research respondents (Suri, 2011). This means that there is no new data is forthcoming from interviews and there is therefore no point in engaging any more participants in the research (Dworkin, 2012). This is an important consideration in qualitative sampling (Dworkin, 2012; Creswell, 2014). The researcher may make a decision to no longer continue sourcing more research participants if no new information is surfacing.

Sample size is the number of research participants in the study that represent the entire population (Marczyk, et al., 2005). Due to the sampling technique to be employed in this study as articulated above; it is not possible to sample a large group. Since the target population for this study is 55; it is believed that a 10% would be an adequate sample size.

### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection is the systematic way of gathering and measuring information from identified sources to gain an understanding of an area of interest that enables the researcher to answer relevant questions and evaluate outcomes (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). This study made use of an open-ended semi-structured interview guide to achieve the collection of data to answer its research questions.

The use of a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions allows the researcher an opportunity to probe issues that come up during the interview (Creswell, 2014). There is a degree of freedom that semi-structured interviews give to the researcher in that such interviews allow the participants to discuss what they deem as important within the structure of the open-ended questions devised by the researcher (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). This situation allows participants to give meaning to the phenomenon under investigation without too much interference by the researcher whilst allowing the researcher to delve into aspects of the participants' experiences that require further probing and exploration.

It is important to note that regardless of which research paradigm is employed, the researcher still has theoretical or conceptual framework commitments to fulfil and these cannot be separated from this process (Creswell, 2014). It was therefore crucial for this study to align its research tool to Vroom's expectancy theory constructs as the chosen and most suitable theory in this exploration. The research tool used in this study was a semi-structured, open-ended interview guide. It was designed in line with Vroom's expectancy theory with three sections focusing specifically on the three constructs found in this theory namely; expectancy, instrumentality and valence.

### **3.3.1 Data Collection Instruments**

The research questions and the nature of constructs under investigation guided the choice of measurement strategy to be employed, as it should in data collection (Flick, 2015). Data was gathered using an interview guide. An interview is an interactive, real time interaction between the researcher and the respondent (King & Horrocks, 2010). This helped to capture

the real time responses to the questions asked without the respondent having to overthink the questions or to try to provide perceived desirable responses.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interview guide was made up of open-ended questions that covered all three constructs (i.e. expectancy, instrumentality, and valence). These constructs were analysed in order to gain better understanding of the phenomenon.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with each research participant using a semi-structured research interview guide. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to elicit the participants' own views and perspectives (Mitchell, 2015). This allowed the interview to cover a number of areas that were planned and probed during the course of the interview. It is a relatively less expensive yet efficient process. Face-to-face interviews also facilitated the responsiveness of participants. A semi-structured open-ended interview guide was developed using three constructs in line with Vroom's expectancy theory. The interview guide was divided into five sections (see Appendix 1).

- **Section A:** Background information
- **Section B:** Expectancy
- **Section C:** Instrumentality
- **Section D:** Valence
- **Section E:** Additional comments

Section A required very basic personal information from the participants. Of great importance was the year in which the study assistance was accessed and the number of times

this was done. The year of study provided the researcher with insight into how recent the participants' experiences were, while the number of times the programme had been accessed gave an indication of the participants' level of commitment to the programme. Even though this information was not used in a scientific way, it offered the researcher an opportunity to probe further and explore this frequency in relation to the motivating factors.

Sections B, C, and D focused on eliciting responses to questions that required probing into the role that each of the constructs play in motivating employees to access study assistance. The questions in these sections were purposefully worded to be open-ended and not to lead the participant into responding in a specific way. This ensured that the researcher had very limited influence on the responses offered by participants.

Section E was included in order to offer participants an opportunity to provide any other information outside of these three constructs that could also have played a part. This was done in order to elicit any other information that the participants were willing to share that may be useful to this study as well as future ones.

### **3.3.2 Data Collection Process**

Whilst handwritten notes are commonly used in recording data from interviews, it is not possible for these notes to be very comprehensive when interviewing in real time (Mann, 2016). Therefore, whilst handwritten notes were taken, a recording device was also be used in order to capture verbatim what the participants shared with the researcher. The handwritten notes were mainly used to remind the researcher of areas that needed probing

which arose from what the participant shared. The use of a recording device was also engaged in to ensure the correctness and authenticity of the data collected. This provided verbatim data that could be analyzed in its raw form without prejudice and interpretation of the data capturer.

Participants were made aware of these two forms of recording before their interviews began. They were also told that they could ask for the recording to be stopped at any time should they wish so. Handwritten notes were kept to a minimum in order to maintain eye contact with the participants. This helped in establishing and sustaining rapport during the interview as the interviewer was seen to be fully engaged during the responses. Non-verbal queues, such as nodding, were also used for the achievement of this engagement and as probing mechanisms to encourage the participant to carry on without the interference of the interviewer.

### **3.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is a process of analysing data collected by using research tools in order to make sense of it (Taylor, *et al.*, 2016). The type of data analysis technique to be employed depends on the research methodology and paradigm engaged. In the case of this study, content analysis was selected as it in line with and best suits the research approach chosen. This type of analysis is concerned with the search for themes that emerge out of the content of the responses of participants and that become categories of analysis (Flick, 2015) and interpreting the meaning of textual data (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen, & Kyngäs, 2014; Cho & Lee, 2014; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016).



Content analysis can be done inductively as well as deductively (Elo, *et al.*, 2014). Inductive data analysis is a process whereby the researcher works without any preconceived framework to allow the data to fully bring about emergent themes. Deductive data analysis allows for a framework for the researcher to work within. This allows the researcher to meet the theoretical commitments of the chosen theory or framework by analysing the data within the suggested theoretical constructs (Elo, *et al.*, 2014). In the case of this study, Vroom's expectancy theory was chosen. This theory has three constructs, namely expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. The analysis was done deductively in line with the theoretical constructs that provided the researcher an opportunity to test the usefulness of this theory within the context of this study. This meant that the themes that emerged from the data were grouped into the three theoretical constructs as proposed by Vroom's theory. This deductive process addresses the concerns of validity in a qualitative study as the categorisation matrix captures the participants' responses within the theoretical constructs identified (Elo, *et al.*, 2014).

The respondents' data was unpacked systematically in order to enable the production of a comprehensive content analysis of the data collected. Content analysis is concerned with what is said, how it was said, and its meaning (Krippendorff, 2013; Elo, *et al.*, 2014). This is a process of reducing data to its core meaning in order to get the gist of what the respondent is asserting. This is crucial in qualitative data analysis as the data is comprehensive and needs to be reduced to its core meaning. This process of reducing data is done in three phases, namely, preparation, organization and reporting (Elo, *et al.*, 2014).

The preparation phase is concerned with the collection of data for analysis (Elo, *et al.*, 2014). The research tool to be used in the collection of data is one of the considerations of this phase. The selection of a suitable sampling strategy as well as the selection of research participants is key to the success of this phase. For the data analysis stage of the research, this phase focuses on the identifying units of analysis (Elo, *et al.*, 2014).

This phase is one whereby data categorization and abstraction are conducted. Categories are described as descriptive levels of data sourced from participant responses (Vaismoradi, *et al.*, 2016). This process resolves issues of number of concepts to be involved, investigates overlaps between categories and the degree of interpretation in the analysis (Elo, *et al.*, 2014). This phase is also concerned with how best to represent data provided by participants.

Systematic and logical reporting of results as well as connections between data presented is the focus of this phase. The content and structure of the data presented needs to be clear and structurally presented. This stage is also known as the finalisation phase (Vaismoradi, *et al.*, 2016). Whilst the overall phases suggested by Elo, *et al.* (2014) were followed, the specific phases of data analysis of initialisation, construction, rectification, and finalisation (Vaismoradi, *et al.*, 2016) were followed.

### **3.4.1 Initialisation Phase**

During this stage of the analysis, the researcher transcribed the interviews from the recordings taken during the interviews. This was done and double-checked by playing back the recording whilst the transcription was being read through to ensure that all the participant

responses were captured. The transcriptions were then read and meaning units highlighted. Notes were also recorded on the side of meaning units that related to the research question.

### **3.4.2 Construction Phase**

This phase began a process of coding. Coding was informed by the three theoretical constructs which were used as part of the coding matrix. Reflective notes were also taken by the researcher in cases where it was not clear how a data point could be classified. A process of labelling data and then defining, describing, and translating it to the theoretical constructs took place. This phase endeavored to group responses and note those that did not belong to anyone of the constructs.

### **3.4.3 Rectification Phase**

This phase is also known as the verification phase (Vaismoradi, *et al.*, 2016) as it involves a process of checking and confirming whether the coding process is an accurate or appropriate categorisation of the data. This meant that the researcher had to allow time to lapse before going back to the coding matrix to conduct a review. This gave the researcher an opportunity to look at the whole process with a fresh perspective and challenge, and to confirm the coding. The outcome of this process was also achieved by relating the textual data to the chosen theoretical framework.

