UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

PERCEPTIONS OF MANAGERS ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE TRADING SERVICES CLUSTER OF ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

By

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DECLARATION

I, Deshini Pillay, declare that:

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(ii) The dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

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ABSTRACT

The eThekwini Municipality is the largest municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, and has a constitutional obligation to provide an efficient service delivery to the public that it serves. Performance issues have always been a challenge in municipalities around the world, hence the introduction of a Performance Management System at eThekwini Municipality. This study investigated the perceptions of managers of the Performance Management System that was introduced in 2009.

A key assumption of this study is that an effective Performance Management System can contribute towards improved service delivery. The aim of the research was to understand the views of management on the system, to identify the challenges that managers had experienced since the introduction of the system, and to determine the impact the system had on performance in the relevant departments. The qualitative research methodology chosen allowed for an interpretative approach that obtained an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of managers based on their experience using the system. The data were obtained using semi-structured interviews conducted with15 managers from the Trading Services Cluster of the eThekwini Municipality, who had used the system for five years. All interviews were transcribed and analysed using a thematic analysis method. Literature and studies from various sources provided the theoretical framework underpinning the subject.

The research findings indicate that there is a negative perception towards how the system was implemented and the managers agreed that while such a system is beneficial to the organisation, there are challenges that need to be addressed. Some of the common themes that emerged were the lack of consistency in the evaluation process, the culture of the organisation in terms of staff attitude, the lack of training, and the complicated administration process of the system. The study proposed a change management strategy that encapsulated an integrated approach which took cognisance of the cluster's organisational structure, culture, systems, policies and processes.

A key recommendation is that the communication strategy should be proactive so that all stakeholders are knowledgeable and can competently engage in the process. Training and development should be a continuous process, where the principles and policies are reiterated and any material changes to content are communicated effectively. A reward system that

clearly distinguishes mediocre performance from excellence must be investigated and suitable alternatives implemented. The study confirms the complexity of implementing a Performance Management System in the public sector and recognises the importance of an integrated approach to implementing such a system.

GLOSSARY

CM   City Manager

DCM   Deputy City Manager

DPEM   Department of Performance Evaluation and Monitoring

DPSA   Department of Public Service and Administration

EPMDS   Employee Performance Management and Development System

HRD   Human Resources Development

IDP   Integrated Development Plan

KPA   Key Performance Area

KPI   Key Performance Indicator

MFMA   Municipal Finance Management Act

MSA   Municipal Systems Act

POE   Portfolio of Evidence

SALGBC   South African Local Government Bargaining Council

SCM   Supply Chain Management

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

One of the constitutional imperatives of any public sector organisation is the effective use of its human capital to maximise its goal of efficient service delivery to the people that it serves. Performance in the public sector is always in the spotlight due to the impact that it has on service delivery and the public's expectations and priorities that are constantly changing. In many countries around the world, the quest for improved service delivery in the public sector has prompted government departments to develop and implement Performance Management Systems (eThekwini Municipality, 2009).

In the 21 years of democracy, the South African government has implemented fundamental changes through all spheres of government by promulgating legislation to enforce the establishment of a Performance Management Systems. These changes have been effected to improve service delivery to all South African communities with emphasis on the previously disadvantaged and underserviced communities that were marginalised during the Apartheid era (MFMA Local Government Municipal Systems ACT, 2000). National Government has had to institutionalize and provide legislation on the performance management process for local government in order to achieve economic development, transformation, governance, finance and service delivery. The progressive interventions of government with the introduction of various legislation and guidelines on the issue of performance management in the public sector is testament to the national strategic importance that is placed on performance management of public sector departments. The DPSA developed guidelines for the development of Performance Management Systems but the responsibility of developing and implementation was left with the individual departments. The eThekwini Municipality is no different and hence it introduced a Performance Management System in 2009 (eThekwini Municipality, 2009).

The aim of this chapter is to outline the research problem, explain the purpose behind the study and briefly describe the methodology employed for the study. A brief description of the structure of each chapter will be discussed to provide a synopsis for the chapters that follow.

1.2 The problem statement

The Municipal Systems Act of 2000 (MSA) promulgated the establishment of a Performance Management System on the 01 July 2001 (MFMA Local Government Municipal Systems ACT, 2000). In 2007 a framework to assist with guidelines on Performance Management Systems entitled The Employee Performance Management and Development System (EPMDS) was designed by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) for all employees in the public sector on salary levels grade 1-12 (DPSA, 2007). The Department of Performance Evaluation and Monitoring (DPEM) was promulgated in 2010 to specifically tackle performance issues of performance evaluation and monitoring in the public sector (Presidency, 2010). A strategic plan 2011/2012 to 2015/2016 was developed to monitor service delivery of municipalities, clinics, schools and other government departments.

The eThekwini Municipality is the largest municipality in KwaZulu-Natal and the third largest in the country. The municipality falls under the ambit of the South African Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC), which is the only recognised employer organisation that represents municipalities. It is designated a category A municipality and services 3 442 398 culturally diverse people in the cosmopolitan city of Durban (SALGBC, 2001).According to the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, the categorisation of the municipality as category A is based on the following requirements:

- High population density.
- Intense movement of goods, people and services.
- Extensive development.
- Has multiple districts and industrial areas.
- Is a centre of economic activity with a complex and diverse economy.
- Has a single area for which integrated developmental planning is desirable.
- Has strong interdependent social and economic links.

The municipality is governed by a 205 member council that is headed by a Mayor and an executive committee. The vision of eThekwini Municipality is to be Africa's most liveable city by 2030, where all citizens live in harmony (eThekwini Municipality, 2011). The municipality, by virtue of its bureaucratic organisational structure, complex administration processes and highly unionised environment, faces many constraints in terms of efficiently managing its human capital and other resources. The challenges of low staff morale, mismanagement, poor

2

organisational culture, political power struggles and corruption are just a few of the constraints that impede the performance management process.

Figure 1.1:Top structure of eThekwini Municipality
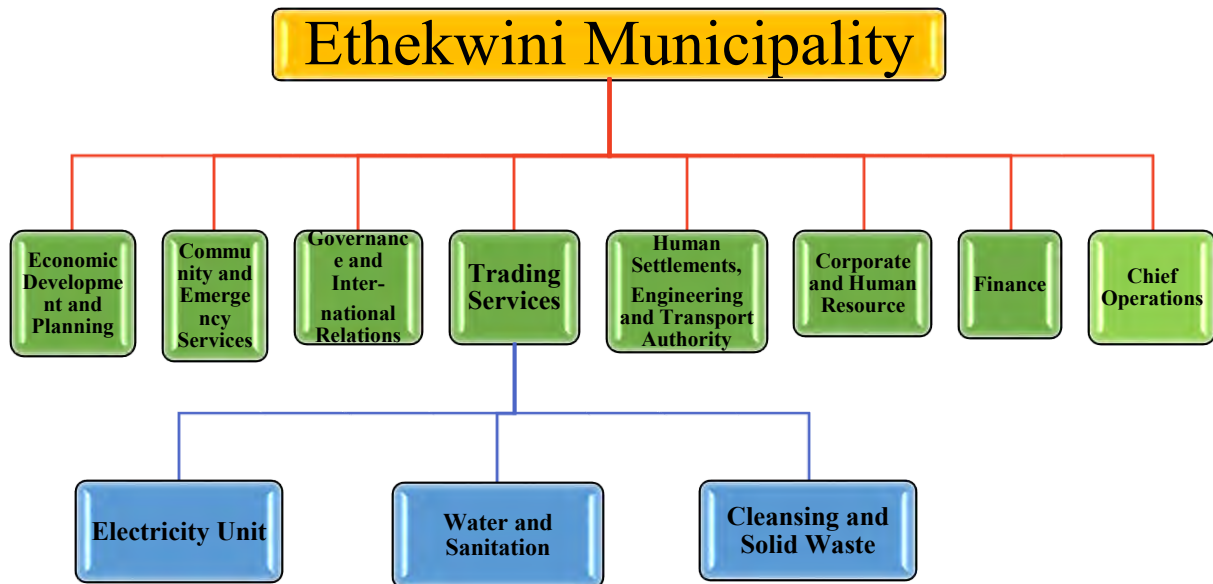
Source: Adapted from eThekwini Municipality (2011)

Figure 1.1 depicts the top structure of the eThekwini Municipality whose administration is managed is by a City Manager (CM).There are seven clusters that are headed by Deputy City Managers (DCMs), who report to the CM. Each cluster is responsible for specific support, service or infrastructure delivery to the citizens of eThekwini (eThekwini Municipality, 2011).

The study was conducted in the Trading Services Cluster of eThekwini Municipality, which is seen to play an integral role in providing essential services to the community. The Trading Services Cluster constitutes three units: Electricity, Water and Sanitation and Cleansing and Solid Waste. The Electricity Unit is responsible for the distribution of power to approximately 711095 customers, ranging from large sophisticated customers that are supplied at 132000 volts(business customers), to urban and rural customers (residential) who are supplied at 230 volts. Electricity is an essential service which generates income for the Municipality (eThekwini Municipality, 2009). The Water and Sanitation Unit is responsible for the distribution of water and the provision of sanitation services to the eThekwini region. It is also deemed an essential service which means that there should be no interruption of supply. The

Cleansing and Solid Waste Unit of eThekwini Municipality, meanwhile, is responsible for comprehensive waste management services. These include the collection and transportation of domestic, commercial and industrial waste, managing landfill sites, street cleaning and litter removal. The staff complement within this cluster is 7790 employees. The performance of employees in this cluster is thus critical, as it impacts on the provision of water, electricity, sanitation and cleansing services to the communities of eThekwini Municipality (eThekwini Municipality, 2009).

In order to understand the problem one needs to first understand the history of performance measurement in the eThekwini Municipality. Prior to 2009, the municipality used a manual performance appraisal system where an appraisal document was sent to an employee's supervisor with a few basic questions on their performance, which was assessed in the anniversary month of the employee's employment (eThekwini Municipality, 2009). This system was seen as merely being a paper exercise due to its tedious process, which entailed the document physically being delivered to an employee's supervisor via a messenger system. In many cases documents were lost, and in the majority of instances the employees ended up receiving an automatic incremental increase. An employee had to complete a year of service in order to receive such an increase. There were several weaknesses in the system as it never considered any Key Performance Areas (KPAs) in order to effectively assess whether an employee was performing effectively. The system was also not designed to cater for career development. This in effect meant that the system was not aligned to the outcomes of the municipality (eThekwini Municipality, 2009).

In 2009, a Performance Management System was introduced into the eThekwini Municipality that was linked to the municipality's outcomes and outputs, which was ultimately aligned to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for local government (eThekwini Municipality, 2009). The new system was implemented to achieve the vision of the eThekwini Municipality, as well as to meet the challenges outlined in the IDP for local government. The new system took into account a five point weighting of the KPAs of staff members, as opposed to the original staff appraisal system that merely rated staff on general performance and conduct (eThekwini Municipality, 2009). Another problematic factor of the old system was that employees automatically received their bonuses in the form of an increment which was programmed for their anniversary date. This in effect meant that employees were assessed at different times of the year, and as the managers sometimes forgot the anniversary dates of their employees, the

appraisal system became an administrative chaos (eThekwini Municipality, 2009). The attitudes of managers and supervisory level staff were that the staff appraisal system was a mere rubber stamping exercise for increases already allocated. The system was perceived as being one that had no objective at the end and had no value in terms of performance and employee development. The introduction of the new system ensures that employees only receive their increases when they meet the standards of their KPAs in their performance plans, and all employees are assessed at the end of each financial year (eThekwini Municipality, 2009). The Performance Management System encourages engagement between the line manager and the employee, and also focuses on developmental issues. The system was initially implemented at different stages, with management being the first phase of the implementation plan. The critical role played by managers in the performance management process includes:

- Setting objectives with employees in such a way that continuous improvement is encouraged.
- Monitoring employees' performance against these objectives.
- Providing ongoing feedback to employees.
- Training, coaching and developing employees.
- Managing poor performance appropriately; and
- Using reward and recognition to reinforce good performance.

The study is intended to ascertain the perceptions of managers after utilising the new system which has been in operation for six years. Although there is an electronic version of the system, managers are capturing information for each employee on spreadsheets and this data is then collated for the various departments. The system has, however, been used by managers over the last six years, thus it is critical to establish whether there is a clear understanding of the system and whether the system has had any impact on improving service delivery within the cluster. It is imperative that managers are convinced that the system is useful and fair, as negative perceptions could have dire consequences when it comes to the success of the system.

In a study conducted at a local municipality in Gauteng on managers' perceptions of the performance appraisal system, the findings confirmed the researcher's assumptions that a lack of trust, support and openness between an appraiser and appraisee negatively affect the implementation of a performance appraisal system (Radebe, 2015). Empirical research of this nature has implications for other municipalities in terms of understanding attitudes and

behaviours that could influence performance systems, and provides a basis for learning and improving systems.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The eThekwini Municipality has invested a substantial amount in financial and non-financial resources to ensure that the system was implemented effectively. For this reason it was imperative that this study was conducted in order to establish whether managers who are responsible for the effective implementation of the system have the correct understanding of the system and believe that the system is of value to the organisation (eThekwini Municipality, 2009). The significance of such a study will be to understand the status of performance management from the perspectives of managers. Managers and supervisors are often the first to identify performance gaps and the causes for such gaps, therefore they need performance management technology and tools to improve performance (Chevalier, 2014). Managers are the link between their organisation and employees, as they communicate the organisation's strategy into clearer goals and are responsible for setting and monitoring targets. As such they influence the strategic direction of the organisation, ensure accountability and create value for their customers (Chevalier, 2014). Managers at eThekwini Municipality play an integral role in the implementation of the system and it is important to understand their point of view in order to identify the weaknesses and successes of the system. Another important benefit of this study will be to assess the knowledge on the subject and provide an opportunity to correct any misconceptions on the subject matter. This is a critical aspect in terms of creating a learning organisation.

The introduction of any new system in an organisation requires an evaluation in order to determine the success of the system and any improvements that may be deemed necessary, yet many organisations fail to do this. Sanger (2008:70) argued that "The outcome of performance management systems are generally unmeasured and little is known about their cost effectiveness or endurance over time."

Such a process had not been conducted at the eThekwini Municipality and the researcher observed that many staff had different views about the system. Negative perceptions of the system could have adverse consequences that may impact on employees' motivational levels and performance, while positive perceptions could create ownership of the system and ensure its success. A key role of any manager is to ensure that their staff are motivated and able to

achieve the desired standards of the organisation (Chevalier, 2014). Performance Management Systems are intended to achieve this purpose, as well as to retain the organisation's key assets, i.e. its human capital.

Some of the key assumptions made in the study is that the effective implementation of a Performance Management System will contribute to improving the effectiveness of departments and ultimately service delivery of the municipality as a whole. From a systems thinking point of view one can appreciate how each person's individual performance collectively impacts on the department, which in turn impacts on each unit and ultimately the municipality as a whole. Every person in the organisation plays an integral role in turning the wheels of the Performance Management System (Arnaboldi, Lapsley, & Steccolini, 2015).

Aguinis (2011) stated that a Performance Management System must be congruent with the culture of the organisation, must minimise errors and must maximise consistency. He argued that managers who are normally the performance raters must be subjected to ongoing training to ensure that they understand the concept of consistency, as a lack of consistency leads to mistrust of the rater and the system. The Trading Services Cluster constitutes a diverse culture of employees at all levels, and managers are expected to be good leaders, to manage cultural diversity, and to understand its influence on the work environment.

1.4 Significance of the study

The aim of the study is to ascertain how managers view the new Performance Management System within the Trading Services Cluster of the eThekwini Municipality. To achieve this aim the following objectives were pursued:

- To identify whether managers understand the Performance Management System.
- To explore the perceptions of managers on the system since its inception.
- To explore the challenges experienced with using the system.
- To investigate whether the system has had any impact on the relevant managers' sections and the objectives of the department.
- To provide recommendations if the current application of the system needs to be improved.

1.5 Research questions

The research questions are listed below:

- What is the managers' understanding of the current Performance Management System?

- What is the managers' perception of the system and how has it impacted performance?

- What are the challenges experienced with the use of the Performance Management System?

- What were the impacts of the system on the relevant sections and the objectives of those sections?

- What recommendations could be implemented to improve the system?

1.6 Limitations of the study

This research is limited to the Trading Services Cluster, which has the greatest impact on the municipality's service delivery. Due to time constraints it would be impossible to conduct such a study across the entire municipality, which has approximately 24,000 staff. The Trading Services Cluster is a good representation for this study as it is made up of those units that are responsible for providing essential services to the community. The study is also restricted to the views of management staff, as this level is responsible for the implementation of the performance management system and ultimately the performance of staff within these units. The management level staff have also been exposed to the system the longest and are thus in the best position to offer recommendations. This may, however, be viewed as having level of bias, as they would want to be seen as implementing the system correctly. Ideally it would have been valuable to obtain the views of both management and employees as this would provide a perspective from two different angles, but due to restricted time frames and the volume of employees this was not possible.

1.7 Research methodology

In terms of the research methodology, a qualitative research approach was adopted which aims for depth of understanding where the variables are not controlled. Qualitative methods are generally characterised as being interpretive and subjective (Esu,2009). The qualitative research process aimed to elicit the intangible factors associated with the problem, such as the opinions of senior management on the implementation of the Performance Management System, and what the reasons were for management adopting their particular views on the Performance Management System.

The methodology used was purposive sampling, where participants were chosen based on their years of experience engaging with the system and their different levels of seniority within the management level structure. These factors were crucial in terms of sourcing meaningful information from the participants that was regarded as institutional knowledge. Managers, Senior Managers, Deputy Heads and Human Resources personnel were selected to participate in the study from the three units within the Trading Services Cluster. The researcher believes that this was an adequate representation for the study as it was a mixture of the middle management and senior management level, as well as human resources employees that provided views from different perspectives.