#### **3.4.4 Finalisation Phase**

This is the phase whereby a connection between the different themes that emerged from the data could be established. This stage allowed for the creation of the story line from the data and allowed the researcher to review the whole process of data analysis from start to finish. This stage also allowed data to demonstrate the constructs that are key in driving the motivation force of employees who have accessed the study assistance programme at SAPREF.

### **3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Researchers have a moral obligation to conduct their research in an ethical and humane way (Silverman, 2016). This is especially the case in qualitative research where open-ended questions as well as probing methods are used. These open-ended questions and probing methods allow the researcher to dig further than what is contained in the interview guide in order to gain depth and further insight into the phenomenon under investigation.

#### **3.5.1 Ethical Clearance**

In order to adhere to the ethical standards for conducting research, the researcher applied for and obtained ethical clearance from the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. This research's full approval was received as the Ethics Committee found that it was in line with the University's code of conduct and did not intend violating any human rights. The ethical clearance was issued in December of 2015, valid for three years and this study was completed within this period and so the clearance was still valid.

### **3.5.2 Informed Consent**

Research participants in this study received a thorough breakdown of the reasons, aim, and purpose for the study. They were made aware of the fact that they were being asked to participate in interviews regarding the topic and the process of identifying them as possible participants was shared with them. This was done so that they could be in a position to make an informed decision on whether to participate in the study or not. They were also made aware that a full approval for this study to be conducted had been received from the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as well as from SAPREF management. Furthermore, research participants were made aware that their participation in the study was on a voluntary basis and that they had a right to withdraw from the study at any time. All participants that went through this process stayed with the research project for the duration of the study.

### **3.5.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

The participants' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of their personal disclosures were discussed and agreed upon, as they were part of the ethical clearance approval process by the UKZN Research Ethics Committee. Research participants were provided with a copy of the ethical clearance.

Permission to record the interview was sourced from each respondent at the beginning of the interview. The reason for the use of a recording device was explained and respondents were told that they could ask for the recording to be stopped at any time during the interview. Further to that, they were asked to give themselves fictional names to be identified with in

the study. These names were also used in the recordings and transcriptions of their interviews. Their genders were not revealed in the final analysis as their occupation or current positions coupled with their gender could potentially reveal their identity.

### **3.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

In this chapter, the chosen research methodology was discussed as well the reasons for choosing it. The qualitative research approach or paradigm was discussed as the chosen approach engaged as an appropriate paradigm in the exploration of this research phenomenon. The sampling strategy was outlined in line with the chosen methodology, with the articulation of the target population, study site, and the sample size. Purposive and convenience sampling were discussed as chosen sampling methods. The reasons for their selection and their appropriateness for this study were also articulated.

The target population, study site, and the size of the sample were stated in relation to the research paradigm employed by this study. The process of collecting data was outlined and the tool that was used was discussed in detail. The process of analysing data and the reasoning engaged in choosing it were also outlined. The data analysis process involved four phases, namely initialisation, construction, rectification, and finalisation. Ethical considerations for this study were also described. These entailed ethical clearance and informed consent, as well as participant confidentiality and anonymity.

The following chapter deals with the analysis of data collected through the interviews as well as a discussion on the meaning and interpretation of that data.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the results of the study, drawing upon the main themes that emerged out of the interview process and subsequent data analysis. The data analysis process used a coding matrix informed by the three theoretical constructs of Vroom's expectancy theory. These are expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. This chapter presents the analyzed data as well as results in narrative text in the context of the study's three main objectives.

#### **4.2 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

The section presents the research participants' profiles without breach of any confidentiality and anonymity issues as agreed upon with the participants. The participants were asked to give themselves fictional names to be referred to in this study in order to ensure their anonymity. These are the names that are used in this section. The participants' race and gender is not revealed as their occupations may indicate their identity once this biographical is known. Their years within SAPREF were rounded off to the nearest whole number. It is important to discuss these profiles in order to understand the diversity of the research participants and appreciate their input, with the understanding of their historical backgrounds (Seidman, 2013).

**Jena:** An engineer who has been with the company for eight years. Jena has used the study assistance on two occasions, first in 2011 and then again in 2014. This allowed Jena to obtain a Master's degree.

**Phumi:** An artisan who has been with the company for 10 years. Phumi has been using this programme since 2014 and is still using it currently. Phumi has already obtained a Diploma in Safety Management and is in the process of obtaining another qualification.

**Yellow Bone:** A human resource practitioner who has been with the company for three years. Yellow Bone is currently using study assistance in pursuance of a Master's degree.

**Three:** An administrator who has used the programme on two occasions. The first time was in 2014 and currently for a B.Tech. Degree. Three has been with the company for five years.

**Buthez:** A technologist who has been with the company for 10 years. Buthez has used study assistance on an ongoing basis for part time studies since 2011.

**Dorkie:** Is a safety officer who has been with the company for nine years. Dorkie started using this programme in 2012 to obtain a Diploma and other Short Courses and is still using it currently.

#### **4.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

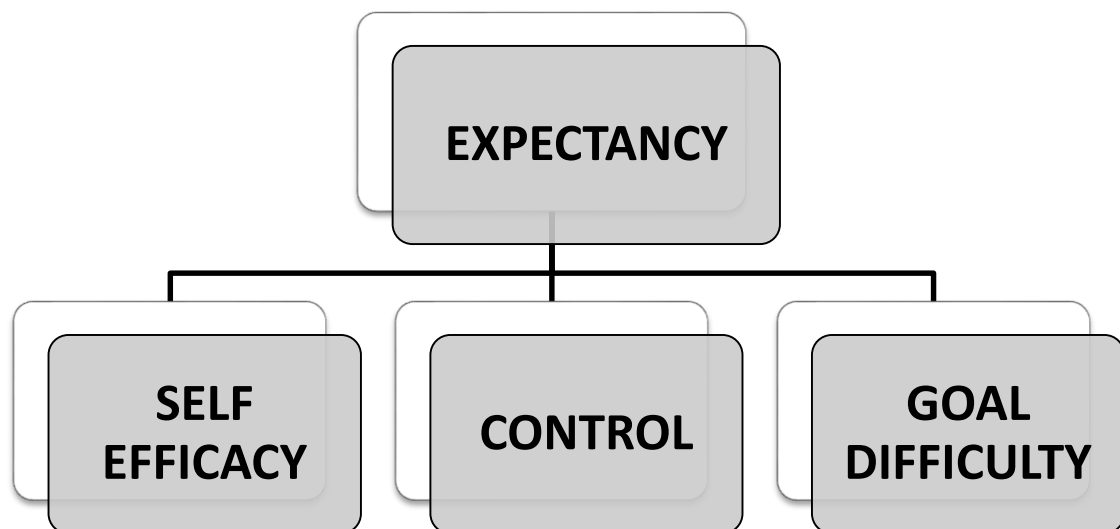
The primary objective of this study was to investigate the factors that motivate employees to access the study assistance programme. This objective was broken down into three secondary objectives in line with Vroom's expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964). This section presents the results of the study in relation to these secondary objectives in pursuance of addressing the main objective of the study.



#### **4.3.1 Objective 1: Investigate if expectancy influences the employee's decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme.**

This objective was concerned with understanding the participants' own perceived level of competence. Self-efficacy, goal difficulty, and control play a crucial part in expectancy (Vroom, 1964). It was therefore important to explore each individual's perception of this concept in relation to their pursued goals. Figure 4.1 indicates how these three constructs are part of the broader understanding of the concept of expectancy.

**FIGURE 4.1 The Expectancy Construct**



##### **4.3.1.1 THEME 1: Self-efficacy**

There was a shared belief amongst all participants that they could achieve their educational goals by making use of this programme. The need for personal growth as well as development in one's career was also indicated as one of the motivating factors for self-

efficacy. There was a notable presence of inward drive to grow, develop, and even career change.

*“I have never failed – academically, I have never started something and not finished it. So, if I didn’t finish this in record time I would disappoint myself” – Yellow Bone.*

The inward drive and motivation to achieve their set goals was also present. This was coupled by a need to improve oneself, high levels of confidence in one’s abilities as well as the need to be “on top of the game”, as one participant put it.

*“I wanted to further my studies; it was my wish to finish my BTech. and also its part of improving my career” – Three.*

*“if you are studying...you are always on top of your game. You won’t be redundant and it keeps you motivated” - Three.*

*“I don’t see why I couldn’t finish it (studies) if I’m still alive; unless I change directions totally...if I feel that the load is big then I will have to cut down” – Dorkie.*

There was also a notable need to give back or contribute to the team and add value stemming out of the new knowledge that would have been acquired.

*“it’s a big benefit to my confidence in delivering my duties... I realize that most of colleagues are comfortable to ask me – what is the best practice? I am glad to be of assistance” – Phumi.*

Self-efficacy is an individual’s beliefs and self-talk about his or her own abilities when it comes to the successful execution of tasks (Vroom, 1964). It was crucial for this study to

gain an understanding of the participants' own perceived level of competence in relation to the skills required to successfully execute the task/s. Research participants had intrinsic motivation that made them believe in their ability to perform.