The data collection method took the form of interviews and an analysis of case studies and journal articles on the subject matter. Research interviews bring to the attention of the researcher what individuals think, feel and do (Esu,2009). Permission was sought from the municipality to undertake this research and ethical clearance (Appendix 3) was obtained from the university to conduct the study. Interviews were scheduled with participants at their convenience and took no longer than 45 minutes each. The interview questions were tested on two managers to ascertain whether these were adequate in terms of obtaining sufficient data. Kumar (2014) emphasised that it is unethical to interview participants without obtaining their consent and seeking their willingness to participate in the study. Informed Consent forms (Appendix 1) were thus signed by each applicant and the process was explained in terms of how the interview process was going to be conducted. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Qualitative analysis requires data to be processed in such a way that common themes or patterns are identified, therefore thematic analysis was used as a means of unlocking information from the raw data and transforming it into meaningful interpretation that added valuable insight to this area of study. Thematic coding, which is also referred to as conceptual coding, was used to reduce the data and identify themes (Plooy-Cilliers, 2014).This form of analysis is an interpretative approach based on the premise that there is no wrong or right answer for human behaviour.

In qualitative studies, reliability and validity are conceptualised as trustworthiness. Trustworthiness can be further explained in terms of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility refers to the findings of the research being believable from the readers point of view; transferability refers to the likelihood of the findings being used in a

similar situation and the outcome being the same; dependability refers to the integrity of the data during the process; and confirmability refers to how well the data obtained supports the analysis (Plooy-Cillier, 2014). A detailed explanation of the research methodology is discussed in Chapter 3.

1.8 Structure of dissertation

Chapter One: This chapter provides an introduction and a background to the problem statement. It also explains the purpose and the objective of the study. The research methodology is briefly explained in this chapter.

Chapter Two: This chapter provides the theoretical framework and will contextualise the problem statement in terms of other authors and research conducted. Journal articles and text books were the main sources of information.

Chapter Three: Research methodology and design are discussed in this chapter. The study also provides an explanation for the use of the particular method chosen for the study.

Chapter Four: The results were discussed in the form of themes to provide a rich understanding of the problem statement. This chapter also provides a synopsis of the views of the various participants.

Chapter Five: This chapter provides a link between the results that were interpreted as well as the theory and results of previous research.

Chapter Six: This chapter provides a conclusion to the overall study, linked the findings to the theory and determined if the objectives of the research were met. It also provides recommendations on how to address problems that were identified.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided a brief description of eThekwini Municipality and performance management in the municipality. It further highlighted the purpose for such a study and contextualised it in terms of the problem statement. The methodology used for the purpose of the study and the limitations of the study were also discussed. It is envisaged that the findings from this study could contribute to improving the current system and ultimately contribute to improved service delivery. The next chapter provides a literature review of performance management and highlights the latest trends and studies on this subject.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The most valuable asset of any organisation is its human capital, which is responsible for an organisation achieving its goals and objectives via their collective performance. The ability to measure the performance of this vital resource is significant for the improvement of the organisations performance and to ensure its sustainability. The complex and competitive environments that organisations operate in require that strategies are carefully designed to achieve the goals that are established for sustainability and growth. The study of performance management contributes to finding solutions to complex challenges by providing valuable insight into the ways in which people interact with organisations in a dynamic world that is continuously evolving (Sanger, 2008). Government departments, by the nature of their bureaucratic structures, operate in complex environments that are characterised by a culture of non-performance, complicated administration processes with cumbersome rules, and political interference weighted by power struggles which pose immense challenges for the transformation of public sector performance (Sanger, 2008).

The evaluation of an employee's performance is a process of assessing the contribution of that performance to the achievement of the organisation's objectives for a particular period of time (Toppo, 2012). This process has implications for organisations seeking new ways to improve performance. Traditionally the process involved evaluating a performance and then telling an employee where there was a problem. The performance appraisal system was seen as a once a year event that was performed as an empty ritual (Shields, 2008). The appraisal system has evolved over the years, however, and has become a part of the performance management system. Yet despite the interest in performance measurement and management steadily increasing over the past two decades, organisations constantly experience difficulty implementing this system (Taticchi, 2012).

2.2 Background to performance management

It is believed that appraising performances dates back to the First World War, when the US Army adopted the "Man-to-man" rating system for evaluating military personnel. This was commonly referred to a merit rating system. This system was then adopted into the business field and applied to hourly paid workers. During the 1920s, relational wage structures for hourly paid workers were adopted in industrial units and each worker's performance was used

to be rated in comparison to others for determining wage rates (Toppo,2012). The development of performance evaluation can also be attributed to Peter Drucker and Douglas McGregor, who developed ideas around motivation and management by objectives (Huprich, 2008). The appraisal system over the years was seen as a short term focus on individual performance, with a top-down management approach that lacked strategic direction. Today performance management is regarded as a continuous, participative system that includes the process of criteria setting, feedback and development (Shields, 2008).

There are a wide variety of definitions to performance management, as Singh (2013:41) explains:

"As a process performance management aims to integrate goal setting, performance review and development, and subsequent compensation and rewards into a single system with the objective of aligning employee performance with organizational goals and objectives".

Toppo (2012:3) drew on Prasad (2005) to define performance management as:

"*The process of planning performance, appraising performance, giving it feedback, and counselling an employee to improve his performance*."

Mondy (2014:222) added that:

"*Performance management is a goal-oriented process directed towards ensuring that organizational processes are in place to maximize productivity of employees, teams, and ultimately, the organisation.*"

From all the definitions above it can be established that performance management is a systematic process with an aim of achieving a performance improvement culture that achieves the organisation's goals. The significance of this type of culture is that it fosters continuous business improvement and contributes to the personal development of employees.

This issue of complexity in performance management can be attributed to the fact that there is no homogenous measure for it and that organisations operate in complex environments (Heijden, 2007). An important concept that surfaces when researching performance is the contemporary "psychological contract". This concept has merits that warrant further discussion, because they can assist in understanding performance in terms of the employment relationship (Shields, 2008). The legal contract as defined by Shields (2008:49) "is a written or verbal agreement about the mutual responsibilities of parties in an exchange relationship, involving a promise, an acceptance and a payment or other consideration". Shields (2008) described the psychological contract as being the perceptions and expectations of each party

regarding what the other party has undertaken to give and receive in exchange. Camilleri (2007) drew on Rousseau (1989) to explain that the key issue in this concept is that there is a belief that a promise has been made for some reciprocal obligation, which is a subjective perception of the employment relationship. The difficulty with this type of contract is that although promises are made clearly, explicitly and consistently, this does not guarantee that both parties share a common understanding of the terms (Shields, 2008). Wellin (2007) provided three reasons for the existence of the psychological contract as understanding and predicting how people behave, engaging people at work, and aligning people better to the strategic business objectives of the organisation. This has important implications for performance management in terms of influencing behaviour in order to create a high performance culture that improves business performance.

2.3 The objectives of a performance management system

Many different objectives and purposes of performance management have been identified by authors over the years. A few of these objectives are discussed with the aim of understanding how performance management plays a strategic role in the progress of an organisation. Stredwick (2014) identified two purposes for performance management:

- The first is for operational reasons, i.e. to exercise control over employees to ensure that performance targets are met. The other operational requirement is to provide clear guidance to employees that direct them towards the organisation's aims and objectives. This form of communication is important in linking the organisation's goals to the employee's individual performance. Another purpose operationally is to improve the effectiveness of the workforce. Organisations operate in highly competitive environments and it is important to have an efficient workforce.
- The second reason is the culture of the organisation. Performance management can encourage trust and openness with employees, and the organisation's vision, objectives and plans are shared. Monitoring targets can act as a motivator as well, especially where employees agree on goals.

Shields (2008) identified the following reasons for performance management:

- Strategic communication in performance management provides a platform for the communication of the organisation's goals to individuals and clarifies what is expected in terms of competencies, behaviour and results.

- Relationship building brings all together stakeholders to discuss performance issues such as planning, development resource requirements etc. This fosters an environment for building relationships.

- Employee development fostered by the monitoring and review process provides valuable information about deficits in the skills, knowledge or abilities of an employee, which initiates training and development programmes. It also provides an opportunity for the organisation to align its employees correctly to their jobs and create career path initiatives.

- Employee evaluation is a process that provides a basis for the allocation of rewards, determining which employees have the potential for promotion, demotion or reassignment. Adjustments to pay is also effected using performance ratings.

The previous authors, Stredwick and Shields, confirm that the objectives of performance management aim at building a high performance culture for individuals and teams, and collectively contribute to improving business. The setting of goals, the communication of these goals, the identification of competencies and the clarification of expectations to ensure that people are doing the right things at the right times, help an organisation use the full potential of employees.

2.4 The process of performance management

Performance management is a dynamic and continuous process that involves planning, reviewing, rewarding and developing performance (Radebe, 2015). It is a goal orientated process aimed at achieving the maximum productivity of individuals, teams and the organisation at large. The performance management process is designed to involve communication between managers and employees, with reporting as a part of the process that is embarked on quarterly, biannually or annually. This provides an opportunity to have a dialogue with employees on their personal roles in the organisation and to evaluate their outputs against the agreed standards. The organisation, on the other hand, seeks such strategies to maximise performance (Bussin, 2013).

Figure 2.1: The Performance Management Process

Figure 2.1 above illustrates the process involved at various stages of performance management and also confirms the cyclical nature of this process. Each stage follows sequential steps that have to be completed in order for the next stage to be implemented effectively.

2.4.1 Planning performance

At this stage the organisation's goals are translated into departmental and then individual goals. These goals are normally derived from the mission or vision of the organisation and adapted into departmental objectives. Each individual's goals should align with their manager's goals and the wider organisational goals (Bussin, 2013).At this stage the supervisor meets with the employee and a plan is mapped out as to how the individual employees will contribute to meet the department's goal and ultimately the organisation's goals. Support and guidance is offered to the employee to ensure that the targets set are met. At this stage the targets must be clearly communicated so that the employee fully understands what is expected of them during the process of evaluation, including time frames. The evidence to be presented and the value attached to goals is also agreed upon here so that there is fairness in the system. Roles and

responsibilities are also clearly defined. This information is drafted into a written performance document (Nel, 2011). The SMART acronym is common when discussing the dimension of goal setting. Stredwick (2014) explained SMART as follows:

- Specific and stretching: specific refers to goals being clear and transparent and not lending themselves to be open to disputes. Stretching refers to targets having different levels of achievement that allow for an employee to achieve better standards.
- Measurable refers to the targets having aspects that can be measured or quantified.
- Achievable refers to the targets being set so that the employee can reach those targets. Targets must also be agreed upon by the employee.
- Realistic refers to the target being set so that it can be achieved. Relevance refers to targets being related to the key performance areas of the job.
- Time-related refers to the length of time taken to achieve a target or at what point the target can be achieved.

2.4.2 Maintaining performance

Ongoing performance conversations are important to discuss progress, assess whether goals need to be changed etc. Monitoring performance and coaching play an important role, as managers can re-evaluate their priorities and efforts and employees can fully understand whether their performances are aligning to the agreed goals (Bussin,2013).According to Nel(2011), astute managers will engage with subordinates in informal ways to observe their performance and identify problems at an early stage. Nel (2011) drew on Gomez'-Meji'a et al. (1998), who claimed that supervisors who manage performance effectively generally share four characteristics:

- They explore the causes of problems.
- They direct attention to the causes of problems.
- They develop an action plan and empower workers to reach a solution.
- They direct communication at the performance and emphasise non-threatening communication.

2.4.3 Reviewing performance

At the review phase, crucial discussions take place around the goals that were set, key performance areas, resources required, training needs, agreed time frames etc. According to Nel (2011), discussions can take two perspectives: the rational perspective and the political perspective. He clarified that the rational perspective is one that assumes the value of each worker's performance can be estimated, and the political perspective is one that assumes that each worker's performance depends on the agenda or goals of the supervisor. An employee's performance is also affected by two types of judgement: absolute judgement and relative judgement. Absolute judgement is where an employee is assessed solely on performance standards. Feedback to the employee here is more specific but the disadvantage is that a group of employees could receive the same rating if a supervisor is reluctant to differentiate. There could also be the problem of different evaluators having different evaluation standards, which could be a cause for conflict. Relative judgement is where the employee's performance is compared to other employees doing the same job. The disadvantage here is that you cannot determine how well or badly an individual employee is doing.

There are many ways that an evaluation can take place, as identified by Nel (2011):

- The immediate supervisor is the most common method, where he/she rates the employee. The reason for this method being common and popular is that the supervisor is in the best position to rate the employee, as he/she has observed the employee's performance and has interactions with the employee on a daily basis. There are also several disadvantages associated with this method such as leniency by the supervisor. Some supervisors are also too lazy to deal with poor performance, so they assign an average score to an employee which is actually a false rating.

- Peer ratings are used to provide a different perspective from that of the immediate superior, however issues like friendship bias could skew ratings. Peer reviews require that one specify exactly what is expected to be reviewed. Peers reviews should be considered in conjunction with other reviews.

- "Reverse appraisal" refers to appraisals by subordinates. This type of rating requires a considerable level of trust and openness.

2.4.4 Rewarding performance

This phase determines the reward or recognition that is awarded to an employee, which is based on whether the goals were achieved and to what extent they were achieved. Shields (2008) identified three objectives for rewarding employees:

- To attract the right people.
- To retain the best people.
- To motivate the current employees.

Rewards can be categorised into intrinsic rewards, which arise out of the job itself and include the challenges that a job provides, the variety in a job, the autonomy that the job provides, the interest that the job creates, and the meaning and satisfaction that the job brings to an individual. Extrinsic rewards can be divided into three types: financial rewards, developmental rewards and social rewards. Financial rewards refer to compensation or pay; developmental rewards are those associated with learning, skills development and career growth; and social rewards are benefits such as a good organisational culture, opportunities for enhanced work-life balance, wellness programmes and other indirect rewards associated with work and the organisation.

There have been a number of studies in developed as well as developing countries that have produced mixed findings about performance pay practices. There is agreement, however, that performance pay plans constitute a major component in rewards in various countries (Shields, 2008). A US social psychologist, Alfie Kohn, criticised performance related rewards. Shields (2008:358) drew on Kohn (1993) and Davis (1995) to argue six points against incentive plans:

- Incentives undermine intrinsic interest in the job, which Kohn (1993) argued leads to workers who do not receive special rewards possibly outperforming those that do. He claimed that intrinsic motivators such as interest in the job and satisfaction from a job well done are the only genuine motivators. He referred to incentives as "pay bribes" that reduce the quality of work.
- Rewards that only motivate people demonstrates that employees will only display behaviour that attracts the reward. He argues that unrewarded behaviour, which could include the desired behaviour, could be ignored.
- Rewards are used to manipulate an employee's behaviour and are compared to punishment.
- Rewards could undermine co-operation and team work as they foster an environment for individual competitiveness.

- Rewards focus on the symptoms rather than the causes of work related problems. Managers rely on incentives as a substitute for managing effectively and identifying problems related to the job, such as design, competencies and skills.

- Rewards discourage risk taking and stifle creativity and initiative. Employees are so focused on the reward that they will only display behaviour to achieve the reward, and will be reluctant to implement innovation at the risk of their rewards.

Shields (2008) also drew on the work of Canadian psychologists Cameron and Pierce (1997), however, who used a meta-analysis of 100 studies to conclude that performance rewards produce motivational force. They argued that people will enjoy performing a task more if they receive a tangible reward.

2.4.5 Developmental planning

Individual career opportunities are identified and plans are drafted at this phase. There are two aspects to development that can emerge from the performance data: career development that influences promotion, and personal development which assists an employee with gaps identified in their current level of performance. A careful evaluation of an employee's performance can identify deficiencies in knowledge, skill or ability. This can be corrected through training and developmental programmes that target the specific deficiency. The importance of training and development was supported by Shields (2008), who drew on Nankervis and Compton (2006) to report the findings of a study conducted in 2003 of performance management practices in Australian organisations. The study showed that 89% of the respondents indicated training and development is an important aspect of performance management.

Performance counselling is an intervention to remedy underperformance. This can be supported by a variety of training methods to address any skills and knowledge gaps, such as formal training, workshops, on the job training and observation. Mentoring and coaching are aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of employees through one-on-one communication. Mentoring is either in the form of a part time or full time relationship between a more experienced employee and a less experienced employee. This relationship is for a specified time period where the mentor provides guidance and support in terms of competency requirements, duties, advice on performance development and career planning (Shields, 2008).

Coaching focuses on the individual's development by allowing for reflection and insight to make the individual more self-reliant and self-managing. A coach will examine areas for development such as attitude, behaviour and impact (Shields, 2008).

2.5 Performance management and fairness perceptions

Employees' perceptions of fairness have a major influence on how they respond to a particular practice and how they relate to the organisation. This is referred to as"organisational justice" perceptions, which play an important role in shaping an employee's outlook and behaviour (Shields, 2008). Singh (2013) cited various researchers such as Erdogan (2002), Greenberg (1996) and Kafryand and Zedec (1980), who argued that employees' emotions and perceptions are important determinants of the effectiveness of human resource systems. Over the years the justice dimensions has evolved; of notable interest are procedural, distributive and interactional justice (Singh, 2013).