#### **4.3.1.2 THEME 2: Goal difficulty**

Whilst there was agreement that studying whilst in fulltime employment was a challenge, there was also a belief that this programme made it easier to achieve one's developmental goals.

*“If I had known how hard it was going to be I don't think I would have had the courage to start” – Jena.*

*“if I was not working here at SAPREF, I was not going to further my studies, that definitely I know because it will be too much for me as you know that fees are very high” – Three.*

The support received from SAPREF was the main motivator. This was acknowledged by all participants. The main factor was financial support. There was also an acknowledgement that it is not merely that the company pays for tuition that motivates participation in this programme. Logistical support was also identified as key in reducing the stress levels of participants and allowing them to focus on achieving both their work as well as educational goals.

*“Because the company is paying for things like accommodation and travel and books, the company administrators are helping me with those logistics. So, I don't have to search for flights and accommodation and negotiate packages with service providers. It's all done through the company's travel office. So, for me it was just a matter of submitting my documents to them to say that I have been approved for study assistance. I would need to be away for these days. Please sort me out. So, there is besides the financial part there is also support in terms of being able to focus on my job and not worry during office hours about hey, let me try and book flights, let me look for accommodation and I need to have an X*

*amount of money on my credit card for car hire. It's all done through the company. The fact that someone is doing it for me gives me time to focus on my job whilst I'm at work and gives me time to focus on the demands of the studies*  
" – Yellow Bone.

The Learning and Development department that administers the applications for study assistance was identified as a support mechanism in accessing this programme. The role of line managers was also identified as a crucial part of this process.

*"you just need your line manager to approve it. Once your line manager approves it, the L&D section, they don't give you problems, they just signed. They've never said no to me"* – Buthez.

Goal difficulty is the level at which the goals or targets are placed (Vroom, 1964). If the employees deem them to be too high to achieve; they may be demotivated to even try. This was evident in the retrospective responses of past studies that had been undertaken. It was crucial to understand the employees' views on goal difficulty. None of the participants regarded this an easy task. Even though all regarded it as a difficult task, they also regarded it as an achievable one.

#### **4.3.1.3 THEME 3: Control**

Even though some participants did indicate that they could afford to pay for their own studies and so did not entirely depend on the financial aid of the programme, they also made it clear that this aid contributed to the achievement of their goals in less time as they could not afford to pay for all the required items in one go. They also acknowledged that this assistance plays a role in keeping their interest in the courses being studied and in not losing the momentum.

*“One of the courses I did was R17 000 and towards the end with the increases and the exchange rate it was around...I stand to be corrected, R26 000. So, if I was paying for it myself I would not have been able to finish it off in the time that I did. Even maintaining my interest to that length of time would have been difficult” – Jena.*

*“for me the big benefit is that my studies have become consistent” – Phumi*

*“the first goal is making sure that I complete my programme on record time which I think the study assistance programme goes a long way in helping me achieve that” – Yellow Bone.*

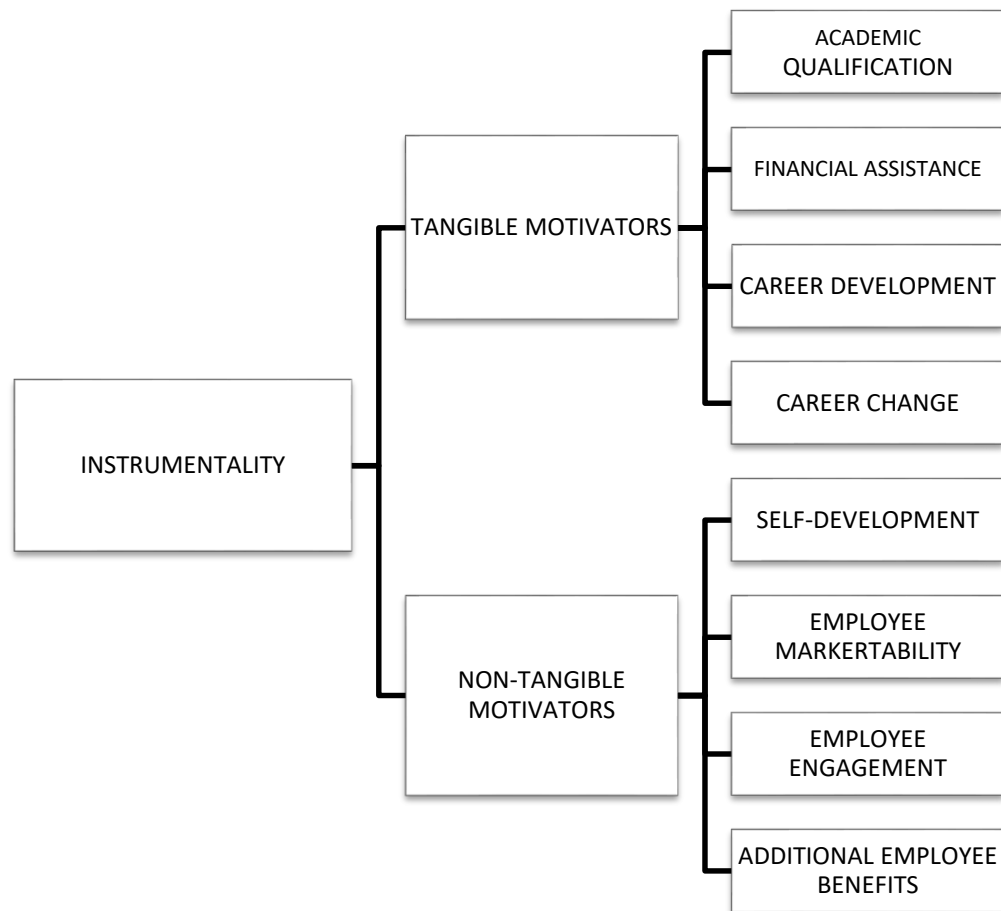
*“without study assistance - I would have done it but it would have been slow. I would have studying part time and I would have taken me a longer time to finish” – Buthez.*

There was a level of comfort with the degree of control over studies that is offered by the study assistance programme. This degree of control over events and situations brought with it a certain level of assurance in as far as the completion of the studies was concerned. This is line with the increase in motivational force that propels individuals to act.

#### **4.3.2 Objective 2: Ascertain the role played by the value employees place on the performance-reward relationship (instrumentality) in their decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme.**

Instrumentality is the belief that there is a reward for meeting performance standards and goals (Vroom, 1964). Instrumentality is therefore based on this perceived performance – reward relationship. This study found that instrumentality was a significant factor in driving the motivational force of employees to access the study assistance programme. The motivators found under this construct were both tangible and non-tangible. They are presented in **Figure 4.2** below and discussed further in the discussion that follows.

**Figure 4.2 The Instrumentality Construct**



#### **4.3.2.1 THEME 1: Academic Qualification**

All participants shared a common goal of obtaining an academic qualification. For some it was their first and for others it was on top of other qualifications. However, all recognised the need to empower themselves with a qualification either in their current job function or in preparation for a career change.

*“For me it’s that I am able to gain a qualification knowing that my studies are paid for” – Phumi.*

*“I’ve used it for my degree; I’ve used it for short courses as well. In fact all the qualifications that I have it’s the educational assistance that has helped me” – Buthez.*

#### **4.3.2.2 THEME 2: Financial Assistance**

The financial assistance offered by this programme was a reason stated by most participants. This was a strong motivating factor for all participants. Many stated how expensive education is and some articulated the stress that is related to having to pay for one’s own studies in the midst of other expenses that one has.

*“Primarily because it is just so expensive to study” – Jena.*

*“...if I missed this opportunity it would be even harder as my daughter will also be going to university and as a single parent I thought it would be even harder to focus on supporting her and still do something as demanding as thing” – Yellow Bone.*

*“sometimes I don’t have the hard cash there and then to pay for my studies but I still want to study and here the company is saying, here make use of it. And, even if they were to say pay it back in so many month, I think I would still make use of it” – Phumi.*

#### **4.3.2.3 THEME 3: Career Development**

For achievement of new skill sets that are required for development in one’s career progression, participants indicated that more than just a theoretical qualification was a motivator. There is an expectation of opportunities to be available for people who have developed themselves. There is a drive to get oneself ready for when such opportunities arise.

*“I really value knowledge, I like learning, I like the challenge. I wanted to grow and also for my career development my degree was a nice marriage of the technical and the people management. So I felt that this will support my career development, where I wanted to go in future” – Jena.*

*“My goal is to get the qualification and then say to SAPREF, this is what I have learnt. These are the new set of skills that I now have and hopefully SAPREF can then provide me with better opportunities for me to utilize my skills” – Yellow Bone.*

*“in case there are opportunities, you mustn’t only have experience. You must also have the paper, cos’ it all goes together” – Three.*

*“it opened up doors for me in auditing, to learn more about auditing and to observe you know the real auditors doing the actual work... It really opened up an opportunity to be known that this person is learning this so we can think of her when there are activities that are around that” – Dorkie.*

*“for me initially, when I first used it I wanted to achieve my university degree, which I did and for now, I am growing my professional career so that’s why I am doing these short courses...because at the moment I’m at an assistant level...with this I could be a manager one day” – Buthez.*

The expectation of career development opportunities was evident in those who have used the study assistance programme and then have been able to change careers within SAPREF. However, one participant believes that this is not necessarily the case.

*“No, I achieved the degree, I got the qualification. But, for me the key part is actually putting that into practice because you walk with any degree, you walk away with a lot of theory. Now it’s a case of transferring into the practical, into the culture and making it work. I don’t feel like SAPREF has been receptive to that. On occasion when there has been an opportunity and I have tried to get involved and provide support of some sort with whatever initiative on the go*



*based on the theory I have and I have found, sometimes people kind of express an interest but it fizzles out quickly and that to me is quite disheartening because SAPREF paid a lot of money for me to study and I haven't been able to use it"*  
– Jena.

It is not clear whether this was a departmental phenomenon as another participant expressed that the application of new knowledge within an existing career was possible and appreciated.

*"my team benefits as well as I am able to share industry benchmarks and best practice with them and we all grow through that process"* – Thando.

#### **4.3.2.4 THEME 4: Career Change**

It is evident that there is a belief that this programme can be used as an instrument for career change within the company. There are a number of participants who have changed careers after achieving qualifications that were outside of their previous roles.

*"looking at myself now I would say my personal goals are being achieved ...I was studying towards Safety when I was in the Mechanical field...I can say that I think I am getting there. I am still studying and I am achieving my goals in the Safety field"* – Phumi.

*"for me when I started off I was still in Operations, so I wanted to change my career. So, it was basically a diversion to change my career"* – Dorkie.

This has created an unwritten expectation that a career change is possible when one uses the study assistance programme. This is a structure approach as participants mentioned the use of the Personal Development Plan (PDP). The PDP maps out the employee's career aspirations and sets out to assist the employee to achieve them.

*“if it’s in your PDP as well....so it’s much easier to show the direction that your career will go” – Phumi.*

*“I wanted to grow my knowledge in other aspects of the business that are outside of HR but at a higher level...I need to deepen my knowledge. From where I am what I would like to do is move into a higher level of management but not necessarily confine myself into HR. In fact, I’ve mapped out for myself that in the next three year I should come out of the HR space and do a role that is completely outside of HR because I’ve been with HR now for more than 10 years” – Yellow Bone.*

#### **4.3.2.5 THEME 5: Self-Development**

There was acknowledgement amongst the participants that the motivator is not just the academic qualification; but that with the academic qualification comes a level of development that is not necessarily captured in the qualification. Work experiences post the achievement of the qualification help “cement” what has been learnt. This brings about a sense of confirmation of the knowledge that was acquired.

*“in the beginning it was kinda just – get the degree and tick that box and finish it. Ah, new things have come up along the way because I’ve grown a lot as a person, my perspectives have changed. So, for me it’s actually been quiet nice and a lot of the studies that I kind of started being introduced to or being familiar with through my degree has now been cemented through the Evolve programme. So, it’s actually worked kind of nice for me. How its all fitting together and how concepts are being pulled together. So, ...I’m not where I want to be because life is always about learning and growing and developing...but based on where I was when I started, Yes, I think I have fulfilled the goals that I had” – Jena.*

The self-development motivator also addresses the need of employees to stay active in their development. There is a need to apply new knowledge in one’s life even outside of work.

This testing of theories and stretching oneself motivates employees to stay on the path of lifelong learning and continuous development.

*“I am a person who don’t like to be in one place for too long. I hate to be stagnant. You need to move with the times. So, most of that things that are offered in training are things that can keep you agile, you know. You’re on your toes and its something that you can use also in your own life” – Dorkie.*

*“its helping a lot because I wanted to be a professional which I have achieved and now in my professional level I want to go international” – Buthez.*

#### **4.3.2.6 THEME 6: Employee Marketability**

Regardless of whether or not participants saw opportunities within SAPREF as a result of accessing the study assistance programme, there was a shared notion of increased marketability as a result of this programme. They acknowledged that this programme offers development that is needed in the market, be it locally or even internationally. This is a motivator for all employees, those who would like to grow their careers within SAPREF and those who would like to venture out into other companies in the future.

*“I would like to see myself achieve something out of it within SAPREF, whether it’s through some innovation that I can bring into SAPREF or it could be any kind of improvement in the workspace where I am at so that at some point when I do have to leave SAPREF... I can then say I studied this MBL and through this MBL; this is how I grew my experience and I think that will make me attractive to prospective employers who are looking for my kind of skills” – Yellow Bone.*

*“if I never started, ... In all honesty I don’t think my career would have changed much within SAPREF, but I do think that it would have limited my opportunities in the future, be it within South Africa, within SAPREF, overseas. That was also a contributing factor to study” – Jena.*

*“I think I have become a more rounded professional because of the experience and the studies that I am doing” – Phumi.*

#### **4.3.2.7 THEME 7: Employee Engagement**

It was interesting to note issues of engagement emerging from participants. These presented the participants’ need to be associated with their employer for a long period of time. The Study Assistance Policy has a work back clause for the equal period it takes to achieve the qualification. Participants embraced this clause as a way of keeping their association with the company.

*“it was important for me to tie myself to SAPREF for another 3 years. So, I thought it would help me to achieve that goal. It is my goal to stay with SAPREF for as long as I can. Obviously if circumstances change or whatever I would need to review that. But, right now I feel that it’s a company that I need to grow my relationship with for a longer period and I saw the study assistance as another vehicle to help me achieve that goal” – Yellow Bone.*

This need to keep the association with the company was also expressed through appreciation of the organisational culture. As participants interact with employees from other organisations they compare benefits with regards to study assistance and there is a definite appreciation of what the company offers.

*“its good for the company. It shows that there is a learning culture. If you are talking about your company, you can boast about that...our company is not just paying for books. Our company is taking care of everything. It gives you that sense of – No, I’m in a good company!” – Three.*

Participants also offered the reason of “It’s good for the company” as a motivating factor for accessing this programme. This was interesting as these were participants who were previously paying for their own studies. Once they became aware of how accessing this programme could benefit the company, they made use of it. This is another level of employee engagement and corporate citizenship.

*“it improves the company’s BBBEE scorecard points for Skills Development” – Thando.*

*“my manager told me that there are tax rebates for the company if I use study assistance so I applied” – Jena.*

This corporate citizenship is coupled with a need to offer a return on the company’s investment by improving company processes and investing the skills back in the company for its benefit as well as that of the employees.

*“in return in whatever I’ve learnt I want to plough it back to SAPREF for at least another 6 years and grow with SAPREF through the studies that I have undertaken”- Yellow Bone.*

*“it’s an investment to myself; it’s an investment to the company as well on how I can improve processes” – Dorkie.*

#### **4.3.2.8 THEME 8: Additional Employee Benefits**

Additional employee benefits were also identified as motivators. These are study and exam leave, and the logistics of accommodation and travel arrangements and payments. These additional employee benefits can only be accessed by accessing or making use of the study assistance programme. This means those who choose to study on their own, forfeit these additional employee benefits.

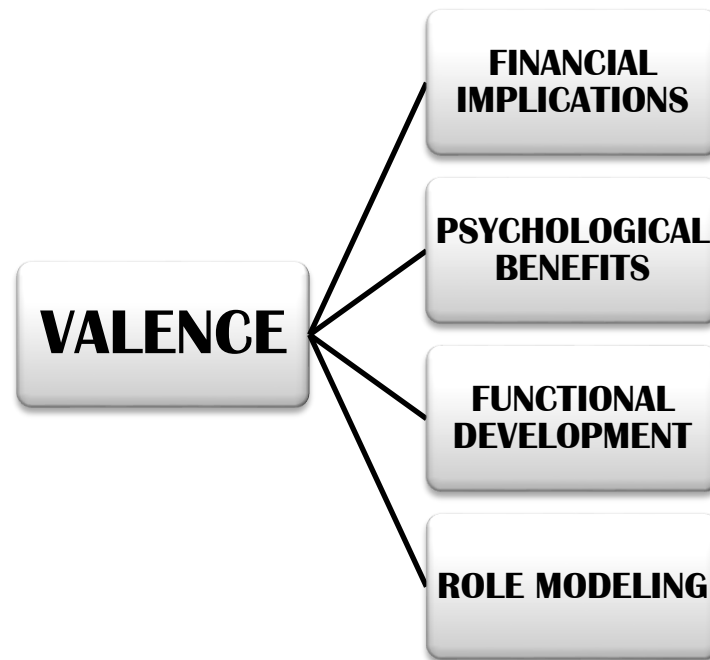
*“if you don’t use it and you study on your own it means that you have to use your annual leave days for things like exams and major assignments. The other benefit for me particularly doing a Masters, is that our company policy grants people who are studying Masters programmes leave to attend study blocks...then you are able to access that, whereas if I did it on my own it would be a lot of annual leave taken. Luckily at SAPREF the study assistance is quite comprehensive. It covers books, it covers tuition, it covers registration fees, everything that’s related to the studies” – Yellow Bone.*

The construct of instrumentality is concerned with the question of benefit to self. What is in it for me? This construct managed to have more themes emerge from it compared to the other two. The number of themes that emerged as part of this construct indicate that there is a lot that the participants deem as motivating factors aligned to accessing the study assistance programme. These motivators are presented in **Figure 4.2** as well as in **Table 1**.