- Procedural justice has to do with perceived fairness and is related to the way the organisation makes decisions on employment issues such as performance assessments and rewards (Shields, 2008). This justice dimension is pertinent to individual assessments of performance as it concerns the issue of felt-fairness. If an employee feels that there were inconsistencies in applying the criteria, inadequate performance information, biased judgements or deliberate harshness or leniency, procedural injustice may surface. Singh (2013) drew on Folger et al. (1992), who used the "due process" metaphor and applied it to the concept of procedural justice in terms of three factors: adequate notice, a fair hearing and judgement based on evidence. Singh (2013) also cited Taylor (1995), who suggested that employees involved in the due process system display favourable reactions to fairness and a positive attitude towards the performance management system. Positive procedural justice perceptions strengthen the link between evaluation results and performance improvement (Singh, 2013).

- Distributive justice perceptions are those related to the decision making outcome; of pertinence to this dimension are the feelings towards rewards. Rewards should be commensurate with the effort put in by the employee and highlight the issue of relative or comparative worth. This means that for an employee to regard a reward as fair, there has to be some sort of proportional comparison to another person or group (Shields, 2008). Singh (2013) studied Adam (1965) in order to explain his Equity Theory as employees having feelings of incongruence between their inputs and the outcomes

received for that input in terms of money, recognition or decisions that may directly affect them. Inequity can arise from either a perception of over reward or under reward. The Equity Theory suggests six possible actions that employees can take to restore their perception of equity:

- Change the inputs.

- Re-evaluate the outcomes within the organisation with a view to change.

- Resign from the organisation for a position elsewhere.

- Alter their perception of the input and output comparison by rationalising the inequity.

- Change the comparison.

- Psychologically distort the input and outcomes of the others so that the perception of inequity is removed.

Singh (2013:46) cited De Nisi and Pritchard (2006), stating that "Performance Management Systems that ensure higher levels of perceived distributive justice will be associated with a stronger perceived connection between outcomes and need satisfaction and so will be associated with a higher level of performance improvement". This highlights the link between distributive justice and performance management.

- Interactional justice refers to the interpersonal treatment and the distribution of outcomes during organisational processes. In the context of performance management, this dimension refers to the fairness of interpersonal communication during the evaluation and feedback process (Singh, 2013). In terms of performance management, it involves interpersonal sensitivity and conduct.

2.6 Motivational factors that influence performance management

The importance of understanding how to achieve the best results from an employee leads to a discussion on what motivates people. Motivation is a complex factor that delves into the cognitive theories that assist in understanding this concept(Kinicki, 2006).There are many theories that aid in understanding the concept of motivation, however for this study we will focus on a process perspective which is essentially concerned with the thought processes through which people decide how to act (Kinicki, 2006).There are three viewpoints that the researcher considers relate to the process perspective on motivation: Expectancy Theory, Equity Theory and Goal Setting Theory.

2.6.1 The Expectancy Theory

The Expectancy Theory was introduced by Victor Vroom (1964) and is based on the perceptions of employees. Shields (2008) confirmed that this theory has provided the most practical insights into motivation. The theory is motivated by two things: how much a person wants something and how likely they think that they are going to get it. This theory assumes that people have choices and will make their decisions based on what promises to get them the greatest reward if they think they can get it (Kinicki, 2006). The three elements to the Expectancy Theory are:

- Expectancy refers to the belief of an individual that a particular effort will lead to a particular level of performance. This is also referred to as the effort–to-perform expectancy. It is a perception of the employee that the probability of a particular effort will lead to a certain level of performance. The employee also has to have a certain level of confidence and the ability to perform.

- Instrumentality refers to the belief that if you perform well the outcome or reward will be positive. This is also affected by the employee's level of trust in the organisation.

- Valence refers to the value attached to the outcome. It looks at the level of importance that an employee assigns to the result or reward.

In terms of the Expectancy Theory, a high value must be assigned to all three elements in order for motivation to be high. There are several factors that managers have to consider in order to motivate employees, which include clearly defining performance objectives, linking rewards to performance, and understanding what rewards an employee values and if they believe that you will deliver the rewards for the achieved performance (Kinicki, 2006).

2.6.2 Equity Theory

This theory is based on the premise that employees are motivated by how fairly they see themselves being treated in relation to others. Kinicki (2006) explained the elements in this theory as follows:

- Inputs are what the employee gives the organisation in terms of knowledge, skills, time and effort.

- Outputs are the rewards that an employee will receive for the results produced such as pay, benefits, recognition etc. Employees will often compare their outputs to other employees to assess equity.

- Comparison is the judgement made by employees upon comparing the ratio of their inputs and outcomes versus someone else's inputs and outcomes. This affects their perception of fairness.

2.6.3 Goal Setting theory

Edwin Locke and Gary Latham developed the Goal Setting Theory (1984, 1990, and 2002), which suggests that employees are motivated by goals that are specific and challenging but achievable. The three elements of Goal Setting Theory discussed by Kinicki (2006) are:

- Goals should be specific if they are to influence motivation. The employee should be clear about what is expected and the goal should not have any element of ambiguity.

- Goals should be challenging to motivate employees to achieve a higher performance. Some of the elements that goals should include are stretch targets for those that want to achieve a higher level of performance.

- Goals should be achievable in that employees must have the knowledge, skills, capabilities and resources to achieve them.

2.7 Requirements for an effective Performance Management System

According to Shields (2008), an effective performance management system has to have certain criteria, as described below:

- Validity in terms of performance management refers to how accurately the measure of the performance standard is applied to actual performance. It is a measure of relevance of the standards that are set. There are three dimensions of validity: construct validity, content-related validity and criterion-related validity. Construct validity refers to whether the performance standards and measures are relevant to the job; content validity refers to whether the performance measures cover all aspects of a job; and criterion-related validity refers to the association between the performance measures and what the organisation expects from its employees.

- Reliability is concerned with how consistent and accurate the performance measure is. A system will be reliable if an assessor does not make errors in measurement.

- Cost effectiveness refers to the time and expense that is spent implementing and managing a system. It is an important consideration in the design of a system.

- Felt fairness is an important aspect to the success of any performance management system. To be effective, a performance management system should meet the test of

fairness. Camilleri (2007) explained that individuals who believe that organisational politics cheated them out of a deserved opportunity are likely to display reactions such as apathy and anxiety, which negatively impact on their performance. Camilleri (2007:248) examined Vigoda (2007) to explain further that if an organisation displays equity through a fair distribution of social and political resources, employees' willingness to engage in organisational citizenship increases.

The factors listed above provide a theoretical framework for the implementation of performance management. The significance of the research that quantified this theory is important in establishing whether there is practical merit in its implementation. In a study of five public sector organisations, Goh (2015) identified the following as success factors for effective performance management implementation:

- The development of a performance management culture with a clear vision of using performance management as a strategic management tool (not just an administrative requirement of central agencies).

- Defining the performance management initiatives, clearly allocating resources and specifying outcomes and expectations.

- Data must be used effectively to make operational decisions and improvements.

- The allocation of a dedicated performance management team that is responsible for planning, measuring and reporting on performance.

- There must be a focus on building capacity with regards to training communication and understanding performance management.

- The identification of problems with a view to finding solutions must be encouraged; the focus should be on learning and not apportioning blame.

- Performance management must be integrated with other tools such as budgeting, planning and a balanced scorecard.

Singh (2013) emphasised the following factors that influence performance management systems from a line manager's perspective, which emerged from her study of software professionals:

- Line managers play an important role in terms of their unique technical insights and interpersonal skills, and because they evaluate their individuals or teams, they are seen as the face of performance management for their employees.

- Line managers must encourage developmental goals that prepare them for present as well as future technology and skills requirements.
- Line managers must arrange periodic review meetings with real time communication to help in aligning individual and team performances.
- Fair treatment and better enactment of procedures by line managers improve the perception of fairness.

Aguinis (2012) explained that although performance management is evident throughout the world, there are factors such as cultural differences that affect how systems are designed and implemented. He provided recommendations on how to think globally and act locally regarding performance management using the following universal principles:

- In countries such as Japan and France where there are high uncertainty and avoidance cultures, job descriptions should be created that are clear and specific. In countries of high power distance such as Denmark and Israel, employees should be encouraged to actively participate in creating job descriptions.
- Training regarding performance management in countries that are highly individualistic should focus on individual based training. In high uncertainty cultures, training should be very standardised and structured around on-and-off the job training. Training programmes that contain opportunities and interpersonal interactions should be designed for feminine cultures, while in low power distance cultures training that promotes active trainee participation should be encouraged.
- In countries where individuals believe that outcomes are not within their control and they are not personally responsible for results, measures of performance should emphasise behaviour with emphasis on how the work is done as opposed to the results. In countries with a collective culture the measurement of performance should focus on teams, while individualistic cultures should focus on measuring individual performance.
- When delivering performance and feedback in high power distance countries, supervisors are encouraged to deliver performance feedback as individuals in these cultures value their status. In low power distance countries, individuals can receive feedback on performance from other sources, which allows them to focus on the feedback rather than the source.

- When allocating rewards in high uncertainty and avoidance cultures, allocation must be clear in terms of what types of behaviours at the individual and collective levels will lead to a particular tangible or intangible reward. In cultures that display high collectivism, managers must minimise the perception that one employee is receiving more or less than another for the same quantity and quality of work. Employees in these cultures deem that this perceived pay inequity or unfair treatment undermines their standing in affiliated groups.

2.8 Performance management in the global context

According to Vance (2015), performance management on a global scale is not merely about linking individual performances to the company's objective, but it is also about being sensitive to cross cultural differences and local conditions. The public sector globally is described as being inherently complex, with dynamic variables such as political influences, culture, economic influences etc. According to Arnaboldi et al. (2015), the largest pitfall of performance management systems in public service is the negative side effects which undermine behavioural aspects such as motivation and morale.

Several authors (Esu, 2009; Hassim; 2015; Singh, 2013) have reported on the positive relationship between performance management and organisational effectiveness, with each noting a variety of challenges. The following examples are a few case studies:

- In a study of the US Public Transit Industry, Poister (2013) stated that companies and governments throughout the world have invested substantial amounts of time and money on performance management systems in the belief that it yields an improvement in results. The results of the study found that performance measurement and strategic management, which are the two principles of performance management, can contribute to improved outcomes in small and medium sized public transit agencies, but cautioned that the scope of the analysis may not be generalised.

- In a study of performance management in the public sector in Nigeria by Esu(2009), the author concluded that the adoption of a performance management system will make public business effective, efficient and sustainable. This study also suggested that it was important to identify performance technology interventions as they are expected to improve the performance of employees if properly designed and developed.

- In a study conducted in 66 US cities, it was concluded that the performance management doctrine emphasises the replacement of bureaucratic rigidity with that of flexibility and managerial discretion, which allows managers to manage. Managers should be given the tools and discretion to pursue the organisation's goals in the way that they deem best, as well as the freedom to innovate as long as they adhere to the organisation's values. This means that the authority to make decisions is delegated to officials at lower operating levels (Ammons, 2015).

- In a case study of a Malaysian multi-national company it was concluded that performance management is a continuous process. It was also noted that there could be resistance to the initial adoption of a performance management process and structure. The benefits of an increase in business performance can, however, be a catalyst to behavioural change within the organisation (Hassim, 2015).

2.9 Performance management in the context of the public sector in South Africa

Bussin (2013) highlighted that despite performance management playing a strategic role in organisations, a study by the University of Stellenbosch in 2006 revealed that a negative culture was associated with performance management. The study also found that there was a lack of support for performance management by line managers. Bussin added the following challenges experienced in governments, universities, schools and NGOs:

- Managers are reluctant to give poor appraisals as they want to be seen as the "good guys".

- There is a reluctance by managers to deal with the consequences of poor performance.

- The appraisal is often one-sided, with a top down approach which requires the incumbent to sign off.

- Appraisals focus on activities and inputs rather than outputs.

- Many appraisals focus on an individual's personality instead of the performance criteria and evidence.

- Appraisals are dreaded by both parties and are seen as a stressful exercise.

- Many appraisals are comparative and competitive rather than measuring the individual who is being assessed against his or her own objectives.

South African organisations, and in particular the public sector, are greatly influenced by organisational politics. In a study conducted in the North West Department of Health and Social

Development to investigate the weaknesses of performance appraisal and the issue of politicisation, the following are some of the conclusions that were reached by Swanepoel (2014):

- Managers must realise the effects of inflating results on the perceptions of procedural unfairness, which negatively affect employees' behaviour in terms of their commitment to the organisation, their job satisfaction levels, their trust in management etc.
- It is also important for raters to take cognisance of the fact that jobs differ in content and that appraisals must be designed to cover specific tasks or jobs.
- A review mechanism should be a part of the appraisal system to eliminate bias, discrimination and favouritism.

The overall conclusion of the study confirmed that the process of appraising employees is highly politicised.

In a study to assess the implementation challenges of performance management in the mining sector, Seotlela (2014) concluded that the hindrance to the successful implementation to performance management was the failure by management to start with a change management, communication and training employees about the process. This was evident by the general feelings of dissatisfaction displayed by lower level employees towards the way the system was implemented. Although the study indicated negative perceptions amongst the employees, there was also agreement that the system could be implemented successfully if management addressed their concerns. This study reveals issues that are congruent with studies conducted in other countries, where communication is highlighted as an important part of the performance management process. It is critical for employees to understand what a system is all about via change management processes such as workshops etc., in order for them to buy into the process and participate proactively.

2.10 Performance management in the eThekwini Municipality

The vision of eThekwini Municipality is to enjoy a reputation for being the most caring and livable city in Africa by 2030.It was in the context of achieving this vision that the municipality introduced its performance management system. The Performance Management Policy and Procedure highlights the following as objectives of the Performance Management System (eThekwini Municipality, 2009):

- Achieve sustainable improvements in service delivery to the community.

- Develop constructive and open relationships between managers/supervisors and employees.

- Encourage and reward good performance.

- Manage and improve on poor performance through a process of counselling.

- Provide accountability.

- Link the IDP to team and individual performances.

- Enable individuals to develop their abilities, increase their job satisfaction and achieve their full potential to the mutual benefit of the employee and municipality.

- Create a climate for individuals to develop their abilities, increase their job satisfaction and achieve their full potential.

- Fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000.

The Performance Management System of the eThekwini Municipality is described as a cycle with four phases:

- Planning -during this phase, which is timed for each financial year which commences in July, performance meetings are held between the employees and their superiors to discuss the objectives for the year. A performance plan is concluded from these meetings.

- Coaching-this phase is a continuous process throughout the year, where the employees' superiors create informal or formal opportunities to provide feedback as to whether their performance is meeting the agreed objectives.

- Reviewing-this is the evaluation phase where the employee is rated for his performance against the agreed objectives. This process takes place in the form of a meeting, where scores are discussed and learning plans are drafted for any deficiencies highlighted or for career development purposes.

- Rewarding: at this phase the appropriate reward is allocated in terms of the evaluation process. A five point weighting system is used.

Table 2.1: Table of rating scale

Score	Terminology	Description
5	Outstanding	Performance exceeds standards expected of the employee.
4	Performance Significantly above expectations	Performance is significantly higher than standards expected of the employee.
3	Fully effective	Performance fully meets the standards expected of the employee.
2	Performance not fully effective	Performance is below the standard required for the job in key areas.
1	Unacceptable	Performance does not meet the standards expected for the job.

Source: Adapted from the Policy and Procedure document of eThekwini Municipality (2009:12)

Table 2.1 provides a description for the 5 point weighting system used by the municipality. At this phase the scores are decided based on the above terminology and description attached to the weightings. The employees scores is correlated to rewards that are attached to each of the weightings described in the table above. These scores are moderated before a final bonus is paid. The moderator is the supervisor or manager's superior. The purpose of moderation is to ensure consistency and to mediate where there is a difference of opinion between the employee and the supervisor regarding the scores. In order justify scores, employees are encouraged to keep a POE file that is present at the performance discussion meeting (eThekwini Municipality, 2009).

Table 2.2: Table of reward allocation

Score	Reward
4.5-5.0	Double performance increment (equivalent to two notches on the applicable grade scale). OR An employee who is on the penultimate notch of the grade range is awarded a single performance increment, and in addition shall be eligible for a "once-off" payment based on the difference between the maximum notch and the penultimate notch of the applicable grade scale multiplied by 12. OR An employee who is on the maximum notch of the grade range is awarded a "once-off" payment equivalent to the total value of the difference of the last two notches on the applicable grade scale multiplied by 12. AND Eligible for four additional leave days. The leave must be taken within 12 months of it being awarded otherwise it will be forfeited.
4.0-4.49	Single performance increment subject to the maximum of the applicable grade scale. OR An employee who is on the maximum notch of the applicable grade scale shall be eligible for a "once-off" payment (equivalent to a single notch) based on the difference between the maximum notch and penultimate notch of the applicable grade scale multiplied by 12. AND Eligible for two additional leave days. The leave must be taken within 12 months of it being awarded otherwise it will be forfeited.
3.0 - 3.99	Single performance increment (equivalent to a single notch on the applicable grade scale) OR An employee who is on the maximum notch of the applicable grade scale shall be eligible for a "once-off" payment based on the difference between the maximum notch and penultimate notch of the applicable grade scale multiplied by 12.

	AND
	Eligible for two additional leave days. The leave must be taken within 12 months of it being awarded otherwise it will be forfeited.
Less than 3.0	Employee will not qualify for any performance reward.

Source: Adapted from the Policy and Procedure document of eThekwini Municipality (2009:13-14)

Table 2.2 above describes the rewards allocated for scores given to employees. The table explains that employees with scores of less than three are not entitled to rewards, but further to this, such a score requires a superior to examine the reasons for the employee not meeting the standards expected. This will result in meetings with the employee to address any skills, knowledge, and resource deficiencies. Human Resources is also included in this meeting to establish if there could be other causes for the expected standard of performance not being met, such as problems of a personal nature. If an employee fails to meet the standards expected after a reasonable period of time and after adequate training or any other deficiencies are addressed, the employee can be subject to disciplinary action (eThekwini Municipality, 2009).