#### **4.3.3 Objective 3: Explore the role of value that the individual places on the reward (valence) in their decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme**

This objective was concerned with understanding whether or not the goal was worth it (valence). There was agreement amongst all participants that it is worth it. Amidst all challenges of balancing work, studies and life, all participants said it is worth it. There are a number of themes that emerged in the exploration of this construct. These were: financial implications, role modelling, functional development, and psychological benefits. Figure 4.3 presents these themes below.

**Figure 4.3 The Valence Construct**



When participants who have completed their studies were asked if they would do it again, there was agreement that they would. In fact, most of them are currently engaged in further studies. The point of this question was to gather information relating to this construct in asking the broader question of; is it worth it?

*“yes, I would do it again, if you asked me a few months ago, I would have said No!” – Jena.*

*“this was very important. I do not like stagnating. I get bored fairly easily, just having an opportunity to step forward and grow in my career is something that I always look for” – Thando.*

#### **4.3.3.1 THEME 1: Financial Implications**

A driving force behind timeous completion of studies is the need to avoid reimbursing SAPREF for failed and uncompleted courses. Once one has avoided paying an educational institution study-related fees, there is a bigger drive not to pay the employer especially as this can be avoided.

*“It’s very important for me to achieve this because if I don’t, I will be owing SAPREF a lot of money” – Yellow Bone.*

#### **4.3.3.2 THEME 2: Role Modelling**

The participants’ reputations within the company as well as in their social circles were also identified as a motivator. Participants expressed the need to maintain their position in the way that they are viewed with regards to their stance on development and therefore a need to role model their behaviour for those in their circle of influence.

*“I do a lot of informal career guidance and coaching...and my stance is always to motivate people. So, I have to preach it and live it” – Yellow Bone.*

*“how do I say to my kids – sorry kids, mommy is not finishing this course. What will that teach them” – Thando.*

#### **4.3.3.3 THEME 3: Psychological Benefit**

Participants identified a psychological benefit that makes it worth it to use the study assistance. Being able to concentrate on one’s studies without the worry of paying fees by a given period and being able to attend classes and do assignments without worrying about logistical arrangements of accommodation, flights, and event textbooks payments was identified as a benefit.



*“its stress-free” – Buthez.*

*“and also if you are studying and you also have a financial burden in your mind... it takes your focus away from the studying that you have to do. You are studying but you also worried about all these other things. So, as a result you might find that you don't achieve your best results in whatever you are pursuing”*  
– Yellow Bone.

#### **4.3.3.4 THEME 4: Functional Development**

Performing in one's current job function came out as an important motivator. There is a need for one to first excel in one's current job before considering further development in other areas. This aspect of development has immediate consequences as it relates to one's performance reviews and ranking which lead to monetary considerations in terms of increments. There is a view that one cannot hope to develop one's career if the minimum requirements of the current position have not been met. Functional development was therefore seen as an important motivating factor.

*“Some of the modules that I have done will help me in my job as I deal with a lot of people. So, I have done Communication. Also it was also my wish to do BTech which is in line with my current position” – Three.*

*“I can go out there and practice what I am studying because I am studying - my job” – Phumi.*

*“and you actually find that there are some things that I realize – hey, we are actually not doing it according to the standards. Its actually good that I bring it up and we look at it. Funny enough some of the things we could have done it for years. But, now that standards are changing every time and you realize that – no, we are actually now doing something that is sub-standard” – Phumi.*

Whilst the reward may be enticing to some; it may not necessarily be the case for others. The value that the individual places on the reward is what valence is all about (Vroom; 1964). The challenge of having a loan turn into a bursary make it enticing enough for some employees to use the study assistance programme. The ability to perform one's duties to the best of one's ability as well as stress free and supportive environment created to learn and not worry about logistical and financial burdens were identified as motivators. **Table 1** as well as **Figure 4.3** indicate these figures as articulated above.

#### **4.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter presented an analysis of the data from interviews conducted with research participants. This analysis was presented in line with the constructs of the theoretical framework that was adopted for this study. The first construct of expectancy was analysed in accordance with the sub-categories of self-efficacy, goal difficulty, and control as offered by the theory employed. In the second construct of instrumentality, the following motivators were found to be present: academic qualification, financial support, career development, career change, self-development, employee marketability, employee engagement, and additional employee benefits. The third construct of valence offered the following motivators: financial implications for not finishing or for failing the course, role modelling, psychological benefits, and functional development.

In summary, the three research objectives based on Vroom's expectancy theory were used as a theoretical framework employed to inform the objectives of this study as well

as its analysis. The analysis of this study shows the number of themes that emerged from interviews held with research participants. A summary of these themes is presented in **Table 1** below.

<b>OBJECTIVE 1:</b> <b>EXPECTANCY</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 2:</b> <b>INSTRUMENTALITY</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE 3:</b> <b>VALENCE</b>
<p><b><u>THEME 1:</u></b></p> <p><b>SELF EFFICACY</b></p> <p>Finishing in record time. Keeping up momentum. Personal growth need. Need for development</p> <p><b><u>THEME 2:</u></b></p> <p><b>GOAL DIFFICULTY</b></p> <p>Intrinsic determination. High confidence levels. Financial support. Structural support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ line management</li> <li>▪ learning department</li> <li>▪ travel arrangements</li> </ul> <p><b><u>THEME 3:</u></b></p> <p><b>CONTROL</b></p> <p>Finishing in less time. Sustained interest in studies. Consistency in studying</p>	<p><b><u>TANGIBLE THEMES</u></b></p> <p>Academic qualification. Financial assistance. Career development. Career change.</p> <p><b><u>NON-TANGIBLE THEMES</u></b></p> <p>Self-development Employee marketability Employee engagement Additional employee benefit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ study/exam leave,</li> <li>▪ accommodation</li> <li>▪ travel arrangements</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>THEME 1:</u></b></p> <p><b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>Company re-imbursement avoidance.</p> <p><b><u>THEME 2:</u></b></p> <p><b>ROLE MODELING</b></p> <p>Advocate for development Need to lead by example</p> <p><b><u>THEME 3:</u></b></p> <p><b>PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS</b></p> <p>Stress-free studying No financial burden More focus</p> <p><b><u>THEME 4:</u></b></p> <p><b>FUNCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>Excel in current position.  Knowledge application</p>

**Table 1: Summary of Research Themes**

In Chapter 5, study conclusions will be presented as well as its recommendations. The recommendations for future research in this field of study will also be presented.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The factors that motivate employees to access the study assistance programme at SAPREF have been explored and discussed in Chapter 4. The three constructs of Vroom's expectancy theory were used as a theoretical framework to understand these motivating factors. The use of these constructs allowed for the systematic clustering of emergent themes elicited from interactions with research participants.

This chapter now draws conclusions for each objective from the results of this study as presented in Chapter 4. It also presents recommendations that can be used by SAPREF in marketing the study assistance programme to those employees that are currently not using it. This is done with the understanding that the results of this study, i.e. what has been found to motivate employees to access the programme, may possibly appeal to other employees as well, thereby increasing the uptake of this programme.

The knowledge that exists in this field of study is very limited. It was therefore crucial for this study to be conducted in order to explore this phenomenon and possibly start a discussion in academia as well as in corporate industry about such programmes. Although the study assistance programme is an educational programme, it is also broadly an employee assistance programme. Employers who wish to expand their employee benefit packages need to have insight into what attracts employees to such a programme and ultimately to their company at talent sourcing stage as well as for retention purposes.

## **5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

There are a number of limitations that this study faced. This section discusses the limitations, which were the need to maintain the participants' anonymity and confidentiality as well as the generalisability of the results of the study.

### **5.2.1 Anonymity and confidentiality**

Having obtained ethical clearance from the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, It was important that the research participants' anonymity and confidentiality be upheld. In ensuring that the participants' identity was not revealed, there is a level of depth in the data analysis that was not reached as it would jeopardize the participants' anonymity. An example of this would be a female engineer who has been with the company for 10 years and is in senior management. This amount of detail would easily show who that person was as there is a limited number of female engineers in senior management positions who have been with the company for 10 years. The views of such a participant would no longer be confidential in such a case. Whilst it would have been interesting to explore, discuss, and analyse the responses to such characteristic detail; anonymity and confidentiality had to be protected.

Therefore, in order to protect the participants' anonymity and confidentiality, the study did not reveal these characteristics and therefore the level of analysis did not go to the level where there would be opportunities for comparing results per gender and seniority in the organization.

### **5.2.2 Generalizability of Results**

This study employed the use of a qualitative research paradigm as it offers a methodology that is concerned with in-depth textual data as compared to statistical inferences (King & Horrocks, 2010). This qualitative methodology was complemented with the use of purposive and convenience sampling. These sampling methods were used, as it was not easy to recruit participants that represented the target population. This was in line with the research paradigm and methodology employed (Creswell, 2014).

The other challenge is that SAPREF is a 24-hour operation with a 12-hour shift system for most of its staff. It was a challenge to get the participation of employees who were on shift due to operational demands. Those who were on their off days were not always accessible and they needed their rest, whilst those on standby were only available on site in response to a site emergency and so could not be disturbed. Thus, random sampling method that would have given an opportunity to generalize the results could not be employed in this study. The results of this study therefore, only represent the views of the study participants and give valuable insights into this phenomenon without generalizing to the target population.

For these reasons, the results of this study cannot be generalized to the entire target population even though there were common themes that emerged throughout all the interviews, as presented in the data analysis in Chapter 4.

### **5.2.3 Sample Saturation**

Sample saturation occurred during the data collection stage of this study. This was determined when there was no new information that was forthcoming from research participants as asserted by Suri (2011). Dworkin (2012) asserts that there is no point in engaging any more research participants in a situation where sample saturation has occurred. This is an important consideration in qualitative data sampling.

Once this was determined, the research did not continue to engage any more research participants. As a result, this study ended up with six research participants out of a target population of 55. Whilst, this is more than 10% of the target population in quantitative terms, this study would have benefited from a wider range of perspectives. However, since there was enough depth in the data received from the research participants; the researcher made a decision to not engage anymore possible research participants.

## **5.3. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY**

This section presents the conclusions of the study. It is important to note that Vroom's expectancy theory suggests that the three constructs of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence need to be present for the motivational force to emerge. The results of this study concur with Vroom's theory, as all three constructs were present for all interviewed participants. This section therefore presents a summary of how the research questions were answered during the course of this study.



### **5.3.1 Research Question 1: What role does expectancy play in the employees' decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme?**

This question explored the participants' own perceived ability to action the required tasks. It was evident that all participants had an inward drive and passion to excel and achieve their goals. It was crucial for this study to gain an understanding of the participants' own perceived level of competence in relation to the skills required to successfully execute the task/s. Research participants had intrinsic motivation that made them believe in their ability to perform. This inward drive to improve oneself was matched with high determination and confidence in the participants' abilities as well as their ability to achieve their educational and personal growth goals.

This determination and confidence was presented in the presence of a recognition of the fact that pursuing studies whilst in full-time employment is not an easy task to complete. The study assistance programme was seen as providing support that made these difficult goals easier to achieve. This was in the form of 1) financial support for tuition, textbooks as well as for accommodation and transport cost if studies are out of town; 2) logistical support, in the sourcing and booking of accommodation, flights and car hire done by Sapref's travel office; and 3) structural support offered by the Learning & Development Department in facilitating the acceptance to the programme and facilitation of payment of invoices from the institution and academic textbook providers.

### **5.3.2 Research Question 2: What role does instrumentality play in the employees' decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme?**

This question the notion of: what's in it for me? It elicited perceived benefits for the participants. Instrumentality had a stronger influence in influencing the employees' decision to access the study assistance programme. This was evident in the number of themes that emerged. It was also found that there were two types of motivators that related to this objective. These were tangible and non-tangible motivators.

Tangible motivators included the achievement of an academic qualification, financial assistance for study related cost, the development and even change in one's career. The emergence of these themes show that there are tangible benefits perceived by the research participants and that these are seen as tangible motivators in the decision to access the study assistance programme.

Non-tangible motivator themes also emerged in the exploration of this construct. These included self-development, employee marketability, employee engagement and perceived additional staff benefits. These motivators may not be seen at face value but emerged due to the retrospective process that the research allowed the participants to undergo and explore. This in turn further highlighted that there are benefits to making use of this programme as the themes have emerged.

### **5.3.3 Research Question 3: What role does valence play in the employees' decision to access the SAPREF study assistance programme?**

The third and last objective of this study was concerned with the exploration of the question: is it worth it? There was an overwhelmingly positive response to this question. Although participants mentioned challenges ranging from line manager approval to balancing their private lives, work challenges, and study targets, they still maintained that accessing this programme was worth it. The financial implications of accessing the programme relate to the fact that participants are motivated to perform at their best in order to pass and not face the reality of paying back the money to SAPREF. This drives participants to excel and to perform their best in fear of the looming reality of these financial implications.

Psychological benefits of studying “stress free” was also a common theme. This theme was said to have made accessing this programme worth it in that it offered the research participants an opportunity to study without worrying about the financial burden that comes with tertiary studies as well as their associated logistical considerations.

Functional development emerged as contributing to immediate benefits of the ability to apply knowledge learnt in the work environment. Although not all participants felt that the opportunity to practice newly acquired skills and knowledge was currently available, it was noted that there was a need for participants to impart their knowledge to their teams.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY**

In light of the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are presented:

### **5.4.1 Raising awareness of the study assistance policy**

The study assistance programme is governed by the study assistance policy. For this programme to appeal to more employees, this policy needs to be clearly understood by all employees. This will achieve an understanding of the programme itself. There was mention of suspicion of lack of awareness about this programme by most participants. The benefits of using this programme should be shared with all employees so they can make an informed decision about accessing the study assistance programme.

### **5.4.2 Understanding the work back clause**

The work back clause contained in the study assistance policy emerged as one of the reasons that some employee did not make use of this programme. There were participants who understood the clause and used it to motivate themselves to ensure that they pass. One even mentioned using this clause as a way of tying themselves to SAPREF. There is a need to clearly explain this clause as a benefit for both employees and the employer.

### **5.4.3 Identification of employees with a need for development**

There is a need to identify employees with a need for development. The study assistance programme is tailored for employees who have a drive for self-development. The number of

employees currently engaged in academic studies without the use of the study assistance need to be investigated in order to offer the programme's benefits to them.

#### **5.4.4 Marketing campaign**

Using the results of this study, it is recommended that a marketing campaign be drawn up and executed. This campaign can be used to recruit more employees to make use of the study assistance programme. The motivators identified in this study can be used as selling points for the marketing campaign. This will be aimed at increasing the uptake and be of benefit to both the employees and the employer, SAPREF.

### **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Whilst there is a lot written about employee motivation; there is lack in content and in depth in the body of knowledge of this phenomenon as it relates to employee development initiatives. It is recommended that this area be explored by future research. This is crucial in life long learning initiatives as well as in alignment with the Skills Development Act in South Africa.

In order to get a different perspective on this subject; it is recommended that future research explore reason why employees do not use the study assistance programme. This is as it was presented earlier in this study that there are employees who are engaged in part time studies but choose to finance them personally instead of using the programme. This may lead to a process of reviewing the programme so that it can cater for the needs of more employees.

## **5.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter summarized the conclusions of the study whilst discussing the study's limitations. The conclusions of the study were presented in accordance with the objectives of the theoretical framework adopted for this study. This allowed for the alignment of the study objectives with its conclusions. This chapter also presented the researcher's recommendations stemming from the results of the study. These are important in order to address the research problem beyond the framework of this study.

This study has succeeded in starting a discussion about employee benefits associated with accessing the study assistance programme. The implementation of the study recommendations as well as an exploration of what is happening in other companies would build on the development of knowledge in this area of study.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alderfer, C. (1972). *Existence, Relatedness and Growth*. New York: The Free Press.
- Armstrong, M. (2009). *A Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. (11<sup>th</sup> ed). London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Bal, P.M., Kooij, T.A. & De Jong, S.B., (2013). How Do Developmental and Accommodative HRM Enhance Employee Engagement and Commitment? The Role of Psychosocial Contract and SOC Strategies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 50(4), 545-572.
- Baumann, M.R., & Bonner, B.L. (2016). An Expectancy Theory to Group Co-ordination: Expertise, Task Features and Member Behavior. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*. [Online]. Retrieved 7 November 2016 from www: [10.1002/bdm.1954](http://10.1002/bdm.1954).
- Berdud, M., Cabasés, J.M., & Nieto, J. (2016). Incentives and Intrinsic Motivation in Healthcare. *Gaceta Sanitaria*, 30(6) 408-414.
- Bezuidenhout, M. (2011). *The development and evaluation of a measure of graduate employability in the context of the new world of work*. (Unpublished master's dissertation), University of Pretoria. Pretoria.
- Boddy, C.R. (2016). Sample Size for Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 19(4) 426-432.
- Botha, J. (2014). *The relationship between adult learner self-directedness and employability attributes – An open distance learning perspective*. (Unpublished master's dissertation), University of South Africa. Pretoria.
- Buon, T., & Taylor, J. (2007). Employee Assistance European Forum (EAEF). *Robert Gordon University*.
- Business Jargons. (2016). *Alderfer's ERG Theory*. [Online]. Retrieved 9 December 2016 from www: <http://businessjargons.com/alderfers-erg-theory.html>
- Chen, M.J., & Miller, D. (1994). Competitive Attack, Retaliation and Performance: An Expectancy-Valence Framework. *Strategic Management Journal*, 15 (2) 85-102.
- Cho, J.Y., & Lee, E. (2014). Reducing Confusion about Grounded Theory and Qualitative Content Analysis: Similarities and Differences. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(64) 1-20.