2.11 Challenges in implementing performance management

Despite the interest in performance management gaining momentum, there has been widespread criticism about the challenges that it presents and the efficacy of fostering it. The following empirical studies confirm that there are various challenges with the practical implementation of performance management. Goh (2015) cited a study of local and state governments in the USA by Sanger (2008), who suggested that there was manipulation of negative performance data which led to the perception that there was a lack of transparency in public reporting of performance. Goh (2015) examined the work of Thomas (2007) and Radnor and McGuire (2004) to conclude that there was a lack of accountability and ownership for the system, and that managers manipulated the system in order to meet the requirements for reporting performance. He highlighted that there are several studies with differing views and inconclusive results, however a study conducted on the Canadian public sector attempted to answer questions on the challenges, barriers and efficacy of performance management systems. The following is a summary of the findings from the study by Goh (2015):

- Alignment of all departments/regions so that they are focused on the same goals and objectives.

- Translating higher level performance goals into meaningful operational objectives at lower levels in the organisation.

- Dealing with reporting and accountability mechanisms from central agencies that are too rigid, standardised and constraining, which frequently do not reflect the realities and complexities of the department.

- Poor performance data management results in data not being accessible to decision makers in a timely, reliable manner.

- Weak performance management capacity, lack of resources, training and knowledge.

- Loss of momentum which contributes to difficulty sustaining a focus on performance management which gets overtaken by other priorities.

- Lack of ownership of performance management which is seen as externally driven and just a bureaucratic exercise.

Mondy (2014) also highlighted the following problem areas:

- Some managers experience appraiser discomfort due to the poor design of a performance system or poor administration processes. This could affect the way a manager rates an employee.

- Alack of objectivity is sometimes caused by personal characteristics.

- The halo/horn affect is when there is a generalisation of one performance feature across all aspects of the performance. Halo is the generalisation of a positive attribute which leads to higher ratings or negative attitudes, which is the horn effect that leads to lower ratings.

- Leniency or strictness is when scores are affected by either the manager giving undeserved high ratings or is too critical and gives a low rating.

- Central tendency is when the employee is incorrectly rated near the average ratings. Either way, giving an underachiever or overachiever an average rating undermines the performance process.

- Recent behaviour bias is where the most recent behaviour of the employee influences that way the employee is rated. This skews the rating process.

- Personal bias is where managers allow individual differences to affect ratings. Cultural bias also affects ratings.

- Manipulation of the evaluation is when managers allocate scores to employees unduly, either to favour them by allocating undeservedly high scores, or to punish them with undeservedly low scores.

- The process creates anxiety for some employees and is reflected in the form of apathy, high turnover or discontentment.

A study conducted by Singh (2013) to understand the perceptions of software professionals on certain dimensions of performance management highlighted the issue of feedback. She argued that although feedback is an important consideration in performance management, people feel uncomfortable giving feedback and tend to avoid confrontation. She further explained that managers often give feedback to re-enforce their self-image or manipulate others' perceptions, rather than giving a constructive view on performance. This type of findings bears significance on the perception of fairness and implications for the implementation process of performance management and the actual outcome. The perception of the appraisal process becomes skewed if managers provide feedback for the wrong reasons.

Arnaboldi (2015) presented a compelling explaination for complexity theory in the public sector, describing the sector as an area of inherent complexity stemming from the location of the managerial culture in a sector that experiences political influences. He argues that this affects managerial discretion and complicates the levels of accountability especially considering the fact that the sector is fraught with uncertain outcomes. This approach not only takes a holistic view of the system, but also attempts to understand its constituent parts. An example of this is illustrated in the problems that are highlighted by a range of commonly used performance management tools in the public sector:

- Budgetary control as a performance tool has disadvantages in that it ignores non-financial performance indicators and runs the risk of only focusing on financials. Achieving budgetary equilibrium in the public sector does not necessarily mean that service delivery objectives have been met or that there is operational efficiency.

- The use of the balanced scorecard in the public sector has been criticised for its dimensions understating the complexity of public sector organisations. It is also criticised for being a list of metrics, for having implementation difficulties, and Performance in the public sector is always in the spotlight due to the impact that it has on service delivery for its minimal integration with accounting information systems.

Understanding such drawbacks in performance measurement and the influence that it has on other parts of the organisation and employees is imperative in improving such systems, with a view to ultimately achieving the organisation's goals.

2.12 Latest trends in performance management

The quest for organisations aiming to become high performance organisations has led to a plethora of research being initiated around this subject. Bischoff (2014) referred to Netflix and Adobe as companies that have abandoned annual reviews to adopt an agile approach to continuous performance management. In her article she confirmed that performance management is the key to having high performing employees and business success.

In a study of the Canadian public sector, Goh (2015) argued that contextual factors are an important consideration when determining the success of performance management in organisations, and highlighted the following contextual factors from her research:

- Organisations that were smaller had fewer challenges and barriers and hence had a more successful performance management experience. Larger organisations had to have a strong performance management leadership with clear vision and strategy for coordinating performance management initiatives and had to "think small".
- Complexity of the operating environments influence performance management in that department with complex operating environments goals are ambiguous, there are multiple stakeholders and overlapping jurisdiction. Organisations that are less complex found it easier to identify and develop performance measures that were clearer and more meaningful.
- Having clearer mandates made it easier to capture and use reliable performance data. Ambiguous mandates made identifying performance metrics more difficult, resulting in a negative view of performance management.
- Departments with more independence had more flexibility to allocate budgets and staffing resources to meet their objectives.

In a case study conducted on the Australian Public Service to determine whether performance management played a role in supporting an effective change implementation, Buick et al. (2015:284) highlighted that "Performance management can enable employees to cope better with the change through clearly defining what will constitute high performance in the change

context; ensuring employees have a clear role purpose and are provided with sufficient mechanisms to adjust this as change occurs; and ensuring employees are aligned with the organizational direction". This research is important as it addresses the gap in the previous literature regarding if there is a relationship between organisational change and individual performance management. This has implications for future research, where other impacts of performance management and change outcomes could be explored (Buick, Blackman, O'Donnell, O'Flynn, & West, 2015).

In an article published by Deloitte (2012) on global human capital trends, Adobe was cited as a company that abolished performance scores in 2012 and instituted "check ins", which entailed ongoing discussions between managers and employees about expectations, feedback on performance and recognising good work. The profound impact was a 30% reduction in voluntary turnover and a highly competitive talent environment. An area that managers found difficulty with was growth discussions, because they did not have the answers to promotional opportunities. The company reframed their concept of growth by focusing on employees growing their own skills and remaining relevant in their rapidly changing environment (Parent, Sloan, & Tsuchida, 2015).

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter provided a detailed theoretical framework on performance management that assimilated the various viewpoints drawn from research studies across the world. The literature review on performance management unveiled several views, challenges and theories on issues such as processes, cultures, motivation models and current trends within the field of study. These studies confirm that there is growing interest in performance management and the impact that it has on organisations. The common thread in the majority of the research studies is that a competitive business environment requires the effective and efficient use of resources to maintain its position within the market. Performance management is an important tool that contributes to this strategy. This theory will be considered in the analysis of findings in Chapter four. The next chapter focuses on the methodology employed to obtain the empirical data.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research is generally based on some philosophical assumptions of what constitutes valid research and the methodology employed for a given study. Kumar (2014:122) explained that "a research design is the road map that you decide to follow during one's research journey to find answers to your research questions as validly, objectively, accurately and economically as possible". The strategy employed by a researcher will depend on their research questions and the objectives of their research.

The previous chapter provided a theoretical framework on performance management and the different views adopted by studies on the subject. This chapter focuses on the methodology and design underpinning the research process, which includes the location of the study, the profile of the participants, the data collection method, how the data were analysed and the reliability and validity of the study. The justification for the research design and the philosophical assumptions that provided a framework for the methodology used was expounded.

3.2 Research paradigms, methodologies and design

Research often begins with a social enquiry that needs to address a research problem. The choice of a strategy depends on the nature of the research being undertaken. Blaikie (2007) identified four research strategies:

- Inductive research begins with collecting and analysing data and then deriving generalisations using inductive logic. This form of research describes people and social situations and then determines the nature of patterns of relationships. This type of research is associated with qualitative research.
- Deductive research is a contrast to inductive research and begins with the patterns of relationships and seeks to find explanations for the existence of the patterns that exist in the social phenomenon that is under consideration. Deductive research begins with a hypothesis and the aim is to then test this theory. This type research is associated with quantitative research.
- Retroductive research begins with an observed regularity but seeks a different explanation. A hypothetical model is constructed and the researcher proceeds to establish its existence by observation or experimentation.

- Abductive research starts with the social world of the social actors being investigated. The aim here is to understand their conceptualisation and reality of their world. The researcher has to enter their world in order to understand and discover their motives.

Blaikie (2007) explained research paradigms as strategies within a broader framework of theoretical perspectives. There are various research paradigms but the two distinguishing characteristics that for the core on which they differ are the ontological assumptions and epistemological assumptions. Ontology is concerned with the nature of social reality and delves into what kinds of things exist, under what conditions they exist and how they are related. Epistemology is concerned with the method of knowledge and seeks to understand how human beings gain knowledge of the world around them. These two aspects are a person's world view, which has a significant influence on what they perceive as relatively important in reality. The different ways of seeing the world by different individuals has repercussions for research and academia (Blaikie, 2007), as they influence the way we think about the world we live in and the world we want to live in. According to Plooy-Cilliers (2014), qualitative research refers to the "whole world experience" and these type researchers want to seek the depth of the human experience associated with a particular phenomenon. Understanding these concepts is relevant to this study as it required the researcher to delve into the perceptions of managers on performance management; it required the researcher to identify the way managers understand, view and become aware of performance management through their experiences or exposure to the system.

Kumar (2014:9) drew on Grinnell (1993), who stated that "research is a structured inquiry that utilises acceptable scientific methodology to solve problems and create new knowledge that is generally applicable". Kumar (2014:10) also studied Burns (1972), who defined research as a "systematic investigation to find answers to a problem". It is evident that the definition of research differs from expert to expert, however the common thread is that it is a mode of enquiry. This mode of enquiry has three approaches: quantitative, qualitative and a mixed methods approach. A basic distinction between quantitative and qualitative research is the way the data are collected, analysed and presented. The mixed methods approach uses the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research (Plooy-Cilliers, 2014)

3.2.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research uses a deductive approach, where the researcher strives for reliability of the data. This means that the same findings can be replicated for other sample population groups. This method typically involves questionnaires that are distributed to participants to complete. Participants' input in data using this method is often limited, however, as there are no opportunities for probing questions and for the researcher to prompt further questions (Henning, 2013).Researchers using this method often strive for reliability and will ensure that their findings can be replicated.

3.2.2 Qualitative research

Henning (2013) explained that qualitative research is very powerful as it can uncover details that give the researcher a deeper understanding of the problem and the participants. The qualitative approach follows a flexible, unstructured approach that places emphasis on feelings, experiences and perceptions. This approach entails the use of unstructured interviews or observations as a means of collecting data (Kumar, 2014). It also affords the researcher an opportunity to adjust the research design, thus the design itself is emergent as the process unfolds. Essentially this means that the breadth of the study can be adjusted according to what the researcher deems important.

In terms of this study, a qualitative research method was adopted. Qualitative research aims for in-depth understanding where the variables are not controlled, and the use of qualitative methods are generally characterised as being interpretive and subjective (Esu, 2009). This qualitative research aimed to elicit the intangible factors associated with the problem, such as the opinions of senior management on the implementation of the performance management system. An interview schedule was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis.

3.2.3 Mixed approaches

A mixed approach involves a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Proponents of this method argue that it provides a more complete understanding of a phenomenon (Henning, 2013).The rationale underpinning the mixed methods approach is firstly the belief that you cannot always get accurate answers to your research questions, and secondly that more than one method will provide a better picture of the research problem (Kumar, 2014).

3.3 Data collection strategy

3.3.1 Sampling

A subgroup of a population that is representative of that population is referred to as a sample (Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). There are two sampling methods - probability and non-probability.

A probability sampling method refers to when each unit of a sample population has an equal opportunity of being drawn. This is a common methodology used in quantitative analysis. The different designs under this types of sampling are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and multi-stage cluster sampling (Plooy-Cilliers, 2014).

Non-probability sampling methods are used when elements in the population cannot be individually identified or when these elements are unknown. There are six non-random sampling designs: quota sampling, accidental sampling, convenience sampling, purposive sampling, expert sampling and snowball sampling (Kumar, 2014).

A purposive method of sampling was employed for this study, with participants being chosen according to their years of experience in engaging with the Performance Management System and their different levels of seniority within the organisation. The main aim of purposive sampling is your assessment of who can provide the best information to provide answers to the problem statement or objective of the study. The researcher can only approach people who she/he believes have the required information and are willing to share it with him/her (Kumar, 2014). This factor was crucial in terms of the contribution of information that could be meaningful, because participants who had experience engaging with the system were in a better position to contribute their reality in terms of a deep understanding and to offer a detailed perspective of the problem statement. Managers, Senior Managers, Deputy Heads and Human Resources personnel were selected to participate in the study from the three units within the Trading Services Cluster. The participants were of different age groups, races and gender.

Table 3.1: List of Respondents

Respondents	Demographic level	Grade Level	Gender
R1	Senior Management	16-18	Male
R2	Top Management	19-25	Male
R3	Senior Management	16-18	Male
R4	Middle Management	14-16	Male
R5	Top Management	19-25	Female
R6	Senior Management	16-18	Male
R7	Senior Management	16-18	Male
R8	Middle Management	14-16	Male
R9	Top Management	19-25	Male
R10	Middle Management	14-16	Female
R11	Middle Management	14-16	Male
R12	Senior Management	16-18	Male
R13	Top Management	19-25	Male
R14	Middle Management	14-16	Female
R15	Middle Management	14-16	Female

Source: Compiled by the researcher

Table 3.1 provided a brief description of the respondents and their genders, which was incorporated to present an understanding of the profile of the respondents.

3.3.2 Primary data sources

There are various methods of sourcing data, such as interviews, observations, eye witness accounts or any other research that is conducted for answering the objectives of the study (Plooy-Cilliers,2014). The primary source of data collection for this study was interviews. There are various types of interviews, such as:

3.3.2.1 Focus group interviews

In focus group interviews the interviewer attempts to explore the experiences, perceptions and understandings of the group, which may share a common experience with the situation or study in question. This type of interview differs from other interviews where broad topics are

prepared beforehand, which serves as a framework for wide-ranging discussions (Kumar, 2014).

3.3.2.2 Unstructured interviews

Warren (2015) described an interview as a social interaction between two individuals. The decision to interview is based on the kind of research question that you want answered. According to Kumar (2014), unstructured interviews have the advantage that content, structure, questions, wording and order have complete freedom and flexibility. Unstructured interviews bring to the attention of the researcher what individuals think, feel and do (Esu,2009).

3.3.2.3 Structured interviews

This process involves a pre-determined set of questions between the interviewer and the participant, and in most cases are closed questions that require a precise answer. The interview is standardised and the same questions are asked of all participants. This type of questioning is used when the goal or objective of the study is clearly understood and specific questions are asked for a targeted response (Henning, 2013).

3.3.2.4 Semi-structured interviews

This method includes features of both structured and unstructured interviews and will have a combination of both open-ended and closed-ended questions. In this type of set up the interviewer has a set of pre-planned questions to ensure consistency, however as the interview progresses the interviewee has the opportunity to provide more information if he/she wishes to do so (Henning, 2013). This study focused on the perceptions of managers on the performance management system, which therefore required an in-depth understanding of their view on the subject. It is unethical to interview participants without obtaining their consent and seeking their willingness to participate in the study. According to Silverman (2013), the research participant must be aware of the following:

- The purpose of the study, methods and intended use of the research findings.
- The confidentiality of information and anonymity of the respondents.
- Participation is voluntary and free from coercion.
- Participants' interest and wellbeing will not be harmed or damaged.
- The impartiality of the researcher must be clear and any conflict of interest or partiality must be explicit.

Ethical consideration in this context refers to the principles of a code of conduct that governs the way research is conducted (Kumar, 2014). The researcher ensured that the Informed Consent forms (Appendix1) were signed by each participant and the process was also explained in terms of how the interviews were to be conducted. This included information about the recording of the interviews, the transcription of the data and issues surrounding confidentiality and anonymity. Kumar highlighted the need for pre-testing with the aim of identifying if questions are worded correctly, are clear and are free of ambiguity. Pre-testing for the purpose of identifying such problems as well as to ascertain the approximate timing of interviews were conducted on two managers, who gave an insight on the type of data that would be obtained.

The interviews in this study took the form of face-to-face interactions between the researcher and the participants. The interviews were semi-structured so that they were free from rigid boundaries and allowed the interviewer the flexibility to deviate from a pre-determined course of questions (Appendix 2). This approach allowed the researcher the spontaneity to ask probing questions that provided greater insight into the responses provided. The researcher also ensured that the participants were not meandering through a course of irrelevance by re-directing them when necessary.

The interviews were scheduled with participants at their convenience and lasted no longer than 45 minutes. Prior to the interview a covering letter was sent to the participants, where the researcher introduced herself, explained the objectives and relevance of the study, and provided contact numbers if participants wanted to query anything relating to the study. Kumar (2014) proposed that open-ended questions seek a wealth of in-depth information, provided that participants feel comfortable. In this study the participants were enthusiastic about taking part and felt free to contribute and express their opinions and experiences, which allowed for a greater variety of information. The participants did not express any objections to the interviews being recorded.

3.3.3 Secondary data sources

Secondary sources of data refer to data that have previously been collected for a specific purpose. The use of these types of data also poses some areas of concern that a researcher needs to bear in mind. These are the validity and reliability of data; personal bias that arises as a result

of some writers being less objective, availability of data so that it can be used in the study, and the format that the data is available in must be relevant (Kumar, 2014).

3.3.3.1 Journal articles, policy documents and reports

Journal articles are written by experts in a particular field of study and offer credibility to research as they are peer reviewed. They may offer a historical perspective or a broader perspective of the study in question. A variety of journal articles were sourced as a means of providing a holistic view of performance management. Policy documents such as the performance management policy at eThekwini Municipality and reports that the different government levels used as a basis of providing a historical perspective on the subject matter were also sourced via on line resources.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis is the transformation of raw data into meaningful information that provides answers to the objectives of the research. According to Plooy-Cilliers (2014), qualitative research has some distinctive charateristics:

- It is textual, which includes using oral, written or graphic language. In the analysis of this text, the researcher conducts an in-depth reading of the text.
- The process is iterative or cyclical, which means that the researcher is constantly analysing and interpreting data in an attempt to gain new meaning and greater insight.
- Plooy-Cilliers (2014:230) quoted Neuman (2003), who explained that qualitative research is hermeneutic and entails "a detailed reading or examination of text which could refer to a conversation, written words or pictures".
- It is subjective because it is the researcher's interpretation of the data. It therefore becomes a more onerous task for the researcher to motivate or substantiate the outcomes.
- Data collection and interpretation are construed as symbolic.

Warren (2015) explained that qualitative analysis requires good organisational and interpretive skills. There is an overwhelming amount of data that has to be systematically sifted through so that the researcher can establish its relevance and importance to the field of study. Conceptualising and theorising occurs whilst collecting data, but the process of analysing

allows the researcher to be more focused (Warren, 2015). The following steps were adhered to during the data analysis process:

- For the purpose of this study the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. This allowed the researcher an opportunity to familiarise herself with the data and gain a better understanding of the information gathered. The process of listening to the recordings and then transcribing them constituted an iterative process which allowed the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the thought processes and views of the participants.

- Once all the recordings were transcribed the process of thematic coding began. Thematic coding, which is also referred to as conceptual coding, was used to reduce the data and identify themes (Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The thematic coding involved a process of scrutinising the transcribed material by reading and re-reading it to ascertain the common ideas or themes that were being expressed. These phrases were then combined so that common themes or patterns were identified and categorised. Categorisation helped the researcher make comparisons and contrasts between the emergent patterns and the complex threads of data that were inter-related.

- The next step was to interpret these themes by drawing on the theoretical framework and the understanding of the text. This form of analysis is an interpretative approach based on the premise that there is no wrong or right answer for human behaviour. The interpretation of the themes is also compared and contrasted to previous studies and literature on the subject matter.

- The final step is the discussion of these themes in a narrative format, where the researcher correlates these themes to the research objectives and draws conclusions. The findings can confirm or contrast assumptions raised around the study and may even raise further questions that were not anticipated. The findings in this study were congruent with the initial perception that resulted in this research being undertaken.

3.5 Research evaluation

In qualitative analysis the research being undertaken is more interested in understanding the meaning and the interpretation of a phenomenon. The aim of qualitative research is to ensure that there are no broad generalisations, and to achieve this end the concept of trustworthiness is used to measure reliability and validity. There are several different strategies to support the

trustworthiness of qualitative research findings. These are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Plooy-Cilliers, 2014).

- Credibility refers to the extent to which data is believable and trustworthy. Kumar (2014) drew on Donnelly (2007) to explain credibility as establishing whether the research is believable from the perspective of the participant in the research. He further emphasised that the respondents are in the best position to judge whether their opinions and feelings are accurately reflected. If the respondents are in agreement with the findings then the level of validity of the study is high. The researcher distributed the findings via e-mail to all the participants who were interviewed and requested feedback from each of them. This gave the researcher an indication of the true reflection of the whether the data was analysed accurately.

- Transferability refers to the degree to which the results can be generalised or transferred to other contextual settings (Kumar, 2014). Transferability is a major challenge in qualitative research due to subjectivity of the researcher being the key instrument. Transferability can be achieved if a researcher thoroughly describes the settings of the study and explains the process followed in detail. This study provided a rich understanding of the environment the study was conducted in chapter one and provided a detailed theoretical framework in chapter two on the subject matter.

- Dependability is akin to the concept of reliability and refers to extent to which the research findings can be replicated with similar subjects under similar circumstances. To ensure reliability, all transcriptions were checked and where the researcher was unclear on certain issues mentioned in the recordings, she contacted the relevant person to clarify. The study provided in chapter one a rich description of the topic, environment and circumstances for the study.

- Confirmability is the extent or degree to which the results can be confirmed by others (Kumar, 2014). In order to achieve this it is important for data that are collected to be organised and stored so that they can be easily retrieved. Confirmability is also a reflection of how well the findings are supported by the data that is collated (Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). In this study the transcriptions and secondary data sources were verified, organised and stored, so that anyone wanting to access this information will be able to do so.

Another important concept in qualitative research is triangulation of data, which refers to establishing the external validity of the data. This is done by comparing different types of data and different methods of data collection to test whether they corroborate with one another (Silverman, 2013). Triangulation ensures that the accuracy of findings in qualitative research is increased. In this study the researcher did this by comparing and contrasting the findings with research obtained in journal articles that are peer reviewed and also with theory from literature.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research paradigm, methodology, strategy and design used. A detailed explanation of the selection of participants, data collection methods, analysis and rationale beyond a particular choice was provided. This provides a framework for the analysis of the results which will be discussed in the next chapter. Chapter four analyses data that was obtained from the interviews using a process of thematic analysis. Data is presented in a format that is meaningful and allows the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the information.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of managers on the performance management system since its inception in the municipality. In the previous chapter a detailed explanation of the research methodology was delineated. A purposive sampling method was used where 15 people were selected to be interviewed. A breakdown of the different levels of staff that were interviewed was presented in chapter three. Semi-structured interviews were conducted at the venues that the respondents were based in, and it must be noted that respondents were eager to participate and showed an interest in wanting to be informed of the findings of the study. This chapter will focus on the findings after a thematic analysis of data that was collected from the interviews that were conducted.

4.2 Analysis of data

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and thereafter the researcher engaged in a process of analysing the responses and grouping them into relevant themes. There were sub-themes that emerged as well. The table below will provide a summary of the themes and sub-themes.

Table 4.1: Summary of themes

Themes	Sub-Themes
4.2.1 Training and Development	4.2.1.1 Lack of relevant training 4.2.1.2 Change management 4.2.1.3 Coaching and mentoring poor performers
4.2.2 Culture of the Organisation	4.2.2.1. Lack of a performance culture 4.2.2.2. Lack of communication 4.2.2.3 People not recognised for creativity, innovation 4.2.3.3 Complacent attitude 4.2.3.4 Lack of trust
4.2.3 Evaluation Process	4.2.3.1 Inconsistencies in scoring 4.2.3.2 Unfair treatment by superiors; scoring used to penalise

4.2.4 Setting of Goals	4.2.4.1. Some objectives are not measurable
	4.2.4.2 Difficulty in collating evidence for intangible goals
	4.2.4.3 Lack of stretch targets
4.2.5 Reward System	4.2.5.1 Rewards not congruent with effort
	4.2.5.2 Rewards not paid on time
4.2.6 Lack of Monitoring and Auditing	
4.2.7 System Design	4.2.7.1 Manual system
	4.2.7.2 Improvement in electronic system
	4.2.7.3 Realistic deadlines

Source: Compiled by the researcher

4.2.1 Training and development

The workshops that were rolled out to all staff as the performance management process unfolded was highly criticised by managers for their lack of appropriate content, the training facilitators lacking expertise in certain areas, and change management not being implemented correctly. Respondents also raised an issue regarding the volumes of staff who were trained, which they claimed resulted in the workshops not achieving their purpose. Three sub themes emerged that are discussed below:

4.2.1.1 Lack of relevant training

The general consensus from the majority of the respondents was that inadequate training was a contributing factor to a lack of understanding of performance management and of staff not being fully supported on the system. All the respondents concurred that the basis for the implementation of any process or programme is appropriate training and the re-enforcement of information, so that all concerned have a clear understanding and are appropriately capacitated to implement or participate in a programme. Two respondents indicated that the training focused on the KPAs and KPIs of the performance contract, but did not focus on the actual appraisal or rating process, i.e. staff did not know how the rating of the KPAs and KPIs worked. According to some of the respondents, the volume of staff that had to be trained was so great that it could have been a contributing factor to the poor training.

People are not properly trained and work shopped on the system and hence their misunderstanding, (R1).

There were a number of things that we picked up after that that was not discussed during training. Training focused on the actual performance contract and did not focus on the actual appraisal of staff, (R8).

The training sessions were more like the facilitators reading the policy and showing you how to fill in a KPA and KPI form and how to rate theoretically. It wasn't that clear, (R12).

Maybe the training was not as good as one expected, in terms of performance management, but I think maybe because of the volumes and the manner in which the training was conducted, it was not feasible in terms of the way it was rolled out, (R4).

Another respondent indicated that he had to retrain employees himself due to the lack of understanding. He indicated that the training was too generalised and staff could not link their duties to the objectives of the municipality. His staff were confused and smaller sessions with them in his office had to be conducted to provide clarity.

A lot of the staff went to the training and I had to retrain because my staff were unclear of how it actually worked so I did a couple of sessions in my office with various levels of staff. The presentations were generalised. My staff failed to link their day to day duties with the rest of the municipality so I had to explain that to them, (R11).

A view from another respondent was that refresher training is necessary because only after working with the system could the staff appreciate how it works. Other respondents echoed the same sentiments about refresher training, indicating that it would correct errors in understanding and reinforce the principles of the system.

I think the refresher training will benefit staff after having gone through the system. I think you go for the training before doing your KPI. After you have worked and been assessed then you can go back at least now you understand what this is all about, (R7).

4.2.1.2 Change management
Change management was highlighted as an initiative that should have been implemented to create an awareness and correct understanding of the purpose and reason behind implementing the performance management system. This would also have prepared staff for the

implementation process and created a buy-in from them, rather than managers seeing it as a waste of time as highlighted by respondent 10. There seemed to be a misunderstanding that the performance management system was no different from the previous appraisal system and was a subjective system. There was also the perception, as highlighted by respondent 3, that the staff do not understand where their performance fits in the bigger scheme of municipality's performance. There is also no understanding of how functions in the various departments are integrated and how this adds value to the end customer. According to one respondent, people are working in silos and that mentality should be broken down. The need for better communication was also highlighted.

Respondent 10 indicated that the older managers are resisting the change and feel that the performance management system is a waste of time. This sentiment was echoed by other respondents, who concurred that many staff perceive the performance management system as a waste of time that nobody is really interested in.

The initial feeling from staff was that the performance management system was not that different from the previous appraisal system. It is also very subjective especially from the person that is assessing you, (R8)

If we can get a change in mind-set that we are here to serve the customers who are rate payers….they need to understand how their eight hours of work contribute to the department and ultimately the municipality achieving its target. We need to add value to the customers. Staff also need to see how their performance impacts on other departments achieving their goals for example economic development and housing. The silo mentality needs to be broken down, (R3).

Staff were not sufficiently prepared for the implementation of the performance management. There should have been better communication about setting targets. People don't really understand stretch targets and what sort of evidence that they need to keep, (R3).

In the municipality we have those managers, like old managers who resist change, who will find it like, it's a waste of time, (R10).

One respondent, R1, highlighted that consideration is not given to span of control, where some managers are overburdened due to the large number of subordinates they have compared to others. The process of administering performance management is seen as being too cumbersome.

That is why the span of control needs to be looked at because there are those who will be over-burdened with a lot of sub-ordinates to do this, otherwise that will be fine, but at the end of the day what else can we do, we have to treat everyone alike, (R1).

4.2.1.3 Coaching and mentoring

The common thread in the results about poor performance was is that it is too much work to score below a three and institute poor performance measures. Another contributing factor for failure to score poor performers appropriately is the interference of unions, and in some cases councillors, as indicated by respondent 6. Respondent 13 also highlighted the culture of complaining that affects the scoring, i.e. managers would rather score incorrectly in order to prevent any conflict issues, which this respondent felt undermined the performance management process. Many respondents agreed that they would rather play it safe and score a three for their staff, even if some did not deserve it, as opposed to correctly scoring poor performers and instituting performance counselling measures. Respondents highlighted that staff complain for everything and their complaints are entertained, so it becomes a complicated process to manage poor performance because managers are seen as treating employees unfairly. Supervisors then have to engage in a poor performance process whilst a grievance is being lodged.

If people score below a 3 then it should be followed up with training and counselling and if necessary discipline, (R13).
A lot of managers are reluctant to score below 3 and engage in poor performance management because they have the unions to deal and some will even go to councillors, (R6.)
The culture of grieving and fear of impunity that impacts on the managers will to mark high or low scores. People will rather not rock the boat which undermines the principles of a performance management system, (R13).

Another respondent compared poor performance in the municipality with that of the private sector, and indicated that in the municipality there are no dire consequences for staff who perform poorly. Respondent 15 said that instituting poor performance measures was seen as a tedious task and managers would rather score incorrectly than engage in such as process. Many respondents felt that there was not enough attention placed on addressing mediocre or poor performers. Other respondents felt that the attitude of staff needed to change in order for

performance management to be successful. Staff have no fear of performing poorly or at a mediocre level, because they know that no strict action will be taken against them.

In the private sector if you scored someone a 2 you had to make sure something was done to improve performance but here in the municipality there are no dire consequences if someone's performance does not improve, (R3).

The biggest problem is not rating people that are underperforming correctly for fear of a tedious poor performance process. It is seen as too much of work so they rather score incorrectly which undermines the entire purpose, (R15).

4.2.2 Culture of the organisation

The culture of an organisation plays an important role in determining the success or failure of new processes or systems. A negative perception of performance permeated through most of the responses, with respondents highlighting a lack of a performance culture, a complacent work attitude, no opportunities for creativity and innovation, poor communication and a lack of trust.

4.2.2.1. Lack of a performance culture

The majority of the respondents view the municipality as an organisation that lacks a performance culture. They indicated that people are implementing the system because they have to, but that there is no drive to improve productivity and performance. The system is thus viewed as an administration exercise that has to be done. Respondent 11 indicated that performance management is not making an impact on service delivery, while many respondents concurred that staff are being scored without POE's.

Performance management is not making much of an impact on improving service delivery... If people are not producing POE's and are just being scored for the sake of it then you are going to get the same output, (R11).

Employees are viewed as lazy by management and management are not really concerned about performance or productivity. Respondent 11 indicated that there was a discussion with his colleagues about performance management and they shared the same view of it being seen as a tedious task that everybody wants to get done with. Many managers see performance management as an event and not a continuous process.

It is just an admin exercise. Managers are lazy to monitor and employees are lazy to work harder and keep stats to support that. I spoke to a numbers of my colleagues that just see this as a tedious task to get over and done within a week. The mind-set of people are just laid back and people really are not concerned about performance or productivity, (R11).

Another respondent indicated that staff get paid a salary for their performance and should only be paid a performance bonus for anything over and above that performance. There were other respondents that concurred with this view. Some indicated that paying everybody a bonus for doing what is expected of them is contributing to the poor performance culture. The common view here is that the performance bonus is seen as an entitlement rather that a tool to monitor performance and reward appropriately.

We have an employment contract that stipulates that we perform for a salary. Performance management rewards should be paid for additional performance above what is expected of you, (R12).

There was also an indication that staff do not care how they are assessed and generally accept their manager's assessment of their performance; as long as people get their increase they are not concerned about how they assessed. People are not conscientious about productivity and how they perform. There is a lack of motivation from staff to participate in the process. Some respondents indicated that the increase is so small that some staff say that they barely see the monetary impact, hence this is not sufficient to motivate people to achieve better targets.

To be honest, the staff, they are not taking it seriously. They just see it as, you the Manager, you know what the score is, and they rely on us and they accept what we scoring them, and they accept how we assess them, in terms of the Performance Plan, (R4).

4.2.2.2 Lack of communication

A lack of proper communication was highlighted in terms of providing feedback to managers on performance trends and areas that require improvement. Many respondents felt that there is no communication strategy filtered to the various levels of staff indicating the performance achievements. Respondent 15 said that if there was proper communication then people would understand what is expected of them. Respondent 2 highlighted the need for communication in

terms of knowing the trends or gaps in performance. Communication was seen as an important tool in facilitating the smooth roll out of the performance management process, but it was argued that the municipality does not employ this strategy well. Respondent 15 highlighted the lack of communication of plans from the top down.

If they communicate where you can carry from one year to the next year and the system has the ability to pick that up and identify trends or gaps, it would be good, (R2).
There are different ways in which people interpreted the training and one has to question the communication strategy. You don't just go for training and continue doing the wrong thing. People were not corrected when flaws were identified in the system, (R15).
I don't know what is in my Deputy Head's performance plan or the Heads. I can't link my objectives to theirs. There should be some sort of communication so that everybody understands at least what their unit is expected to deliver, (R15).

4.2.2.3 No recognition for creativity, innovation or additional tasks
Respondents 11 and 9 highlighted that the system does not cater for ad-hoc projects and tasks that fall outside your job description. They highlighted the need for flexibility to create and be innovative. These two respondents felt very strongly that at a management level one is more involved in project management and ad-hoc projects, which do not feature in the performance plans due to the nature of the way they arise. Projects are sometimes started after plans are drafted and sometimes do not relate to the individual's KPAs. This view did not surface with other respondents, however.

System does cater for ad-hoc work for people that are called to assist on additional projects, (R11.)
The problem with performance management there are so many factors that fall outside your job description. How do you then fit that into it when it is not part of it because you not even getting rewarded for it? Performance management should be designed such that, aligned to your duty schedule but also give you the flexibility, to bring in your innovation, your creativity and for people to be recognised for that, (R9).

4.2.2.4 Complacent attitude
The view about having the right attitude was clearly expressed by many respondents. There was a clear link between the attitudes of staff and how this impacts on the culture of the

organisation, or on the contrary how the culture impacts on the attitudes of staff. Respondents 1, 4, 9 and 11 and many others spoke about the attitude of the staff and about them participating in the process for the sake of it. Respondent 11 even commented on how disappointed he is with himself as his attitude has been influenced by the staff around him. Respondent 4 recognised that the complacent attitude is a problem, while respondent 9 said that staff see it as a mundane task that has to be done. The common feeling amongst all the respondents was one of despair, and many of them recognised that this should change and that performance management could be the catalyst to promoting such change.

To be honest with you, people are doing it because it's there, (R1).

People tell you that this is the municipality, don't work so hard. Nobody is ever in a hurry to get things done. Very complacent attitude of staff which has now rubbed off onto me. I am actually disappointed in myself, (R11).

I think we sort of doing it, because for the sake of doing it. That for me, is a problem and if you doing things for the sake of doing it, what are you going to achieve, (R4).

Well it's a mundane task because they feel there's no growth beyond the paperwork they had to do. It also becomes a task, that, they feel if I finish it and sign it off timeously then I have done my bit, (R9).

4.2.2.5 Lack of trust

Overall the issue of a lack of trust was portrayed as having a negative impact on performance management. Strong views were presented on the issue of trust, with respondents indicating that some staff see performance management as management using it as a tool to reprimand, some question the purpose of the system and others question the integrity of the appraiser. Respondent 4 indicated that trust is influenced by other people interfering, such as the unions. Contrary to these views, respondent 2 highlighted the need to trust managers in this process to make responsible decisions. Respondent 15 alluded to appraisers scoring incorrectly to make their departments look good and raised a question as to whether the appraisers can be trusted. Respondent 4 compared the municipality to the private sector in terms of people interfering and raising doubts about trust.

Staff still feel it is a management tool to reprimand them. There were a few staff that refused to sign their agreements, (R11).

People were reluctant about the system. They did not know whether it was there to catch you, (R12).

We are in the Council. Either we are too complacent. In the private sector, you have trust, there are consequences. Here the unions come in. There are other people interfering. There's too much factors interfering, (R4).

We must start trusting our managers and make managers take responsible decisions, (R2).

People have never trusted the system and always question its intended purpose. Is it achieving improved performance? Can the appraisers be trusted or are they scoring people to make their departments look good? (R15).

4.2.3 Evaluation process

The evaluation process was also criticised by the majority of respondents and strong views on the inconsistencies in the scoring process were expressed. The fairness and integrity of appraisers were also questioned. Some respondents felt that the evaluation process is stressful, while others felt that if you had your portfolio of evidence (POE) and had done your work, then you were fine. The moderation process was also criticised for scores being changed by moderators.

4.2.3.1 Inconsistencies in scoring

The common view was that most people were scoring a three in order to receive an increase; anything higher than a three require a POE and anything below a three requires poor performance measures to be initiated. Many commented on the integrity of the appraisers, and contentious views were presented on the scoring process by all the respondents. This part of the process was strongly criticised by all respondents. A few responses that were most controversial are presented to highlight this point. Some managers are lenient and others are strict with their scoring, which causes discrepancies in the way people are remunerated. The scoring is thus not seen as a true reflection of performance and productivity in the municipality.

You see these discrepancies when there are people that are doing it so that they just get a performance notch. You become aware of this when you see some departments where people have scored 3 for all their KPI's, (R12).

Other respondents highlighted the discrepancies between branches as follows:

Inconsistencies in terms of the inconsistent application of the Performance plan in terms of scoring, in terms of notching, in terms of counselling of staff. There were a lot of anomalies from branch to branch. While some were strict, others were not strict, (R4).

Yes, people are talking, they saying in some of the departments some people are getting double notches. Some other people realise the main aim is that there is a difference on the way the weighting is being done. Some other people are having easy things and are working towards that, and there's a big difference, (R7).

Respondents 2, 11 and 13 confirmed the view that scoring a 4 and above is frowned upon and staff will be interrogated by senior management if they receive such scores. Their responses support the view that it is less controversial and less work to score below a 4. Respondent 13 used the term "harassed" to indicate the level of proof one has to have if one scores above a 4. This respondent also said that it becomes demotivating for high performers. The perception that there is fear attached to scoring 4 and above was clearly emphasised in the majority of the responses.

Senior management have made it clear that if somebody gets a 4 then the magnifying glasses will be coming out so you become so scared to give a 4, (R11).

There is a fear that if you give somebody a 4 or 5 then you have to produce 10 lever arch files of evidence. There are actually people that would prefer to score below a 4 to prevent producing a mountain of evidence. You almost get harassed for being a high performer, (R13).

As much as I think, on certain KPAs, I perform exceptionally well to avoid having to go and get interrogated, it's easier to just accept a 3.It actually doesn't de-motivate me, I just feel the fight is not worth it, (R2).

There were also views expressed that people do not know how to score. This was indicated in responses with regard to training, where it was highlighted that there was a lack of training on rating. Respondent 4 confirmed this as follows:

Even up to now, nobody knows how to score. If people use 1.1, 1.2, there's different interpretations of how you score. So I am saying, that alone, should be revisited and there should be a standard way of how it should be done, (R4).

Respondent 10 confirmed the view that there are managers who do not know how to score and have to be trained. There seem to be inconsistencies in scoring either due to a lack of knowing how to score, or to intentionally avoid being under scrutiny for scoring highly.

The respondent added that people have complained about scoring and said that there was an intervention held to train some managers.

Yes, we've been receiving calls, complaints, from the employees, saying that our managers are doing something totally different from what you taught us. So because they were doing their own thing, we had to jump in and help them to understand how to score. So there are quite a few managers we trained to help them understand the scoring, (R10).

The following respondent highlighted the lack of alignment of scores. The suggestion is that there must be a linkage of scores from the top and across departments. Many highlighted that they had average scores but heard that their superiors scored higher for the same KPA. They indicated that their achievements are also an indication of what their superiors should be achieving.

In terms of the assessment it starts from the top and there needs to be a tie back to those departments. So there needs to be that linkage between your manager's rating and the departments that are producing the work for that particular KPI, (R6).

4.2.3.2 Perception of unfairness

Some respondents indicated that unfairness surfaced when managers used the system as a punitive measure or to "get back" at staff. Respondent 6 indicated that the principle of fairness is important, while respondent 10 highlighted that negative perceptions were created when managers were using the system as a punitive measure. Respondent 2 indicated that there will always be bias.

I think there's always bias. I said you have five targets and even with that five, again it doesn't mean that the targets are not set too easy. There will always be that opportunity. You don't want everyone sitting with fours just like you don't want anyone sitting with ones, (R2). Negative perceptions, because they were seeing performance management more as a punitive measure, other than managers, managing performance because some of the managers, not

understanding performance management, they will have an opportunity to say I will get you during performance assessment, (R10).

I am old school, I believe in fairness. I believe that, if it's good for me then it's good enough for you. But applications and the outcome must be a fair one it must be reflective of what you are achieving at that point in time, (R6).

4.2.3.3 Stressful process

A large number of respondents alluded to the process being stressful, however some respondents such as R1 felt that if you did what you were supposed to do, you would not feel uncomfortable or shaken. Respondents also commented on the difficulty of collating evidence for the POEs, which made staff feel anxious as they were unable to support their achievements.

Because again if you have done, what you supposed to have done, you don't feel shaken, you don't feel uncomfortable...if you haven't done what you suppose to do it's a lot of stress, because you don't know what you are going to say to your superior about what is not done. It does bring stress for some people, (R1).

Another respondent commented on the environment that contributes to the rating process being difficult and the fact that people previously got automatic increases. When probed about this issue, many respondents indicated that politics and power struggles make the process difficult, especially when senior people use the process to settle scores.

The task of rating performers in difficult in the municipal environment because staff previous got their automatic notches and saw it as a right. There is too much of interference, politics, and power. People using the process to settle scores, (R3).

With my superior it was a bit stressful because it was more a qualitative evaluation which went on for a few hours. It was mentally draining to sit and discuss each KPA at length. We should be having regular meetings so that your superior is aware of your outcomes and progress instead of waiting for the final assessment, (R3).

Respondent 3 further highlighted the reason for his stressful evaluation was that he viewed the process as qualitative and that there was a lack of regular meetings with his superior. A concern raised was around the lack of regular monitoring, which places a superior in a position where he/she is unaware of progress made when it comes to performance, or a lack thereof.

4.2.3.4 Moderation process

There was a common view that scores were unilaterally changed during the moderation process. Many respondents felt that this was wrong and undermined the principle of fairness. Respondent 3, however, felt that moderation was a good process and ensured that the scores were more realistic. Respondent 13 also concurred that moderation is necessary, but said that the process is too subjective. Some respondents also indicated that due to scores being changed without following due process, employees developed an "I don't care" attitude. Respondent 2 said felt that moderation was demotivating.

The policy says that the moderator and appraiser should meet to discuss the discrepancies before discussing with the employee. Moderated scores are not discussed with the employees, (R8).

Scores get changed by the moderators without consulting with employees. It goes against the policy. The purpose of the moderator is to get both parties together to reach a consensus score. It is really a problem with consensus has been reached on a score and a moderator changes scores thereafter, (R12).

The moderation is far too subjective but is a process that is necessary. You do get some managers that score people with high scores and you know that individual has not achieved, (R13).

What is very demoting is the whole moderation system. That moderation becomes a very discouraging thing. And staff are saying to avoid the process of being moderated, it's better for them to just score in the 3 range points. So they're basically saying, keep it under the radar. Even though I think it is wrong there's staff that deserve to be above 4 but choose not to be above, (R2).

Moderation is a good process and helped with setting more realistic scores, (R3).

4.2.4 Setting of goals and targets

Goal setting elicited varied responses, from views on KPAs not being measurable, to targets having no numeric value and difficulty in collecting evidence for POEs. Goal setting in summary is highlighted as a problematic area.

4.2.4.1. Some objectives are not measurable

It was clearly evident from respondents 2,3,4,8 and 13 that KPAs and KPIs are not measurable. Respondents 4 and 8 concurred that it is unfair to be measured on something that is not

measurable, while respondent 13 argued that every KPI should have a numeric target. Respondent 3 indicated that it is difficult to score qualitative KPIs, thus it is subjective.

In our type of work it is difficult to develop KPA's that are measurable and it is difficult to provide evidence, (R8).

And it's unfair to measure us on anything that can't be measured, (R4).

There should not be even a single KPI that does not have a numeric target. Far too subjective and not measurable outcomes. It is very difficult to measure people if the outcomes are not measurable. I would prefer specific targeted goals, (R13).

I think if the foundation is right, it has to be smart, it has to be measurable and it has to be achievable. If you can't measure it, it should not be there, (R2).

When KPI,'s are loosely defined then it becomes difficult to score. The qualitative KPI's are much more difficult to assess because of the subjectivity, (R3).

Respondent 11 had a different concern from the others with regard to a SCM, KPI that he felt was generic and had nothing to do with his performance.

There is one KPI that is generic to all managers on business enterprise which I feel is unfair. This has to do with SCM and I do not see how it should affect me. How can I be accountable for something which I have no control over? (R11).

Respondents 4 and 7 alluded to the issue of misunderstanding roles and staff only wanting to perform to achieve their KPI's.

For me, I think staff need to understand, clearly, what their roles are. And they need to understand, that the impact it's going to have, if you don't do the work, (R4).

I think that is another area of concern because now people are saying, no, no, no, I am only working towards my KPI and what about the other things , because you can't put everything onto a KPI. That understanding also needs to be there when it comes to your staff, (R7).

4.2.4.2 Difficulty in collating evidence
The respondents below confirmed the difficulty in collecting evidence for some KPI's as there is no tangible evidence. Respondent 4 said that managers know what staff are doing but in

some areas this cannot be quantified. Respondent 3 offered a different view, saying that underperformers are seen as staff who are reluctant to provide POE's.

If there is no tangible evidence then it basically relying on one person's opinion but our senior manager understands how our section works, (R8).
The POE should be self-regulating. I measure my staff on output, (R13).
The main challenges I think was the POEs, that was quite a difficult thing to deal with and dealing with discernments and I think those are the key things we found. Remember we are Managers, you manage your staff, you make sure the work is being produced, things are being dealt with timeously and there's a lot of other challenges in between, where we cannot actually quantify or say this can be done, (R4).
The underperformers are generally reluctant to provide POE's. I have rated people under 3 and I was not afraid to take the necessary action thereafter, (R3).

4.2.4.3 Targets

The lack of stretch and numeric targets were highlighted by respondent 13. Targets were also described as being not measurable or tangible. Respondent 2 gave an example of what a numeric stretch target should be. Having the correct targets was an important aspect in scoring and many respondents indicated that this was a difficulty.

If there are stretch targets and people achieve it then they should get a higher score. There is a lack of clear numeric targets. Targets are intangible, not measurable and sometimes does not exist e.g. good corporate governance...how do you measure that there must be stretch targets and scored accordingly, (R13).
For example you had a target to train, your target was to train apprentices. It will tell you that to score 1 you must train 3, to score 2 you must train 6. There were five targets for every KPI, (R2).

4.2.5 Reward system

The common theme that permeated through the majority of the responses was that the reward was not worth the effort. Some respondents compared rewards in the private sector to that of the municipality and the conclusion was that rewards were better in the private sector. Many respondents spoke about the delay in paying the reward which will be discussed as a sub-theme.

4.2.5.1 Rewards not congruent with effort

Respondent 11 felt that rewards were not a motivating factor due to them being viewed as too much of effort for a negligible amount of money and leave. The rewards in the private sector were highlighted as being better. This respondent also indicated that it was easier to score staff a 3 which seems to be middle ground. Working overtime was seen as a better way of earning more money than performing and achieving KPA's. Respondent 13 said that people should not be paid for doing their normal work. This was also echoed by other respondents who said that you get a salary for doing your job and rewarding someone for performance should be for achieving more or better than is required.

The rewards are not motivating. It is easier to give a 3 and give a notch than give a higher rating and submit a whole lot of info to support that for just an additional day's leave. Middle ground seems to make everybody happy. The rewards were better in the private sector. Record keeping and systems were far superior which really helped. Most people don't see it as worth it. People rather work overtime for two days than work hard the entire year for a notch, (R11). People should not be rewarded for doing their normal job, (R13).

Another view expressed by respondents 2 and 13 was that the wide range between scores and the fact that the staff are allocated the same reward across a range is seen as problematic.

The gap between the 3.1 and 3.9 is too big. Very few people get a 2 and 90% of the staff get between 3 and 3.99, (R13).
The rewards system does not speak to the Management System. Take for example, the current Performance Management System and the KPI's, you get a rating from 1 – 5. Whether you score 3.0 or 3.99 your reward is the same. That's what I am saying, the rewards mechanism does not speak well. It's not a very motivating rewards system, (R2).

Some respondents were of the view that the funds should be pooled together and allocated by the manager of the respective department according to how individuals in that department performed. Respondent 13 disagreed with people being given leave as an incentive.

Maybe each department should be allocated a pool of funds based on a percentage of their salary. So if you got one manager that is too lenient, you got a lot of people that are sharing the same level, so everyone will get R2000, ok, whereas another manager who has been very

strict and very fair in his allocation, you will get somebody that will get R500 and another high-flyer that will get R5000, (R2).

We as managers should be given money and say, here's for your team, this is how you should allocate it, that's a more fair way. Then the people will understand, no hold on, the reason why, I am getting R10 and others are getting R20, (R4).

I think it is absolutely ludicrous that you take your best performers and give them leave .What company in the world takes their best people and say here is extra leave go home, (R13).

4.2.5.2 Rewards not paid on time

The consensus view here was that rewards are paid late and do not have the desired effect anyway because they are so small. Many respondents indicated that staff do not even see this notch adjustment in their salary as it is so small they miss it. The suggestion offered by the majority is that there should be a re-think about the time frames.

Time frames are all wrong. You can't say 30th June and then tell us you giving people pay in September, (R4).

The system is not fair also in a sense that it can be 18 months after you have done your Performance Assessment and you haven't even got paid your bonus, (R2).

Rewards should be paid on time for it to have the desired effect of motivating people. You get this notch so many months after completing your assessment that you even forget about the adjustment of your pay. The amount is so little any way that is does not make a difference, (R15).

4.2.6 Lack of monitoring and auditing

Monitoring and auditing are viewed as important functions that are lacking in the system. Some respondents suggested that audit committees need to be established to monitor deviations and to assess whether there is actually an increase in productivity. The majority of the respondents indicated that they do not know if there has been an increase in productivity in their department and the municipality. Respondent 6 also highlighted that it is the responsibility of a manager to monitor performance, but agreed that an audit process is necessary to validate scoring due to the issue of subjectivity.

Have a committee, pull out a sample of performance reviews and just go through them and see, in other words, what the score there was, is a true reflection of what will happen, (R1).

I don't know if the scores are audited to identify any deviations. We have not been given any follow ups on verification or audits. It could be happening in the background, (R8).

A comparative analysis will help to monitor performance, (R12).

For the last five years have we increased productivity or are we stable or where is it? If things are improving each year then one can say, that means the system is working. And if it is not then we need to review it and say how we can then close the gaps, (R4).

Also as a manager you need to check, hey how you doing with your KPI, is everything alright there. Because come end of the term, you didn't check, it's too late to say you not going to get that notch because you didn't achieve, (R6).

There has to be some kind of audit process that has to be put in place there. There has to be some kind of validation that goes on there because right now, I will be very honest with you, this is my personal feeling that this thing is very subjective, (R6).

4.2.7 System design

A strong view that was expressed by all the respondents was that the performance management system needs to be re-evaluated in terms of how it was designed and whether this model suits the intended purpose. Respondents said that there are two systems: the manual system and the electronic system. Both systems do not promote efficiency. The deadlines to complete the performance management process also poses a problem.

4.2.7.1 Manual system

Various problems were highlighted regarding the use of the manual system, which entails capturing information on a spreadsheet. Respondent 13 indicated that this is open to scores being leaked, while respondent 3 indicated that it is an administrative burden and thus is not given the priority that it deserves.

Performance management is too time consuming if done manually. The e-performance may alleviate the admin task to some extent, (R12).

Scores are put on a spreadsheet and sent to the Senior Manager Human Resources which is open to the system being hacked and yes leaked, (R13).

Managers are overloaded especially depot managers and this just lies at the bottom of the pile of work that they have to achieve and is not given priority. It is an administrative burden, (R3).

4.2.7.2 Electronic system

Some respondents indicated that they are using the online system, but there is a problem accessing it and data sometimes reflects incorrectly. Many respondents felt that an improvement in the electronic system will relieve the administrative burden that they are experiencing. Respondent 12 found the system to be good but had a problem with the extraction of reports.

Last year I used the electronic system but had to still capture and submit spreadsheets manually for payment. This year I tried unsuccessfully. Too many problems with the online system, (R8). It must be a simplified, workable, user-friendly system, (R4).

But a lot of the times with people like personal assistants, have difficulty getting onto the system to capture. And now when you got a deadline, people panic. And now you can't capture and they copying and sending photocopies and then you defeating the whole purpose, (R9).

Yes, I have used the electronic system but there were a few challenges, in the beginning you find some of the guys were not reflecting under me, so I had to get someone else. It's one of those limitations but I think that it is something that can be fixed moving forward, (R7).

Electronic system was user friendly but everybody needs to be on board, (R3).

I have used the e-performance system and have found the system to be good with the exception of extracting reports, (R12).

4.2.7.3 Realistic deadlines

The timing of the process was raised as a concern by many of the respondents. The municipality's financial year is from June to the following July, however some respondents claimed that they are only able to obtain some of the financial information for which they are assessed after the financial year end.

The problem is, some of the managers said that, in order to do their POEs, they need the information for that financial year and they can only get it in August, they can't get it in July, (R4).

The electronic system is not very user friendly but it does work. We sometimes do have a problem getting into the system. The system is also down quite often. You also can't load the next year's contract until you have completed the previous year's process. I would like to amend the contracts earlier, (R13).

4.3 Conclusion

Although there were negative views expressed on performance management, many of the respondents felt that they would rather have a system with flaws than have nothing at all. The common position that many took was that if there was an improvement in the use of system then the municipality would be progressing towards achieving its intended purpose of improving productivity. The next chapter provides a discussion of these results in comparison to other studies and the literature on the subject.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings of the research, which indicated that the majority of the respondents had negative perceptions of the performance management system introduced to the municipality. This chapter will discuss these findings in terms of a comparison of research of a similar nature, as well as the theoretical literature that exists on the subject. The discussion is not based in any order of importance or priority, but takes place as the results were presented in the previous chapter.

5.2. Training and development and change management

The findings on this theme presented a view that the lack of efficient training and development initiatives were contributing factors to many of the problems experienced with the implementation of the performance management system in the municipality. The information gathered from the respondents was that workshops were held to create awareness but there was no in-depth understanding of performance management in terms of goal setting, scoring and dealing with poor performance issues. The perception was that training was a rushed process to ensure that the trainers got through the large volumes that were scheduled in order for the appropriate phase implementation to be effected. All the respondents concluded that training is a critical aspect to the success of performance management that should not be a once-off event, but rather a continuous process. These views are congruent with a study of Australian organisations in 2003, where Shields (2008) drew on Nankervis and Compton (2006) to highlight that 89% of respondents indicated the importance of training and development in performance management.

Another proponent of training and development initiatives is Hanson (2013), who proposed that the periodic refreshing of training content through informal group discussions and providing one-on-one feedback can assist in training professionals, which will support performance management transformation.

Change management and communication were highlighted as initiatives that could have facilitated the implementation of performance management. This view is congruent with Radebe (2015) who cited Maley (2013) as saying that communication by senior managers is integral in the performance planning phase. The views expressed in this study are consistent

with a study conducted in the mining sector, where Seotlela (2014) concluded that the hindering factor to the successful implementation of performance management was the failure to start with change management initiatives, communication and training employees. It was also emphasised in this study that it is critical for employees to understand the system via change management processes in order for them to participate proactively. Frieden (2014) also emphasised the importance of effective communication in not only increasing commitment to programmes, but also to changing perceptions on an issue.

The results of this study further indicated that the staff do not correlate their performance to that of the unit they work in, or to a larger extent the municipality. The employees seem to be performing their tasks without understanding how their outcomes contribute to the municipality achieving its objectives. Participants were also not aware that they should have communicated to their employees the department's objectives and clarified roles within their areas of responsibility. The findings are in contrast to Stredwick's (2014) view that providing clear guidance to employees that direct them to the objectives of the organisation is an operational requirement for performance management. He emphasised that this communication is important in linking the individual performance to the organisation's goals.

The culture of employees lodging grievances and the interference of unions and councillors was found to be contributing to the ineffective coaching and mentoring of poor performers. The view was that there are no dire consequences for poor performers; as it is too tedious a task, to escape this process many participants score poor performers incorrectly. The staff are also not concerned about how they are scored and many rely on their manager's decision to score without questioning. These views expressed are consistent with Camilleri's (2007), who explained that if an individual believes that organisational politics cheated them of opportunities they are likely to display reactions of apathy, which impacts on their performance negatively.

5.3. Culture of the organisation

The results indicated that there is a lack of a performance culture and the complacent attitude of staff impacts on performance and productivity. Staff are seen as lazy and lack the drive and enthusiasm to improve productivity. The reason cited for this attitude was that staff know that they do the bare minimum and still receive an increase. The general consensus from the findings was that staff do not view the implementation of performance management to be the

important strategic tool that the municipality embarked on to improved efficiency. The process is rather viewed as an administrative task that has to be done. These views are contrary to Taylor (2014), who emphasised the importance of understanding an organisation's culture and sub-cultures so that the performance management system can be aligned accordingly. Taylor (2014) drew on Sanger (2008) to highlight that performance management requires that leaders in public organisations must use culture to change values, behaviours and assumptions so that the bureaucratic paradigm is changed.

Another view that was presented was that the culture of people being rewarded for performing their normal duties for which they are already receiving a salary seems to be encouraged by the introduction of performance management. In terms of a contractual obligation between an employer and employee, the employee is paid a salary in exchange for a service they provide. Many respondents questioned the purpose of a salary and argued that performance rewards should be paid to staff who are achieving over and above the normal expectations or standards.

A strong degree of suspicion was highlighted by the majority of respondents, who said that lack of trust is an issue that many staff had towards the introduction of the performance management system. The employees felt that it was a management monitoring tool that was being used to reprimand them, and that there is no benefit to them. The respondents lamented the fact that there is a lack of adherence to the performance management policy which perpetuates unfairness. This resonates with Singh (2013), who drew on Taylor (1995) to confirm that employees will display a favourable attitude towards a performance management system if they perceive the system to be fair, which contributes to strengthening the link between the evaluation results and performance improvement.

The inconsistencies in scoring was a concern that elicited strong views and emotions, with some respondents questioning the integrity of their seniors and other managers. Unilateral decisions to change scores were frowned upon and the issue of trust was raised. The views expressed are contrary to the procedural justice dimension that Shields' (2008) theory presents, however. This dimension explains that procedural injustice surfaces when employees feel that there are inconsistencies in applying certain criteria, the inadequacy of performance information and if there are biased judgements. Swanepoel (2014) also supported the view of Shields (2008), saying that managers should realise that inflating results effects the perceptions

of procedural unfairness and has consequences that impact negatively on the behaviour of employees in terms of trust which affects their commitment to the organisation.

5.4. Setting of goals and evaluation process

There was an outcry from respondents on goal setting, specifically in terms of KPA's and KPI's not being measurable. The common view was that some targets could not be justified in terms of numeric targets and hence it was difficult to measure. This is congruent to the theory that Radebe (2015) presented on the setting of objectives, where he emphasised the need for employees to know upfront the standards against which they will be evaluated. He confirmed that it is pointless defining objectives that cannot be measured. Poister (2013), however, presented a contrary view to this, arguing that setting targets actually have a negative impact on performance. Research by Boyneand Gould–Williams (2003) supports this argument, whereby in a study of 1000 local government officials in Wales on the perception of performance improvement, the results indicated that both setting targets and the number of targets established were associated with lower performance.

The respondents also highlighted that objectives were not correctly compiled and hence it was difficult to score, which led to a degree of subjectivity. One respondent viewed the evaluation process as being stressful due to the discussions around evidence and the time his evaluation takes. There was also a view that there is a lack of understanding as to what the stretch targets are and how to set these targets with appropriate numerical weightings. These views varied from Stredwick's (2014), who provided a theoretical perspective on targets being specific and stretching, and further expounded the principle of clarity and transparency when setting targets. Stretch targets were explained as being targets that have different levels of achievement that allow the employee to achieve better standards.

The collation of evidence for the POE's was highlighted as a challenge, as some objectives are not tangible and thus it is difficult to produce evidence to support their achievement. This differs to Radebe (2015), who indicated that evidence should be provided to confirm the results achieved. This view is also congruent with Goh's (2015), who said that unreliable performance data makes identifying performance metrics more difficult, resulting in a negative view of performance management.

5.5. Reward system

Shields (2008) identified three objectives for awarding rewards - retention, attraction and motivation. This study displayed contrary views that indicated that rewards are insufficient to motivate staff to perform better. Many respondents compared rewards in the private sector to those of the municipality, and claimed that far better rewards are offered in the private sector. Some respondents indicated that staff did not even question whether they received a performance increase, as they did not feel that there was any monetary gain from them; the effort that they had to put in was not congruent with the reward received. This is a divergent view from the expectancy theory highlighted by Kinicki (2006), which made the assumption that people make decisions based on what promises them the greatest reward if they think they can get it.

The delay in the payment of rewards was seen as a demotivating factor for many respondents, who claimed that it did not have the desired effect. Many respondents echoed the challenge of exorbitant overtime hours that staff work, which in comparison to their performance increase was significantly much more. Staff were more willing to work overtime and earn additional money in that manner rather than improve performance which resulted in a very small change to the financial status. The monetary benefits of overtime was far greater than the monetary benefits of a notch increase received as a performance reward. The common view from the respondents was that money does motivate staff, but the quantity of money is an important factor. Generally most respondents felt that the intended purpose of performance management in the municipality is to motivate people to improve performance, but if the motivator is not seen as lucrative, then the system has failed to achieve its purpose. These views are corroborated by Kinicki (2006), who explained Victor Vroom's expectancy theory in terms of valence, which refers to the value attached to the outcome. If the employee assigns a high level of important to this element as well as the elements of expectancy and instrumentality, then motivation is high. There are divergent views on rewards, however Shield (2008) assessed the work of Kohn (1993) and Davis (1995) to express views against rewards as follows:

- Incentives are seen as "pay bribes" that reduce the quality of work.
- They are used to manipulate behaviour.
- They could undermine co-operation and foster an environment for individual competitiveness.
- Rewards focus on the symptoms rather than the causes of work related problems.

- They discourage risk taking and stifle creativity and initiative.
- Rewards encourage employees to only display behaviours that attract rewards.

5.6. Lack of monitoring and auditing

The verification of scores to ensure that there is consistency was highlighted as challenge. Although a moderation process exists, many respondents felt that scores were changed unilaterally, which undermines the process. Some respondents said that the system is manipulated and that some managers allocate scores randomly to meet deadlines and no proper evaluation is conducted. These views are supported by the theory of Swanepoel (2014), who reinforced the importance of a review mechanism to eliminate bias, discrimination and favouritism.

A second issue that was highlighted was that since the inception of the performance management system there have been no statistics to show whether there has been an improvement in productivity or not. Many respondents argued that the system should be evaluated to assess whether its objectives are being met.

5.7. System design

Many respondents complained that there is a manual system and an electronic system in place, but that both systems have their challenges. The manual system is administratively time consuming and is open to confidentiality being questioned, because it is a matter of spreadsheets passing through many hands before scores are processed for payment. The scores are viewed by administrative staff and on many occasions respondents confirmed that scores were discussed by staff.

The electronic system posed a problem of access for many respondents due to the system being an online one. The system was also closed on many occasions, which makes it difficult for capturing scores. There were respondents who presented a positive view of the electronic system, however, claiming that it is easier and that there is less opportunity for manipulation of scores. These views are consistent with Hunt (2015), who confirmed the importance of technology in improving performance management systems. He endorsed the value technology plays as a tool in transforming performance management and reducing the administrative burden associated with performance management.

The deadline scheduled for performance evaluations were criticised as many felt that they should be held after the financial year end and not coincide with it, as this creates problems for staff who have to present financial data for their POE but are only able to extract these reports after the financial year end. These views are consistent with Esu (2009), who also suggested that it is important to identify performance technology interventions as they are expected to improve the performance of employees if properly designed and developed.

5.8 Conclusion

The aim of performance management is two pronged, one in terms of rewarding employees for improved performance and the second for career development. This chapter provided a summary of the results, which illuminated many challenges experienced by various management levels in the use of the performance management system in the municipality. The general consensus was that there is a negative perception of the performance management system. The results were also compared to studies previously conducted and the theoretical perspectives of many authors on the subject of performance management. Some were comparative views whilst others were contrasting views, which alludes to the complexity of performance management in any organisation. The next chapter provides recommendations to address some of the challenges as well as recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to establish the perceptions of managers on the performance management system used in the eThekwini Municipality. The municipality had implemented a Performance Management System in 2009 and there was no evaluation process of the system since its inception. This was a key motivation factor for the researcher to engage in this research topic. The research was conducted in the Trading Services Cluster amongst senior management, middle management from the line departments and human resources. The information gleaned from the results and the discussion on the results shows that there are several challenges that are impeding that successful implementation of performance management, which has resulted in negative perceptions about the system.

The objectives of the study were to acquire the views of managers on the system in order to ascertain whether there is an understanding of the performance management system; the challenges experienced in using the system; the impact of the system on departmental objectives; and lastly to provide recommendations. A qualitative research methodology was employed and 15 participants were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The enthusiasm displayed by respondents was an indication that they had valuable information to communicate and that this study provided a platform to this end. It was evident that this study was needed to emphasise the gaps in the performance management system that had not been assessed, and that manager's want these to be addressed. This chapter focuses on the key findings and provides recommendations for consideration.

6.2. Addressing the research objectives

The key findings will be discussed in terms of the objectives and the themes that emerged from the analysis of the interview data.

6.2.1. To identify whether managers understand the performance management system

The study indicated that training and development on the actual performance management system was lacking in terms of staff understanding what performance management is about and the correct way to implement performance management. This satisfied the objective of whether there is an understanding of the system. The change management and communication strategy was a hasty process with little consideration for verifying if the message was translated

76

correctly and if the timing for implementation was appropriate. A conclusion drawn from the respondents was that there was no change management plan that set the stage for the implementation of the programme, hence there was trepidation about the intention of the system. Krishnan (2014) supported the importance of change management by emphasising the need to have a change management strategy to transparently communicate key messages and the new features of the system which would assist in obtaining buy-in. Another important factor that he raised is for the organisation to afford time to employees to accept the new system in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

Other challenges created by the lack of appropriate training include:

- Managers do not know how to set goals, define targets and communicate objectives.
- Appraisers score inconsistently - deliberately in some cases and in other cases due to a lack of knowledge or understanding on how to score.
- Managers do not know how to manage poor performance and score incorrectly to avoid implementing such measures.

A vital phase of any performance management system is the planning phase, where roles and responsibilities are clarified upfront and a clear understanding of the departmental and wider organisational goals are communicated. This practice provides a link between an individual's performance and that of the organisation, which creates synergy for the achievement of performance management(Bussin, 2013).This was partially achieved in this study where several gaps were identified in the goal setting phase due to a lack of understanding.

There was also confusion as to how staff should be scored, and due to different understandings of the scoring process there were huge anomalies with scoring. Many respondents cited that they do not know what should be included in a POE file, which prejudiced many of them during the evaluation process.

6.2.2. To explore the perceptions of managers on the system since its inception

The communication of objectives and linking these objectives to the various levels within the organisation so that employees understand their roles and the impact of their performances on the different levels was highlighted as a challenge. The silo mentality has permeated throughout

the organisation, with managers and senior managers being aware of this culture but making no effort to change the thinking; the managers feel that the problem is too great for them to take responsibility individually.

This study drew on the perceptions of procedural justice in relation to trust and morale, and was characterised by the inconsistencies in the application of the performance management policy in terms of goal setting and scoring, lack of integrity of appraisers, and a lack of understanding of the performance management system (Shields, 2008). This negatively affected organisational commitment and productivity.

Although the general perception was negative, the majority of the respondents concurred that a performance management system is an important strategy to effect organisational performance if the implementation is correct and if there are other strategies in place to support the system such as communication and compliance.

6.2.3. To explore the challenges experienced with using the system

Changing the culture of the organisation was viewed as a challenge that requires collective interventions and strategies. The managers emphasised that the lack of a performance culture is entrenched in the municipality, but also indicated that performance management could change the current culture if the implementation strategy was re-evaluated and the necessary changes effected thereafter.

The fact that the majority of assessments are done manually bears testament to the fact the use of the electronic system was not made compulsory. Many respondents questioned having an electronic system that is flawed in terms of technical system problems that are not resolved. This forced many to compile spreadsheets and capture data, which is viewed as an administrative burden that many dread. This challenge was viewed as a problem that could be easily resolved with effective information technology interventions.

The lack of monitoring and auditing processes were criticised for contributing to managers abusing the performance management system to achieve their own aims. Unethical behaviour was cited by the respondents, where some managers have been accused of using the system as a punitive measure to settle scores with employees they have had disagreements with, while others were accused of favouritism.

6.2.4. To investigate whether the system has had any impact on the relevant managers' sections and objectives of the department

The purpose of performance management in any organisation is an improvement in organisational efficiency. If this is not monitored or unknown then the intended purpose of implementing such as system is a futile strategy and effort. The implementation of performance management in the Trading Services Cluster of the municipality was perceived to be done without evaluating the level of achievement, and the majority of the respondents alluded to being unaware if there has been an impact on their respective departments.

The consensus view was that the rewards provided are not congruent with the effort required, hence staff are not willing to contribute additional effort to improve their performance or productivity. The delayed payment of performance rewards impacts on the motivation and morale of staff, which negatively influences the productivity levels, while the lack of stringent monitoring measures and consequences contributes to these poor attitudes.
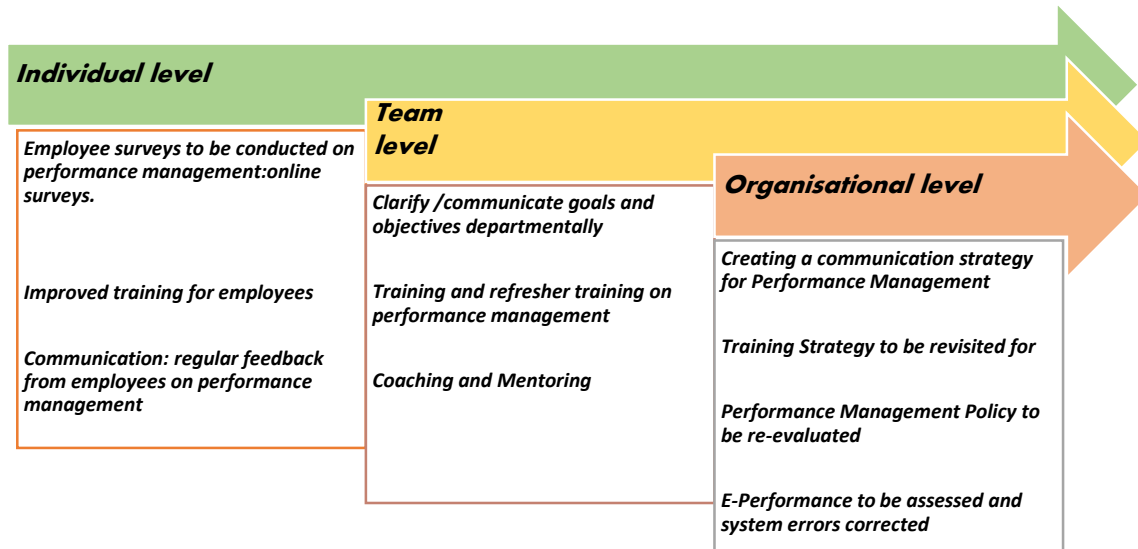
6.3. Recommendations

The last objective of the study was to provide recommendations if it was found that the current application of the system needed to be improved.

6.3.1. Change management

Change management should be supported by a top down and bottom up approach. This type of approach will be conducive to the municipality environment due to its wide span of control, hierarchical structures and large employee base. An important factor that affects the introduction of any new process is the strong presence of the labour component in the municipality. The bottom up approach takes this component into consideration, allows for inclusivity in decision making as it creates a flow for information from the majority of employees to decision makers, and provides an opportunity for strategies to be re-evaluated. Change cannot occur overnight, but encouraging behaviours that reinforce performance improvement is critical. Employees always want to know what or how they will benefit from any change process and this must be carefully communicated. Performance is affected at three different levels: the employee level, the department (team) level and the organisational level. When crafting a strategy, the dynamics of each of these levels must be taken into consideration. Each level has a role to play in the execution of a performance management process and analysing the contextual environment is pivotal to strategy implementation. A key stakeholder

in this process in the councillors, who must be included in the communication strategy for performance management. They also influence the implementation of strategies.

Figure 6.1: Change management strategy considerations

Individual level

Employee surveys to be conducted on performance management:online surveys.

Improved training for employees

Communication: regular feedback from employees on performance management

Team level

Clarify /communicate goals and objectives departmentally

Training and refresher training on performance management

Coaching and Mentoring

Organisational level

Creating a communication strategy for Performance Management

Training Strategy to be revisited for

Performance Management Policy to be re-evaluated

E-Performance to be assessed and system errors corrected

Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2015

Figure 6.1 provides a snapshot of some of the issues that should be considered for a change management strategy on performance management. The diagram depicts the three levels that should be affected by a change management strategy:

The individual level: At the eThekwini Municipality, this is a critical level where an individual's performance ultimately impacts on the organisation achieving its goals. It is at this level that service delivery is impacted and influenced. Although this study was not based on the perceptions of individual employees, the findings suggest that it is an important level that contributes to the achievement of service delivery and that there are negative perceptions about performance management. It would be a very valuable exercise to conduct a survey to assess performance management in terms of the problems and concerns that employees have. This study suggested a lack of training which could also be canvassed in the survey to ascertain whether the findings corroborate each other, and to understand at a deeper level where gaps exist. Communication must also feature as an ongoing process, with a suggestion box on the official municipality intranet site, the iThekunet. This could play an important role in change management as it will open the dialogue between the various levels of employees and assist in identifying the type of strategy that should be employed.

The team level: The team level refers to middle management or the operational level. This is an important level that influences the way the employees think. If managers are not convinced of a process then their perceptions will influence their employees and this affects the success of a process. The findings of this study suggest a communication strategy for managers be crafted to facilitate the dissemination of goals and objectives. A suggestion here is a flow chart for each section that is distributed annually.

Figure 6.2: Flow chart for goal clarification

Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2015

Figure 6.2 provides a depiction of a flow chart that can provide clarity for the goals and objectives that need to be achieved. Each segment should have a summary in a point form of goals that need to be achieved. At a glance employees will be able to identify the contribution their performance makes to each level achieving its goals. This form of communication with a visual impact is easy for employees to contextualise and remember. This flow chart should be updated as changes are made and goals achieved.

Training for this level and the individual level is discussed below in 6.3.2. A coaching and mentoring programme to assist managers transfer skills and knowledge, as well as to assist employees recognise their potential, is important. Creating a learning environment and demonstrating interest in employees could change the way performance management is viewed.

At the organisational level the change management strategy has to consider the organisational structure, culture, systems, policies and processes when implementing a performance management system. The eThekwini Municipality, by the nature of its diverse population, is comprised of a diverse culture of employees. An added complication is the structures and systems that are complex due to the inherent nature of the organisation. Being a public sector organisation that has restricted financial and human capital resources, the implementation of

any new system is a matter for scrutiny by the various stakeholders. This study has revealed the need for a re-evaluation of the current communication strategy, the training strategy, the current performance management policy and the E-Performance system. Wadongo and Magdy (2014) highlighted that a dominant internal organisational culture and its interaction with the leadership have a significant influence on the implementation of performance management systems. They also confirm the importance of information technology systems, organisational structure, and the external environment that influences performance management and ultimately organisational effectiveness.

6.3.2 Training and development

The role of training in ensuring the successful implementation of performance management cannot be overemphasised. The DPSA (2007:8) underlined the importance of training, and in terms of a framework on EPMDS said that "Another key requirement for the successful implementation of the EPMDS is training on the system. Managers, supervisors and employees must be trained in the mechanics of the system and areas such as communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution in order to manage the system more effectively. The training of supervisors in particular is of the utmost importance, and this should result in supervisors knowing how to implement the system, ensuring that employees receive adequate training and possess sufficient information to be able to fully participate in the processes. This must be done with the support and co-operation of the HRD unit in the Department".

Training provides the necessary knowledge and guidance that managers require for correct implementation processes. It assists further in creating rapport with trainees and gives a sense of whether there is support for the system or not by providing an opportunity to give feedback. Hunt and Pulakos (2015) reiterated the importance of reinforcing learning and the fact that programmes fail when this stops. The eThekwini Municipality has to ensure that it invests in training to ensure the sustainability of processes and programmes. In terms of this study, the gaps identified in training could be addressed by the following recommendations:

- The content of the training for managers should be re-evaluated to encompass the correct formulation of goals with in-depth information defining KPA's, KPI's and stretch targets.
- Managers should be trained on bias-free ratings and learn how to allocate scores in terms of the five point weighting.

- Training on dealing with grievances and poor performance measures should be provided on a regular basis to identify new problems that could have emerged since the implementation.
- Ethical behaviour, specifically in terms of performance, should constitute the content of training for all staff.

6.3.3. Improvement in goal setting and the evaluation process

A key requirement for performance management is clearly defined goals and objectives that are cascaded from organisational to departmental to team and then the individual level. A second important factor is for these goals to be aligned with the organisation's vision, strategy, structure, policy and processes.

The Human Resources department for each unit should assist with goal setting and correct managers who are not adhering to the set standards. A comprehensive guideline of the performance management process including examples of how goals are set, documents used and a frequently asked questions section needs to be published and updated on the intranet. A mechanism to report malpractice should also be created to encourage ethical behaviour and to show commitment from top management to the process.

6.3.4. Improvement in rewards

The significance of the rewards is an important determination for changing the attitude of staff towards performance management. If the reward is perceived to be significant then the impact on motivation will be effected to positively influence the effort towards goal achievement (Shields, 2008). Many respondents indicated that in the current economic environment of rising prices and the cost of living being so high, that money would be the best motivator. Some of the respondents suggested that rewards in terms of monetary gain should be re-structured where funds are pooled and allocated to departments as a percentage of their annual salary budget. These funds should then be distributed according to performance scores in terms of evaluation.

6.3.5. Improvements in the current e-performance system

It is a fact that we operate in a dynamic, technologically driven world where change is a constant, thus it makes sense that technology should be a priority for the successful implementation of performance management. The municipality currently has an electronic

system called e-performance, which is not used by many staff due to various system problems. The following technological interventions are recommended for system improvement:

- E-performance should be made compulsory for all engaged in performance management.

- Training should be provided for all users to ensure that everybody who's engaged with performance management is using the system. A technical representative should be allocated for each cluster to resolve any system problems.

- The e-performance system should be linked to the pay system to ensure timeous payment of rewards.

Sanger (2008) confirmed that new systems require significant effort in terms of money, time and human resources, and it is therefore imperative that they stay relevant. Well-designed systems can also fail if they are not properly implemented. Hunt (2015) agreed with these views, saying that a failure to leverage performance technology limits an organisation's ability to create effective performance management methods. He further stated that technology can facilitate the most basic tasks associated with performance management such as setting expectations, offering evaluations and providing feedback.

6.3.6 Cluster audit committees

Ensuring compliance is a critical function when any system is implemented. The hierarchical structures, wide span of control and diversified functions that exist in the municipality require that this function be cluster-oriented for better control. Clusters are grouped with units sharing commonality either in terms of strategic focus areas or outcomes. The balanced scorecard for the city is monitored by the Performance Evaluation Unit, however a local level form of evaluation committee is necessary for effective monitoring and control. This proposal resonates with the recommendations that many respondents indicated were lacking in terms of auditing and monitoring functions for performance management. The purpose of such a committee would be:

- To ensure compliance with the performance management policy.
- To provide statistics for unit performance and communicate this to all staff.
- To provide a comparative analysis of performance in order to establish if performance management in a particular cluster is achieving its purpose; and

- To identify which departments are not performing to expected standards and provide necessary recommendations.

6.3.7 Changing the perceptions of managers

The negative sentiments expressed by management are an important consideration when introducing new systems, as they influence the success of such a system. The researcher therefore recommends that a change management exercise be undertaken to address the concerns raised by managers, and that managers be encouraged to communicate and adhere to the policies and guidelines on performance management. The researcher believes that this will have a positive influence on creating a performance culture and a climate of trust.

6.4 Recommendations for further study

The current research focused on managers' perceptions of performance management in the Trading Services Cluster, which provided a snapshot view of the perception of performance management in the eThekwini Municipality. A recommendation for further studies could be to explore the perceptions of ordinary staff in the same municipality, with a wider scope in terms of obtaining the views of other clusters so that a holistic perspective is obtained. Such a perspective could elicit findings that could corroborate or contrast the views of this study and in essence impact the recommendations proposed by the researcher. Further studies that compare the performance management process of eThekwini with other municipalities could also be advantageous for comparing performance standards and establishing if there are similarities in the problems highlighted in this research.

6.5 Conclusion

The research commenced with delineating the problem statement and thereafter providing a literature review that expounded on the important elements of performance management. The methodology employed during the research process was explained and supported by empirical evidence, and was used to elucidate data that encompassed the research. The research was conducted to establish the perceptions that were permeating through the organisation about performance management. The study now confirms that there is a negative perception about performance management amongst managers and the challenges highlighted warrant serious consideration for a paradigm shift in thinking. Various recommendations in this chapter have been proposed, and a concerted effort to analyse, evaluate and implement these recommendations will create a momentum for creating a performance culture within eThekwini

Municipality. Although performance management is not a panacea for transforming the performance culture, it is certainly a step in the right direction.

The implementation of a performance management system in the public sector is a complex process that is influenced by factors within the internal environment of the sector, as well as dynamic external factors such as economic and political instability. The public sector operates in a different context to the private sector which is profit driven. The public sector has to exercise great caution when implementing performance management models that suit its context or face the consequence of a costly, destructive system.

An apt conclusion that sums up the purpose of this study is the following quotation:

"*The demand for organisations to rethink performance management and usher the practice into a new age using evidence-based behaviours and proven change-management practices will certainly improve the current state of performance management, and it could potentially help PM as a practice "catch up" with other major HR processes undergoing significant transformation today*" (Church, 2015: 128).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Informed Consent Letter

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

MASTER OF COMMERCE IN LEADERSHIP STUDIES DEGREE

Perceptions of managers on performance management within the Trading Services Cluster of eThekwini Municipality

Researcher: Deshini Pillay (0313119302)
Supervisor: Cecile Gerwel Proches (0312608318)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba (0312603587)

Dear Respondent,

I, Deshini Pillay, am a Postgraduate Master of Commerce in Leadership and Management student, at the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: "Perceptions of managers on performance management within the Trading Services Cluster of eThekwini Municipality". The aim of this study is to determine how managers view the performance management system since its inception within the Trading Services Cluster of the eThekwini Municipality.

Through your participation I hope to understand whether managers understand the Performance Management System, to explore the challenges experienced with using the system and to investigate whether the system has had any impact in the relevant managers sections and objectives of the department

The results of the interview are intended to contribute towards compiling and analysing the data to draw meaningful conclusions on the perceptions of managers on performance management.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this interview. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, UKZN.

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

The interview should take about 45 minutes to an hour. I hope you will take the time to participate.

Sincerely

Investigator's signature_____ Date_____
This page is to be retained by the participant

94

Perceptions of managers on performance management within the Trading Services Cluster of eThekwini Municipality

Researcher: Deshini Pillay (0313119302)
Supervisor: Cecile Gerwel Proches (0312608318)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba (0312603587)

CONSENT

I……………………………………………………………….(full names of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby consent/do not consent to record the interview.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

This page is to be retained by the researcher

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

MASTER OF COMMERCE IN LEADERSHIP STUDIES DEGREE

Researcher: Deshini Pillay (0313119302)
Supervisor: Cecile Gerwel Proches (0312608318)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba (0312603587)

Perceptions of managers on performance management within the Trading Services Cluster of eThekwini Municipality

Interview Questions

1. What is your understanding of the Performance Management System implemented by the municipality?
2. Were you and your staff trained on the system and what is your knowledge of performance management in an organisation?
3. How long have you been implementing the system in your branch/department and on how many staff have you applied the system?
4. Can you explain some of the perceptions of employees that you applied the system to?
5. Has the system been applied to assess your performance? If yes, what were your views about the evaluation?
6. Did the system have any effect of the performance of individuals that you applied it to? Please elaborate.
7. Did the system have any impact on the productivity and objectives of your branch/department? Please elaborate.
8. Do you feel that the system is fair in terms of the way the evaluations are conducted? Please elaborate.
9. Do you think that the system is achieving its intended purpose? Please elaborate.
10. What are some of the challenges you experienced in using the system?

11. What areas of the system do you think requires improvement?

12. Can you recommend improvements to these areas?

Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

17 June 2015

Mrs Deshini Pillay 9149735
Graduate School of Business & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Mrs Pillay

Protocol reference number: HSS/0644/015M
Project title: Perceptions of managers on performance management within the Trading Services Cluster of eThekwini Municipality

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 29 May 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 Shamila Naidoo
On behalf of Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr Cecile Gerwel Proches
Cc Academic Leader Research: Dr M Hoque
Cc School Administrator: Ms Zarina Bullyraj

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
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Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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98

Appendix 4: Turnitin Report

Turnitin Originality Report

The Perceptions of Managers on Performance Management within the Trading Services
Cluster of eThekwini Municipality by Deshini Pillay

From Final Draft (Research Dissertation 2015)

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JENNIFER LINDSEY-RENTON

PO Box 68648

Bryanston

2021

4th December 2015

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to confirm that I am a professional editor and proof reader and that I have edited Deshini Pillay's thesis, the title being: 'Perceptions of managers on performance management within the trading services cluster of eThekwini municipality.'

For any queries, please contact me on jenniferrenton@live.co.za.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Lindsey-Renton