- Chudzikowski, K. (2012). Career transitions and career success in the 'new' career era. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 81, 298 – 306.
- Coetzee, M. (2014). A psychological career resources framework for contemporary career development. In M. Coetzee (ed). *Psycho-social career meta-capacities: Dynamics of contemporary career development*. Dordrecht: Springer International.
- Coetzee, M., & Schreuder, A.M.G. (2014). Career anchors as a meta-capacity in career development. In M. Coetzee (ed). *Psycho-social career meta-capacities: Dynamics of contemporary career development*. Dordrecht: Springer International.
- Coetzee, M., Ferreira, N., & Shunmugum, C. (2017). Psychological career resources, career adaptability and work engagement of general cohorts in the media industry. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*. doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v15i0.868.
- Cole, G.A. (2002). *Personnel and Human Resource Management*, (5<sup>th</sup> ed). London. York Publishers.
- Conley, C. (2007). *Peak: How great companies get their mojo from Maslow*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cook, S. (2008). *The Essential Guide to Employee Engagement: Better Business Performance through Staff Satisfaction*. London. Kogan Page.
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA, Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA, Sage Publications.
- Cucina, J.M., & McDaniel, M.A. (2016). Pseudosocial Proliferation is Damaging the Organizational Sciences. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 37(8), 1116-1125.
- David, A.U., & Eguzoikpe, U.G. (2014). An Empirical Synthesis of Employees' Perceived Relationship between Motivation and Job Performance in Nigeria. *Covenant University Journal of Politics and International Affairs*, 2(1), 38-52.
- David, S., Clutterbuck, D. & Megginson, D. (2013). *Beyond Goals: Effective Strategies for Coaching and Mentoring*. London, Routledge.
- Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). (2014). Five Year Sector Skills Plan for The Chemical Sector Annual Update: 2014 – 2019.



- Department of Labour (DOL). (1998). Skills Development Act 97 of 1998.
- Dierckx de Casterlé, B., Gastmans, C., Bryon, E., & Denier, Y. (2012). QUAGOL: A Guide for Qualitative Data Analysis. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 49(3), 360-371.
- Dobre, O. (2013). Employee Motivation & Organizational Performance. *Review of Applied Socio-Economic Research*, 5(1) pp. 53-60.
- Dworkin, S.L. (2012). Sample Size Policy for Qualitative Studies Using In-Depth Interviews. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 41(6), 1319-1320.
- Eisnberger, R., Malone, G.P., & Presson, W. (2016). *Optimizing Perceived Organizational Support to Enhance Employee Engagement*. Houston, TX, University of Houston.
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). *Qualitative Content Analysis: A Focus on Trustworthiness*. [Online]. Retrieved 1 November 2016 from Available [http://www.miguelangelmartinez.net/IMG/pdf/2014\\_Elo\\_et\\_al\\_Qualit\\_Content\\_Analysis\\_Trust\\_SAGE.pdf](http://www.miguelangelmartinez.net/IMG/pdf/2014_Elo_et_al_Qualit_Content_Analysis_Trust_SAGE.pdf)
- Federman, B. (2009). *Employee Engagement: A Roadmap to creating profits, optimizing performance and creating loyalty*. San Fransisco, Jossey-Bass.
- Ferreira, N. Basson, J., & Coetzee, M. (2010). Psychological career resources in relation to organisational commitment: An exploratory study. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 8 (1) doi:10.4102/sajhrm.v8i1.284.
- Flick, U. (2015). *Introducing Research Methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project*. London, Sage Publications.
- Fulmer, I.S., & Ployhart, R.E. 2014. Our Most Important Asset: A Multidisciplinary / Multilevel Review of Human Capital Valuation for Research and Practice. *Journal of Management*, 40(1). 161-192.
- Gardner, A.K., Diesen, D.L., Hogg, D., & Sergio Huerta, B.S. (2015). The Impact of Goal Setting and Goal Orientation on Performance during Clerkship Surgical Skills Program. *The American Journal of Surgery*, 211(12). 321-325.
- Girivas, V., & Uma, M. (2016). Employee Engagement: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Human Resources Management and Research*, 6 (2). 21-30.
- Googe Maps <https://maps.google.com>

- Gopalan, V., Bakar, J.A.A., Zulkifli, A.N., Alwi, A., & Mati, R.C. (2017). A Review of the Motivation Theories in Learning. *The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Applied Science and Technology 2017 (ICAST'17)*. doi.org/10.1063/1.5005376
- Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B.B. (1959). *The Motivation to Work*. (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hesse-Biber, S.N., & Leavy, P. (2010). *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hilmarrsson, S. T., & Rikhardsson, P. (2009). *The Evolution of Motivation and Incentive Systems Research: A Literature Review*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1965646>
- <http://businessjargons.com/alderfers-erg-theory.html>
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com>
- <https://www.virgin.com/richard-branson/look-after-your-staff>
- Hoffman, M., & Burks, S.V. (2017). *Training Contracts, Employee Turnover, and the Returns from Firm-Sponsored General Training*. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w23247>
- Hollman, R.W. (1982). Employee Assistance Programmes in the United States. *Employee Relations*, 4(3), 6-10.
- Hussein, I.A. & Simba, F. (2017). Effect of Employee Motivation on Organizational Performance of Mogadishu Al Port in Somalia. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 2(6), 89-97.
- Ivancevich, J.M., Konopaske, R., & Mattesson, M.T. (2008). *Organizational Behavior and Management*, (8th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- James, J.B., McKechnie, S., & Swanberg, J. (2011). Predicting Employee Engagement in an Age-Diverse Retail Workforce. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 32(2), 173-196.
- Jerome, N. (2013). Application of the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory; Impacts and Implications on Organizational Culture, Human Resource and Employee's Performance. *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*, 2(3), 39-45.
- Kanfer, R., Frese, M., & Johnson, R.E. (2017). Motivation related to work: A century of progress. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(3), 338-355.

- Khan, A.A., Abbas, N., and Zaki, K.A. (2017). Effect of Incentives Based Two Factor Theory on Employee Performance in Telecom Sector of Pakistan. *The Nucleus*. 54(3), 173-180.
- Khoveyni, M., & Eslami, R. (2016). Managerial Goals Directed Benchmarking for Organised Efficiency in Data Envelopment Analysis. *International Journal of Information and Decision Sciences*, 8(1), 1-17.
- Kominis, G., & Emmanuel, C.R. (2007). The Expectancy-Valence Theory Revisited: Developing an Extended Model of Managerial Motivation. *Management Accounting Research*, 18(1), 49-75.
- Krippendorff, K. (2013). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. (3rd ed.), Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lee, J., & Turner, J. (2016). The Role of Pre-Service Teachers' Perceived Instrumentality, Goal Commitment, and Motivation in their Self-Regulation Strategies for Learning in Teacher Education Courses. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, July, 1-16.
- Leibowitz, B.L. (2016). Professional Academic Development: The Influence of Context on Motivation. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 30(6), 191-206.
- Locke, E.A., & Latham, G. (1990). *A Theory of Goal Setting & Task Performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice Hall.
- Lussier, R.N., & Achua, C.F. (2012). *Effective Leadership*. Emmaus: Rodale Press.
- Mabhala, M.A., Ellahi, B., Massey, A., & Kingston, P. (2016). Understanding the Determinants of Homelessness through Examining the Life Stories of Homeless People Who Work with Them: A Qualitative Research Protocol. *Diversity and Equality in Health and Care*, 13(4), 284-289.
- Macey, W.H., & Schneider, B. (2008). The Meaning of Employee Engagement. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 1, 3-30.
- Mann, S. (2016). Managing Interview Interaction. In Mann, S. (ed.), *The Research Interview*, 114-143. Harlow, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Marczyk, G., De Matteo, D., & Festinger, D. (2005). *Essential of Research Design and Methodology*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Maslow, A.H. (1954). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper.

- Masson, R.C., Royal, M.A., Agnew, T.G., & Fine, S. (2008). Leveraging Employee Engagement: The Practical Implications. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 56-59.
- Maxwell, J.A. (2012). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications.
- Mitchell, G. (2015). Use of Interviews in Nursing Research. *Nursing Standard*, 29(43), 44-48.
- Morse, J. (1998). Designing Funded Qualitative Research. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, pp. 56-85. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications.
- MTD Training. (2010). *Managing Your Career*. [Online]. Retrieved 1 November 2016 from www: <http://bookboon.com/int/business/career/managing-your-career>
- Nagar, J.G., & Guha, S. (2016). Alderfer ERG Theory: An Approach to Meet Retailer's Need to Motivate Consumers. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 4(7), 74-82.
- Nazar, G., & Van der Heijden, B.I.J.M. (2012). Career identity and its impact upon self-perceived employability among Chilean male middle-aged managers. *Human Resource Development International*, 15(2), 141-156.
- Ncube, S., Bussin, M.H.R. & De Swardt, L. (2013). Confirming theoretical pay constructs of a variable pay scheme. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*. 11(1), doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v11i1.464
- Ndzube, F. (2013). The relationship between career anchors and employability. (Unpublished master's dissertation), University of South Africa: Pretoria.
- Neault, R.A., & Pickerell, D.A. (2011). Career Engagement: Bridging Career Counseling and Employee Engagement. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 48(4), 185-188.
- Neubert, M.J., & Dyck, B. (2016). Developing Sustainable Management Theory: Goal Setting Theory Based in Virtue. *Management Decision*, 54(2), 304-320.
- Odongo, A.A. (2016). An Assessment of the Effect of Motivational Strategies on Organizational Performance. A Case Study of XYZ Company. *International Journal of Psychology*, 1(1), 10-29.

- Oluwasanya, A.T. (2016). Human Motivation: Stimuli that Drives Enhanced Employee Performance. *International Journal of Research in IT, Management and Engineering*, 6(2), 137-155.
- Oosthuizen, R.M., Coetzee, M., & Mntonintshi, F. (2014). Investigating the relationship between employees' career anchors and their psychosocial employability attributes in a financial company. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12 (1), Art. #650.
- Palinkas, L.A., Horwitz, S.M., Green, C.A., Wisdom, J.P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42 (5), 533-544.
- Parvaiz, T., & Ahmed, O. (2016). *Sustaining the Growth of Employee: Motivation and Career Development in Organization*. [Online]. Retrieved 9 December 2016 from www: [https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/69728/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_69728.pdf](https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/69728/1/MPRA_paper_69728.pdf)
- Pennington, M. (2014). How to Increase Employee Engagement: The Impact of Social Media and Organizational Culture. *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*, 28 (6), 24-26.
- Phillips, J.J. (2011). *Return on Investment in Training and Performance Improvement Programs*. (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Pink, D. (2011). *Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us*. New York: Riverhead.
- Pool, L. & Sewell, P. (2007). The key to employability: Developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education and Training*, 49 (4), 227-289.
- Rajasekar, S., Philominathan, P., & Chinnathamb, V. (2013). *Research Methodology*. Physics/0601009v3
- Rajin, J. (2012). *Employee assistance programme in the South African Police Service: A case study of Moroka police station*. University of South Africa, Pretoria, <<http://hdl.handle.net/10500/5761>>
- Rurkkum, S., & Bartlett, K.R. (2012). The Relationship between Employee Engagement and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour in Thailand. *Human Resource Development International*, 15 (2), 157-174.
- Sanjeev, M.A., & Surya, A.V. (2016). Two Factor Theory of Motivation and Satisfaction: An Empirical Verification. *Annals of Data Science*, 3 (2), 155-173.

- Savickas, M.L., & Porfeli, E.J. (2012). Career Adapt-Abilities Scale: Construction, reliability, and measurement equivalence across 13 countries. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 80, 661-673.
- Schein, E. H. (1990). *Career anchors and job / role planning: The links between career pathing and career development*. MIT Sloan School of Management. WP#3192-90-BPS.
- Schermerhorn, J.R., Hunt, J.G., & Osborn, R. N. (2002). *Organizational Behavior*. (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.) University of Phoenix. Wiley.
- Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education & the Social Sciences*. (4th ed.) New York: Teachers College Columbia University.
- Sheehan, M. (2014). Investment in Training and Development in Times of Uncertainty. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 16(1), 13-33.
- Shell and BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd (SAPREF). (2014). *Leadership Improvement Agenda*. SAPREF, Durban.
- Shell and BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd (SAPREF). (2015a). *Annual Training Report*. SAPREF, Durban.
- Shell and BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd (SAPREF). (2015b). *Study Assistance Report*. SAPREF, Durban.
- Shell and BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd (SAPREF). (2015c). *Leave Report*. SAPREF, Durban.
- Shell and BP South African Petroleum Refineries (Pty) Ltd (SAPREF). (2016a). *Annual Training Report*. SAPREF, Durban.
- Shen, W., Huang, J., & Li, D. (2016). The Research of Motivation for Word-of-Mouth: Based on the Self-Determination Theory. *Journal of Business & Retail Management Research*, 10 (2), 75-84.
- Shuck, B., & Reio, T.G. (2011). The Employee Engagement Landscape and HRD. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 1-10.
- Shuck, B., & Wollard, K. (2010). Employee engagement and HRD: A seminar review of the foundations. *Human Resource Development Review*, 89-110.

- Sieberhagen, C., Pienaar, J. & Els, C. (2011). Management of employee wellness in South Africa: Employer, service provider and union representatives. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 9 (1), Art #305.
- Silverman, D. 2016. *Qualitative Research*. (4th ed.) London: Sage Publications.
- Skills Development Act of 1998.
- Skills Development Levies Act of 1999.
- Sobo, E.J. (2016). *Culture and Meaning in Health Sciences Research: A Practical Field Guide*. London: Routledge.
- Speer, J.D. (2016). Pre-Market Skills, Occupational Choice and Career Progression. *The Journal of Human Resources*, 51(4), 1-82.
- Taylor, S.J., Bogdan, T.R., & DeVault, M. (2016). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook and Resource*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- The South African Constitution: Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights.
- Thomas, G. (2017). *How to do your research project: A guide for students*. London: Sage.
- Tubbs, M.E., Boehne, D.M., & Dahl, J.G. (1993). Expectancy, Valence and Motivational Force Functions in Goal Setting Research: An Empirical Test. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78 (3), 361-373.
- Vaismoradi, M., Jones, J., Turunen, H., & Snelgrove, S. (2016). Theme Development in Qualitative Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*, 6 (5), 100-110.
- Van der Heijde, C.M. (2014). Employability and self-regulation in contemporary careers. In M. Coetzee (ed.) *Psychosocial career meta-capacities: Dynamics of contemporary career development*. Dordrecht: Springer International.
- Vivek, S. & Satyanarayana Rao, A.V. (2016). A Study on Employee Retention in Private Sector Banks. *The Journal of Indian Management*, 6 (2), 82-89.
- Vroom, V. (1964). *Work and Motivation*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Wang, G.G., Dou, Z., & Li, N. (2002). A systems approach to measuring return on investment for HRD interventions. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*. 13 (2), 203 – 224.



- Walker, J. (2016). Occupational Inertia and Career Change. *The New Worker*, Spring.
- Weston, J. (2016). *Employee Engagement: Understanding the Construct's Stability*. (Unpublished M.Sc.-thesis). Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO.
- Wils, L., Wils, T. & Tremblay, M. (2010). Toward a career anchor structure: An empirical investigation of engineers. *Industrial Relations*, 65 (2), 236-256.
- Whatishumanresource.com. Undated. *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs & Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory*. [Online].
- Wright, R.A. (2016). Motivation Theory Essentials: Understanding Motives and Their Conversion into Effortful Goal Pursuit. *Motivation and Emotion*, 40 (1), 16-21.
- Yeheyis, M., Reza, B., Hewage, K., Ruwanpura, J.Y., & Sahiq, R. (2016). Evaluating Motivation of Construction Workers: A Comparison of Fuzzy Rule-Based Model with Traditional Expectancy Theory. *Journal of Civil Engineering and Management*, 22 (7), 862-873.
- Younger, B. (2015). Employee Assistance Programs. In Cautin, R.L. & Lilienfeld, S.O. (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Clinical Psychology*, pp. 1-5. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.



## **APPENDIX 1:**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

### SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

DATE OF INTERVIEW

CODE/NAME OF INTERVIEWEE

YEAR PROGRAMME WAS ACCESSED

QUALIFICATION PROGRAMME WAS ACCESSED FOR

NUMBER OF TIMES PROGRAMME WAS ACCESSED

### SECTION B: EXPECTANCY

Why did you make use of the Study Assistance Programme?

What benefit to you is the Study Assistance Programme?

Why should other employees make use of the Study Assistance Programme?

### SECTION C: INSTRUMENTALITY

What did you aim to achieve by accessing the Study Assistance Programme?

How is this achievement related to your personal goals?

Did you achieve what you set out to achieve through this Programme?

### SECTION D: VALENCE

How important to you is the goal that you wanted to achieve?

What would be the implications of not achieving it?

How easy / difficult it would have been to achieve it without this programme?

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

## **APPENDIX 2:**

### **ETHICAL CLEARANCE**

### **APPENDIX 3:**

### **TURNITIN REPORT**

## **APPENDIX 4:**

### **GATEKEEPER LETTER**

## **APPENDIX 5:**

### **INFORMED CONSENT**

18 December 2015

Mrs Nompumelelo Letticia Mbambo (205511482)  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
Westville Campus

Dear Mrs Mbambo,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1640/015M

Project title: Motivating factors that influence employees to access the study assistance programme at SAPREF

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application received on 03 November 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

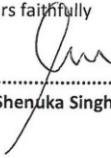
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further 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.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....  
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Supervisor: Mrs J Ramasamy-Gurayah  
Academic Leader Research: Professor Brian McArthur  
School Administrator: Ms Angela Pearce

---

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snymanm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snymanm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



Founding Campuses ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville