UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Exploring the managerial competencies for excellent performance in KwaZulu-Natal South African Police Services

By

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DECLARATION

I, **Sthembokuhle Precious Shangase,** declare that

- The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

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ABSTRACT

In South Africa (SA), previous research and the strategic plans for the South African Police Service (SAPS) have highlighted that inadequate managerial skills hinder professional advancement and effective crime management. The objective of this exploratory qualitative study was to examine managerial competencies for excellent performance, and subsequently, develop a framework for excellent performance tailored to the unique challenges faced by the SAPS in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). Guided by an interpretivist research philosophy, this study utilized semi-structured interviews to gather data from a sample of 11 purposively selected high-performing police managers at the levels of Lieutenant Colonels, Colonels, and Brigadiers, to explore their understanding of the managerial competences which tip them to excellent performance. Participants were drawn from various components within the KZN SAPS Provincial Office, ensuring a diverse representation of experiences and insights. Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to derive key themes related to managerial competences for excellent performance, according to the police work experience of the selected high performing police officers who participated in the research. The study reveals seven themes relating to competencies that are essential for ensuring excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. These themes include emotional intelligence (EQ) to lead self and others, enhancing collaboration for effective work performance, effective communication across multiple forms to achieve desired results, decision-making in a variety of stable and volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) contexts, command leadership agility, technology-savviness for informed policing, and strategic thinking. The second research question in this study focused on how managerial competencies impact performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS. Seven themes relating to the competencies that influence performance outcomes within the organization emerged, including decisive leadership competency, communication competency, decision-making competency, knowledge and expertise competency, management and administrative competency, analytical thinking, and problem-solving competency. Lastly, a competency framework for excellent managerial performance in the KZN SAPS is developed and proposed. The framework provides a structured approach to equipping police managers with the skills necessary to navigate complex challenges and enhance organizational effectiveness. The study concludes that police leadership should focus on strengthening the identified managerial competencies if they are to build the SAPS with excellent performers, pivotal to improving service delivery and addressing crime management challenges in the KZN SAPS.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Effective policing in South Africa's volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment requires managers who can translate organizational vision into operational reality through clearly defined competencies. The South African Police Service (SAPS) has made significant strides in aligning practices with constitutional mandates since 1994, yet persistent challenges in crime prevention, community trust, and operational efficiency highlight critical gaps in managerial capabilities at station level (Modise, 2023; SAPS Annual Report, 2024).

For decades, competencies have been recognized as reliable indicators of exceptional job performance in business organizations (Wong, 2020). Prominent organizations leverage competencies necessary for recruiting, selecting, developing, and managing high-performing individuals. The focus is on clearly identifying the qualities that set exceptional performers apart from their average counterparts in a context of managerial. Policing requires competent staff and officers that play a key role in achieving effective outcomes across various positions, including general duties, investigative tasks, and command roles. As a professional practice, policing is a complex, dynamic, and evolving enterprise (Pepper and McGrath, 2020).

Police professional development requires staying abreast of the nuances, intricacies, and changes in the field, which calls for a focus on building competencies at various levels, including command (Johnson, Faulkner, Meredith, and Wilson, 2020). The intricate and ever-changing contexts in which policing takes place are surpassing the ability of most police services to adapt (Johnson et al., 2020).

In many countries like the United States (US), Canada, South Africa (SA) as well as the United Kingdom (UK), there is a recognition that policing in the 21st century is changing. This requires reconnecting the police and the people, enhancing police accountability, accessibility, and transparency to the public, and ultimately contributing to safer communities (Modise, 2023). The body of work highlights that while technology can limit Chances for criminal activity, it can also have the opposite effect. The emergence of cybercrime and other technological challenges has further intensified these demands (Koksal, 2009; Maluleke, 2023).

This study explores the managerial competencies required for excellent performance among KZN SAPS managers. It aims to develop a tailored framework addressing the unique challenges faced by SAPS in this region. This chapter sets the stage for the dissertation by providing an overview of the context on the background of the study. Thereafter, the chapter presents the research problem, research objectives, and questions before focusing on the motivation, focus and significance of the study. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a discussion on delimitation and structure of the thesis before presenting a chapter summary.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The demands for 21st-century policing are changing, re-shaping the roles of police officers but also necessitating new capabilities for officer to excel in policing work (Healy, 2014). Police officers face the challenge to develop strategies for addressing challenges in both internal and external environments. Typically, police managers must conduct an analysis of the external environment to recognize opportunities and challenges, along with an organizational assessment to evaluate strengths and weaknesses within the internal environment.

Research conducted by Jorgensen and Rothman (2008:1-12) on occupational strain, health issues, and organizational obligation among members of the SAPS revealed that significant outcomes of perceived stressors included both physical and psychological health problems, the level of perceived commitment from the organization to its members, extensive time spent traveling, and poor relationships with colleagues. They suggested implementing enhanced recovery strategies to facilitate effective healing from trauma and stress.

The insightful but older survey by News24 (2013:1) conducted in SA communities indicated that "71% of 3,320 people between the ages of 18 and 34 do not trust the police" in SA. Mistrust of the police stems from their involvement in abuses of power, including physical assault, brutality, inducement, and the command of heinous crimes on the both innocent individuals and those who break the law. The SAPS's code of ethics requires its members to operate based on principles such as honesty, respect for life and diversity, compliance with the law, excellence in service, and gaining public trust. However, it is the violation of these principles,

particularly integrity, which damages the police's reputation and diminishes public confidence in the force (Govender and Pillay, 2021).

Outside SA, police services in Canada are increasingly addressing social issues for which they have inadequate training and resources (Shore and Laoie, 2019). While the police in Canada are now regarded as the "informal first responders of the mental health system," they do not have the sustenance or essential resources needed to efficiently fulfil this mandate (Carleton, 2021).

In Canada, the demand for policing is being shaped by an aging, more varied, and numerally oriented population. Additionally, addressing the policing of individuals with mental health issues or those in calamity is becoming a growing concern nationwide (Shore, and Lavoie, 2019). Similarly, one of the key challenges faced by the SAPS has been the need to transform its image from being the enforcer of an unjust regime to a credible, professional police force that meets the policing requirements of all citizens in a democratic society (Govender and Pillay, 2022). Reynecke and Fourie, (2001: 37) observed that integrating new information technology with the requirements of the SAPS is gradually becoming a collective responsibility for all police personnel, rather than solely the domain of information technology specialists. The availability of user-friendly systems, online tutorials, rapid technological advancements, decreasing costs, and robust yet accessible software has transferred the responsibility to the end users (Lowdermilk, 2013).

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Policing revolves around the management of relationships. The manner in which internal relationships are managed determines the way external relationships, such as police-public relations, are handled by individual police officers (Noble and Alpert, 2008). Today, police services face issues of low job satisfaction and officers who suffer from job-related stress. Police work entails significant responsibility and numerous potential stressors, including exposure to violence, workplace injuries, high job demands, insufficient support, physical dangers in the field, extended working hours, the risk of burnout, unmanageable workload, work–life conflicts, unrealistic expectations, and a lack of development opportunities provided by employers. These stressors lead to several negative consequences. Galanis, Fragkou and Katsoulas (2021) concur that police work is a highly stressful and demanding profession, placing officers at a heightened risk for mental health issues, including post-traumatic stress

disorder, depression, anxiety disorders, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors. It is crucial for police services to explore successful approaches to address these challenges and enhance their workforce's overall effectiveness.

In Canada, the existing structures of police workforces are primarily focused on generalist officers, posing a challenge in addressing emerging crime issues like cybercrime and cross-border crime that necessitate specialized skills that are challenging to establish within a tenure-based generalist officer framework. The SAPS Strategic Plan 2020-2025 acknowledges that cybercrime is a challenge requiring collaborative, preventive efforts from all sectors and the creation and execution of a comprehensive multidisciplinary strategy for combating cybercrime in SA. The integration of information technology into front-line policing demands specific skills to fully leverage the capabilities of the devices (Sanders and Henderson, 2013). Emerging technologies also create a need for additional specialized skills, such as expertise in crime data analysis (Byrne and Buzawa, 2005). The evolving expectations of police services necessitate a comprehensive understanding of the skills and competencies that high-performing police managers must possess to lead the force in the right direction. Without addressing these gaps in managerial competence, the SAPS may struggle to meet the goals outlined in the SAPS Strategic Plan for 2020-2025.

A study by Mabusela, Ngonyama-Ndou and Mmako (2024) revealed that employees believe the disciplinary practices of the SAPS are enforced in an unfair and inconsistent manner. Disciplinary policies that promote and uphold consistent standards of conduct enhance employee morale and contribute to a positive work environment. Although the organization has established laws and policies, implementing them effectively has proven challenging, particularly due to the lengthy processes involved in investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct. There is a lack of consistency and objectivity in applying disciplinary procedures within the SAPS. Mabusela et al., (2024) suggests that ill-discipline among police officials has been linked to unfair labour practices within police departments, including corruption and favoritism. These issues contribute to subpar police performance, involvement in criminal doings, and a disregard for the organization's code of conduct (Mabusela et al., 2024)

A study by Mokgolo (2017) revealed the presence of workplace bullying within the SAPS. Workplace bullying is a complex issue that poses significant harm to the health, dignity, relationships, and well-being of both employees and organizations (Makgopa and Munyeka,

2024). It encompasses behaviors that intimidate, insult, socially isolate, or detrimentally impact an individual's work. Bullying is often viewed as a gradual process in which the target is consistently exposed to harmful behaviors over an extended period. During this time, a power disparity emerges between the perpetrator(s) and the target, making it difficult for the target to defend themselves (Einarsen et al., 2020). This dynamic is a defining characteristic of workplace bullying. There is an increasing need for effective management at all levels to address not only crime but also internal issues such as corruption, workplace bullying, and leadership challenges.

Policing in the 21st-century has been influenced by the six pillars produced by the President's Task Force on 21st-century Policing in the US. On December 18, 2014, President Barack Obama issued an executive order to create the task force. Its mandate was to identify effective practices and provide recommendations for enhancing crime reduction while fostering public trust. Subsequently, the policing discourse in the US has centered around six pillars identified as key for 21st-century policing.

The first pillar in the report released in 2015 focuses on building trust and legitimacy. It emphasizes the significance of trust-building as a basis for fostering a positive affiliation amongst the police force and the community. This requires a shift in perspective—from viewing the police as an external authority imposing control to recognizing them as an integral part of the community. The emphasis is on policies and oversight that ensure police actions and practices align with community values. Collaboration between law enforcement and communities, especially those most affected by crime, strengthens relationships, engagement, and cooperation. Such collaboration is essential for creating effective policing strategies and allocating resources efficiently to combat crime.

The third pillar emphasizes the role of technology and social media, advocating for the responsible use of technology to enhance policing practices and foster public trust. It asserts that technology implementation must be guided by clear policies and objectives. While integrating new technologies can enhance transparency and accountability, it is equally crucial for law enforcement agencies to evaluate their impact on individual rights. This pillar urges agencies to thoughtfully assess and implement technologies that balance effectiveness with considerations of individual rights.

Technology has transformed police work in the 21st-century, improving efficiency, productivity, and providing new methods for ensuring safety and fostering communication. While many advancements have been advantageous, some have also introduced significant challenges, such as the rise of digital and cybercrimes. These crimes present new difficulties for law enforcement, particularly in understanding and managing digital evidence. To address these challenges, police must stay updated with the rapidly evolving technological landscape, enabling them to effectively combat crime, protect communities, and maintain public safety.

The fourth pillar hinges on community policing and crime reduction, highlighting the importance of community engagement. Community-oriented policing involves building strong, collaborative relationships with community members to address underlying conditions that affect public safety. Engaging community members, especially youth, in decision-making processes and creating strategies aligned with community values is central to this approach. The fifth pillar, training and education, addresses the changing responsibilities of law enforcement professionals in a diverse nation. It stresses the urgent requirement for comprehensive, hands-on training through various law enforcement courses. This training prepares agencies to tackle challenges such as international terrorism, immigration concerns, emerging technologies, and the mental health crisis.

Law enforcement agencies are urged to involve community members, particularly those with specialized expertise, in the training process. Additionally, they should provide ongoing leadership training for all relevant personnel. Today, police officers are expected to possess substantial education and training, with the understanding that improved training correlates with better performance in law enforcement.

The sixth and final pillar of 21st-century policing emphasizes the importance of the welfare and safety of law enforcement personnel. This pillar recognizes officer wellness as a vital aspect of public safety and advocates for collaborative initiatives to promote their well-being.

Drawing from the President's Task Force report, it is notable that police are experiencing changes and facing unprecedented internal and external challenges. However, new prospects are also arising that can enable police services to thrive in the changing landscape of safety and security. Police organizations face various internal challenges, including a significant number of officers nearing retirement, under-representation of women and minorities, evolving

expectations among new recruits, and a shortage of skills needed to effectively utilize technology and tackle emerging forms of crime. Over the last decade, police expenditures have been increasing at a rate that surpasses overall public spending and gross domestic product (GDP), raising worries about the affordability of policing.

Ivković, Donner, Mraović, and Das (2022), in their book entitled '*Exploring Contemporary Police Challenges: A Global Perspective,'* lament that although the body of research on policing and related topics is expanding rapidly, its influence on everyday policing practices remains limited. A major reason is that research is often published in journals that are difficult to access and presented in ways that are hard for non-experts to understand. Furthermore, police practitioners generally do not engage with researchers and tend to keep their work confidential. The involvement of top executives in motivating and developing middle managers is crucial for implementing change within a police organization. For successful transformation, leaders must inspire middle managers with a compelling vision for change. Additionally, police executives cannot effectively guide organizational renewal without addressing the existing police culture and climate.

1.2.1. Origin and nature of the Police

Sir Robert Peel, the then-Home Secretary is credited with establishing the first modern municipal police force, the London Metropolitan Police in 1829 after the Parliament passed the Metropolitan Police Act (Clarkson and Richardson, 1889). The members of the police were called Peelers or Bobbies. Before this, policing involved part-time volunteers, night watchmen, and "thief-takers" employed to apprehend criminals, along with various methods of private, fee-based security (Campion et al., 2011). Dockworkers in London reacted to the establishment of the Thames River Police by rioting, as the police interfered with their efforts to supplement their income and redirected resources from dockside employers that could have benefited the workers (Visits, 2020). However, the middle classes supported state-provided protection of private property through a professional police force. This model of policing was exemplified by the formation of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829, which highlighted the significance of organized and centralized law enforcement operating under a hierarchical structure. In the US, significant transformations in policing occurred during the 19th-century, marked by the introduction of modern investigative techniques, the advancement of communication technologies for policing, and the

establishment of police oversight bodies that emphasized accountability and transparency in law enforcement.

One significant effect of the political era in the US was the politicization of police departments (Ba, Kaplan, Knox, Komisarchik, Lanzalotto, Mariman, Mummolo, Rivera, and Torres, 2023). Political machines and party leaders often controlled police appointments and promotions, leading to corruption and nepotism within these departments, where officers were selected based on political connections rather than qualifications. In many African nations, police are frequently utilized as instruments for maintaining political authority, often deployed to suppress protests and intimidate opposition groups (Baker, 2015). As the detrimental effects of political influence became more evident, reform advocates began pushing for the establishment of professional standards and training for police officers (Walker and Archbold, 2018). This advocacy led to the creation of police academies and the implementation of standardized recruitment processes.

1.2.2. Strategic direction and core focus of the SAPS

The vision of the SAPS is to establish a safe and secure environment for all individuals in SA. The SAPS Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2025 outlines clear priorities for policing in SA, including the elimination of economic crime, fraud and corruption, as well as enhancing border security, addressing illegal migration, and controlling the spread of firearms, (South African Police Service, 2020). It also emphasizes the need to reduce organized crime, drug syndicates, gang activities, human trafficking, the economic effects of illegal mining, and cybersecurity threats to the nation. Key elements in pursuing these priorities include building trust, professionalism, enhancing access to policing, promoting active community engagement and participation, ensuring fair resource distribution and more efficient resource utilization, along with performance management and accountability.

While these strategic priorities provide a depiction of where the SAPS is heading and the means to achieve its strategic direction, it is equally essential to understand its organizational foundation and history. The SAPS serves as a pivotal entity in SA's security sector, significantly impacting the daily lives of citizens regarding safety and security. In line with Section 205(3) of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the SAPS Strategic Plan defines its mandate through four key elements: (1) to prevent, combat, and investigate

crime, (2) to maintain public order, (3) protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property; and (4) to uphold and enforce the law (South African Police Service, 2020). Ensuring that every individual in SA feels safe is central to the SAPS's objectives, as outlined in the Medium-Term Strategy Framework (MTSF) inspired by the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 (Chokoe, 2021).

To achieve these goals, the SAPS must maintain professionalism by hiring and retaining highly qualified personnel. Staff must possess the necessary competencies to fulfil their roles effectively, and employee knowledge and skills should be continually enhanced to achieve optimal performance aligned with the organization's vision. Although there are areas of excellence within the SAPS, there remains significant room for improvement. In SA, the NDP envisions a police service that is well-equipped and professional, comprised of highly skilled officers who take pride in their work, serve the community, protect lives and property impartially, defend the peaceful from violence, and uphold the rights to equality and justice (Chokoe, 2021).

This exploratory qualitative research aims to examine the competencies required by high-performing managers within the SAPS in KZN. This focus is pivotal in achieving the police service envisioned in the NDP for SA. The intricate interplay of managerial competencies contributes to improved managerial performance. The police also navigate the constantly evolving international standards of policing. Just as maintaining and enhancing professional knowledge requires ongoing effort, so too does the development of critical managerial attributes. As a professional organization, the SAPS and its members are expected to consistently uphold and project a professional image. According to Marwala (2006), public sector managers must consistently demonstrate high levels of proficiency in specific competencies. An individual can perform optimally in their role if they possess certain competencies (Taylor and Chapman, 2007). A review of various research papers reveals that traits such as effective communication, creativity, willingness to take risks, focus on results, proactivity, planning orientation, vision, motivation, decision-making, determination, and collaboration are commonly associated with successful managers. Managerial performance heavily relies on these competencies.

Newham (2015:40) states explicitly that the Australian Institute of Police Management conducted a meta-analysis of 57 empirical studies regarding the criteria for effective police

leadership in Australia, the UK, Canada, New Zealand, and the US. While seven main features were identified as essential for a police commander to be effective, their link to outstanding or superior performance remains ambiguous. Three of these features are closely tied to integrity, indicating that a police leader must possess ethics, be trustworthy, and have legitimacy. The other four characteristics highlight the importance of police leaders recognizing the need to act as a role model, be good communicators, be critical and creative thinkers, and be able to make good decisions. While it is vital for organizations to assess the managerial competencies of their personnel to pinpoint skill deficiencies and achieve desired performance outcomes, it is equally critical to understand and study superior or outstanding performers.

The Corruption Watch and the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) (2017:2) report indicates that since the 2011/12 period, there has been a noticeable decline in several operational areas of the SAPS. This includes a reduction in the effectiveness of intelligence crime threat analysis and network operations, as well as lower detection rates for violent crimes within detective services. Additionally, indicators of visible policing, like the frequency of roadblocks, have worsened. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the SAPS 2020-2025 Strategic Plan acknowledges that there are pockets of excellence.

Insights into the skills gap in the SAPS are crucial to aid the development of a competence framework and the formulation of training and development initiatives to improve operational excellence, effectiveness and efficiency in policing by managers and leaders. The limited research focusing on managerial competencies demonstrated by excellent, superior, or outstanding members of the SAPS reveals a scholarly gap and a key opportunity to contribute to the training and development of top-tier police officers and policing in a VUCA environment.

Historically, it is essential to underscore that the SAPS emerged as a pivotal institution after the conclusion of apartheid and the beginning of the first democratic elections in 1994, marked by the amalgamation of the former South African Police (SAP) and various police agencies from the homeland and self-governing territories. Operating under the Constitution of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) and the South African Police Service Act (Act No. 68 of 1995), the SAPS is tasked with preventing, combating, and investigating crime, maintaining public order, protecting inhabitants and their property, and upholding the law (Semenya, 2012). With over 140,000 members dedicated to serving communities across SA, the SAPS is structured

into national, provincial, and area components, comprising numerous specialized units and police stations (Moshikaro, 2016). Its strategic objectives include reducing crime rates, enhancing investigative capabilities, and increasing community engagement through initiatives such as public forums (imbizos) that involve citizens in crime prevention strategies (Salomane, 2010).

While the SAPS is committed to transforming into a professional police service that upholds democratic values and human rights, it continues to grapple with challenges related to crime rates, public trust, and accountability (Montesh, 2019). By addressing these issues and striving for reform, the SAPS seeks to rebuild trust with the communities it serves while tackling the complex challenges of modern policing in SA. Scholars such as Motsepe, Mokwena and Maluleke (2022) note that the current lack of proficiency in the SAPS is marked by inefficiency and dysfunctional performance. At one point, Jackie Selebi, the national commissioner with the longest tenure in the post-apartheid period, was quoted as saying that the SAPS is in crisis, "finish and klaar" (Motsepe, Mokwena and Maluleke, 2022:174). He used the term (meaning "that's the end of it") to characterize his relationship with a well-known crime lord.

The performance of the police during the July 2021 riots in KZN and Gauteng Provinces drew widespread criticism from various sectors of society. Furthermore, the senior leadership of the SAPS has been deeply affected by various governance and leadership challenges, contributing to a significant weakening in public trust and confidence in the organization Afrobarometer (2023). While one may focus on the under-performers, it is equally important to identify and recognize excellent performers in the SAPS as role models of exemplary policing. An excellent manager must not only lead and manage themselves but also others. Managing an under-performing team is a difficult task, especially during a crisis (Uitdewilligen and Waller, 2018). Every situation is different, and every high- or under-performing team member presents unique challenges to overcome. In light of the diverse challenges faced by the SAPS, the question of how to develop managers capable of excelling both as individuals and as leaders of others in policing work is a topic of great interest for researchers and law enforcement professionals.

Given these challenges and gaps in the literature, this study aims to explore the competencies required by high-performing managers within the SAPS, particularly in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province. This research is crucial not only for filling an existing gap in the academic literature but also for informing the development of a competency framework that can enhance

managerial performance across the SAPS. Identifying and developing these competencies will directly contribute to improving leadership at all levels of the organization, which is essential for addressing the internal and external challenges facing the police service today. By exploring the competencies of high-performing managers, this study will offer valuable insights into how SAPS can improve its organizational effectiveness, professionalism, and public trust, ultimately contributing to the achievement of its strategic objectives and the vision of a safer South Africa for all.

1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

The SAPS in KZN faces significant challenges that impede its effectiveness, primarily due to inadequate managerial competencies among its members, as acknowledged in the SAPS 2020-2025 strategic plan, which emphasizes the need for improved leadership to tackle crime and enhance public trust (South African Police Service, 2020). Despite the critical role of managers in strategy development, goal setting, and daily operations, there is limited research on the specific competencies required for excellent performance within the SAPS. Existing studies highlight the importance of generic managerial skills such as communication and decision-making (Ketel, 2005), but they overlook the unique managerial competencies that distinguish excellent from average performance in the specific context of the KZN SAPS. Furthermore, Salem (2019) argues that the training methods employed by the SAPS are largely ineffective and have significantly affected the performance of police services in SA, with many training programs failing to adequately address the evolving needs of law enforcement (Mokwena and Maluleke, 2022). To enhance performance and address organizational challenges, it is essential to identify and evaluate the specific managerial competencies demonstrated by excellent performing members of the SAPS in KZN.

This exploratory qualitative study seeks to uncover the managerial competencies required for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS. It aims to provide clarity on the nature and variety of managerial competencies necessary to tip to excellent performance, uncovering what is needed to excel in leading oneself and others in policing in KZN. Understanding the managerial competencies that exert a disproportionate influence on performance is critical-not only for individual officers seeking to improve their policing performance but also to guide them toward

the competencies that enable them to exceed performance standards (Walker and Archbold, 2018).

1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The research objectives of this exploratory study on the managerial competencies for excellent performance within the KZN SAPS are as follows:

- To identify the managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in KZN SAPS.
- To explore the impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS.
- To explore how training and development opportunities shapes the development of managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS.
- To recommend managerial competencies which are critical for performance to constitute a managerial competence framework for the SAPS managers.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This exploratory qualitative research will answer the following research questions:

- What managerial competencies are critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS?
- How does managerial competencies impact performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS?
- How does training and development opportunities shape the development of managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS?
- What managerial competencies are critical for excellent performance to constitute a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN?

1.6. MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The motivation for this exploratory qualitative study arises from various aspects. There is a significant research gap regarding managerial excellence competencies within the SAPS, particularly in KZN. While effective management is crucial for enhancing police performance, existing literature lacks focused exploration of the specific competencies necessary for excellent managerial performance in this context. Understanding these competencies is vital in

an era where police organizations face pressure to improve operational effectiveness, and foster excellent community relations.

Lazenby (2015) confirms that all managers, regardless of their level, must possess key competencies to perform at their highest capacity. However, existing research has not adequately addressed the specific competencies required for managerial excellence within the SAPS. This exploratory qualitative study aims to provide a deeper understanding of managerial competencies for excellence from the perspective of high-performing members of the SAPS. This understanding is essential for developing and sustaining excellent individual and organizational performance. The study also seeks to address the unique challenges faced by the SAPS in KZN. By identifying the managerial competencies for excellence, the research provides insights for the SAPS leaders on the distinctive competencies that can improve management practices, ultimately enhancing the SAPS's effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate. Understanding the threshold at which an individual's use of a competence tips them into outstanding performance offers crucial insights for managers and leaders.

Finally, the researcher's professional experience within the SAPS has sparked a keen interest in the intersection of managerial competencies and organizational performance. This study aspires to develop a competency framework to inform training and development initiatives, ensuring leaders within the SAPS are equipped with the required skills to excel in navigating the complexities of modern policing. By focusing on these competencies, the study aims to offer valuable perspectives on the nature and variety of managerial competencies critical for excellence in policing. Inclusion of these competencies in the frameworks for the SAPS can enhance understanding of performance expectations and create clear links between competencies and excellence at individual, team, and organizational levels.

1.7. FOCUS OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on exploring the managerial competencies necessary for excellent performance within the South African Police Service (SAPS) in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). Specifically, it aims to identify and evaluate the unique managerial competencies that distinguish high-performing police managers from their average counterparts in this context. The study seeks to provide insights into how these competencies contribute to improved

organizational effectiveness and public trust, aligning with the SAPS's strategic objectives outlined in its 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

The focus is on high-performing police managers at the levels of Lieutenant Colonels, Colonels, and Brigadiers within the KZN SAPS Provincial Office. These individuals are selected for their demonstrated excellence in leadership and management, providing valuable insights into the competencies required to excel in policing roles. The study employs an exploratory qualitative approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews to gather data from these high-performing managers.

By concentrating on the KZN SAPS, this study addresses the specific challenges faced by police services in this region, including high crime rates and community policing challenges. The findings will contribute to the development of a competency framework tailored to the unique needs of the SAPS in KZN, enhancing its ability to address internal and external challenges effectively.

1.8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant for three primary reasons:

Firstly, the study benefits aspiring police officers seeking to grow into excellent leaders by highlighting not only the threshold managerial competences required for effectiveness but also the distinctive competencies that define outstanding performance. It identifies characteristics that distinguish superior performers from average or low performers in a police organization. Recognizing that effective managers must possess specific competencies to consistently exceed performance standards is essential for workforce productivity. By identifying and evaluating these competencies, this research aims to contribute to the development of high-performing managers and focused human resources development, using a context-specific competency framework informed by the real-life experiences of high-performing officers within the KZN SAPS.

Secondly, well-defined managerial competencies enhance organizational effectiveness. This research is significant for leadership development practitioners in the KZN SAPS as it provides insights into the managerial competencies critical for excellent performance. By focusing on

these competencies, the exploratory qualitative study has the potential to foster a high-performance culture within the SAPS.

Lastly, the study holds significance for scholars of police management and leadership. It provides insights into the distinctive competencies that differentiate average from excellent police managers. These findings can inform the development of police command training suitable for 21st-century policing in SA. Additionally, the research can inform revisions to the police management excellence competency framework to better respond to the evolving demands and risks of modern policing in a VUCA and digital environment.

1.9. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The delimitations of this exploratory qualitative study are as follows:

The first delimitation is based on participants' criteria. The study focuses exclusively on active managers within the KZN SAPS who hold the rank of Lieutenant Colonel or higher. Only those who have demonstrated excellent performance in their current roles, as indicated by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or performance reviews, are included. This criterion ensures that the study captures insights from individuals with proven managerial effectiveness. As such, employees outside the category of excellent performers are deliberately excluded from this exploratory study. The assumption is that in any organization, including the SAPS, employees can be identified and categorized as excellent performers, average performers, or underperformers. In many competency studies, the group of 'outstanding' or 'superior' performers is established by gathering input from various individuals across multiple nomination sources.

Additionally, results from data or morale climate assessments are often utilized in this identification process (Boyatzis, 2011). This study focuses not on threshold competencies, but on those competencies that reach the tipping point, pushing an individual into outstanding performance. Analyzing the frequency which one individual demonstrates a variety of competencies at the tipping point helps predict performance. Understanding these competencies aids those developing and coaching others in the KZN SAPS to recognize the most effective drivers of outstanding performance. This critical tipping point is often referred to as a trigger point (Boyatzis, 2011). Without clear and deliberate attention to tipping points

and the competencies that push individuals toward excellent performance, a study of this nature risks merely reporting threshold competencies that meet but do not consistently exceed performance standards and expectations.

The second delimitation is that the study is confined to the KZN region of SA, specifically within the SAPS Provincial Office. This geographic limitation intends to provide a detailed examination of managerial competencies and performance within this particular context.

The third delimitation is the study's methodological focus. It utilizes qualitative methods, specifically semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis. The exclusive focus on qualitative data and an interpretivist research philosophy means that quantitative measures of performance or other forms of data collection, such as surveys or experiments, is not used.

1.10. RESEARCH STRUCTURE

This exploratory qualitative study consists of six chapters, which are as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview of the Study

This chapter introduces the research and offers a comprehensive overview of the study's execution. It outlines the background and motivation behind the research, presents the problem statement, and details the key research questions and objectives, and describes the delimitations of the exploratory qualitative study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter offers a review of relevant literature regarding managerial competencies and performance within police organizations. It begins by defining key concepts related to competencies, including different perspectives of competence and competency. The chapter also explores managerial competencies and ccompetency models, including the application of the Competency and Values Framework (CVF) and the Integrated Competency Framework (ICF) in a police context. The chapter discusess performance and previous research on management competencies and performance in the context of policing. Lastly, the chapter presents a summary.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodological procedures utilized in the research. It details the research design, approach, and tools utilized for data collection. The chapter also discusses the methods used for analyzing the data and how the findings will be presented and interpreted.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter presents the findings from the thematic analysis of data. It will align the findings with the research objectives of this exploratory qualitative study.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the study's findings. It eexamines how these findings relate to existing literature and participants' perspectives. Additionally, it draws conclusions and discusses the implications of the results.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

The chapter summarizes the research by highlighting the key findings and reviewing the content of each chapter. It provides recommendations for addressing the identified challenges and suggests directions for future research.

1.11. CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the background of the study was established to provide context for exploring managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. The discussion emphasized the essential role that competent police services play in meeting constitutional mandates and community expectations. The chapter outlined the research objectives and presented research questions aimed at guiding the investigation. The motivation for this study arises from a significant research gap regarding managerial excellence competencies within the SAPS, particularly in KZN. The significance of this study lies in its potential to enhance police performance and community relations. Additionally, the chapter delineated the delimitations of the study, focusing on active managers within the KZN SAPS who demonstrate excellent performance. It also outlined the qualitative methodology employed. The next chapter will present a comprehensive literature review examining previous research findings related to managerial competencies in policing, identifying knowledge gaps, and contextualizing the importance of these competencies in enhancing police performance.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to review relevant literature on managerial competencies required for excellent performance to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept. In pursuit of this aim, the chapter introduces the concept of competencies, explores a variety of different definitions of competence, and discusses the notion of competency. Thereafter the chapter focuses on managerial competencies and competency models, including the application of CVF and the ICF in a police context. The concept of performance and previous research on managerial competence and performance in the context of policing are also discussed before concluding with a chapter summary.

2.2. UNPACKING THE CONCEPT OF COMPETENCE

The concepts of competence and competency have been extensively studied in managerial literature and defined from various perspectives, resulting in multiple interpretations. Even though competence and competency have a widely acknowledged difference in meaning, the terms are sometimes still used interchangeably since they have carried varied meanings for different individuals. This overlap often raises curiosity about the distinction between the two terms. The words originate from different ways of thinking about the notion of workplace fitness (Vazirani, 2010). Competency describes a person's behaviour, while competence describes the duties or results of a job (Vazirani, 2010). According to Mulder (2007), as quoted by Lapiņa et al. (2017), the term "competence" originates from the Latin word "competentia" meaning “is authorized to judge” or “has the right to speak” (Caupin et al., 2006:9).

The term garnered significant attention from psychologists during the early 20th-century (Shippmann et al., 2000). However, it was not until the 1970s that David C. McClelland, a Psychology Professor at Harvard University and the founder of McBer and Company (later known as the Hay Group) (Vazirani, 2010), published a pivotal study titled "*Testing for Competence Rather Than for Intelligence*." This publication sparked extensive use of the concept within human resource management (HRM) practices and studies (Guerrero and De los Ríos, 2012; Rodriguez et al., 2002; van der Klink and Boon, 2002; Vathanophas, 2007). Major business organizations began to utilize competencies for hiring, selecting, training, and

managing high-performing individuals. In 1982, Boyatzis expanded on McClelland's (1973) concept by creating the "Job Competence Assessment (JCA) Technique," which aimed at identifying the characteristics that set top performers apart from average ones in managerial roles in the US (Vathanophas, 2007; Omran and Suleiman, 2017).

Shehu and Akintoye (2008) describe competency as a description of a person in terms of the fundamental qualities that contribute to exceptional work performance or are associated with effective behavior in a specific sector. Competency is a behaviour-oriented approach and describes the attitudes and behavioural attributes of a person. For example, emotional intelligence (EQ) competencies encompass emotional self-awareness and self-regulation, and self-control. Social and cognitive intelligence competencies encompass systems thinking and pattern identification, whereas social awareness and relationship management competencies include empathy and teamwork (Gómez-Leal, Holzer, Bradley, Fernández-Berrocal, and Patti, 2022).

Focusing on task performance and job output, competence differs from competency, which emphasizes a person-oriented approach and measures attitudes and behaviors (Rakotoarison, 2018). As such, competence is assessed based on performance on the job, while competency is assessed through behaviours and attitude exhibited by the person. Below is Table 2.1, which highlight the subtle differences between competence and competency.

Table 2.1: The comparison between 'competence' and 'competency'

Competence	Competency
Focus on the results	Focus on a person's behaviours
Describe the features of the area of work tasks or job outputs	Describe the attributes of the person
Constitute of the various skills and knowledge needed for performing the job well	Constitute of the underlying attributes of a person for superior work performance
Not transferable as each skill and knowledge is more specific to perform the job	Transferable from one person to another
Assessed by performance on the job	Assessed in terms of behaviours and attitude

Source: Yuvaraj (2011:119)

In a nutshell, competence is a task-oriented, functional approach aimed at achieving results within a specific field of work and holds significant influence in the US. This approach uses the term ‘competence’ more frequently to describe work tasks or job responsibilities (Gawrycka et al., 2020). While competencies are widely accepted as essential for organizational success, some scholars have raised concerns about their effectiveness. For instance, Shehu and Akintoye (2008) argue that competencies are often subjective and challenging to measure, leading to inconsistencies in assessment and development. Similarly, Gawrycka (2020) notes that an overemphasis on competencies can result in a "one-size-fits-all" approach to management, failing to meet unique organizational requirements.

On the other hand, Agbenyegah and Mahohoma (2020) highlight that developing competencies within certain businesses can pose significant challenges due to resource constraints and competing priorities. These constraints may hinder the effectiveness of competence-based interventions, making it difficult for them to implement such strategies successfully. This suggests that while competencies are important, their development must be tailored to address the distinct traits and difficulties encountered by different organizations and individuals.

Below is Table 2.2, which outlines various definitions of "competence" articulated by scholars. This table highlights the diverse interpretations of competence, emphasizing its multifaceted nature and the importance of understanding these definitions in the context of managerial competencies. By examining these definitions, one can appreciate how competence encompasses a range of attributes, including knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential for achieving effective performance across different roles.

Table 2.2: Various definitions of “competence”.

Definition of Competence	Scholar and Year
A collection of qualifications or traits inherent to an individual that allows them to successfully carry out a	McClelland (1973) and Boyatzis (1982)

specific task, enhance their performance, or excellently navigate particular situations.	
Knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors necessary for effectively performing job responsibilities.	Mirabile (1985)
Competence is the combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that empower a worker to effectively perform the responsibilities and tasks required by their occupation.	Norton (1987)
Competence is a motivation, characteristic, self-perception, attitude, or value, knowledge of content, or individual ability that distinguishes superior from average performance.	Spencer and Spencer (1993)
Competence is the capacity to execute a job or task according to the standards anticipated in the workplace.	Hyland (1994)
A blend of skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to carry out a particular activity, along with the individual's performance in a certain situation, which includes the behaviors exhibited at work and the resulting accomplishments.	Gonczi (1995)
Competence is the proven ability to utilize knowledge, skills, and attitudes to produce measurable outcomes.	Hoffmann (1999)
Competence is the ability to apply or utilize a collection of related knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to effectively carry out essential work functions or tasks within a specific work environment.	Lucia and Lepsinger (1999)
Competence is the capacity to utilize knowledge, skills, and attitudes to successfully execute a particular task or activity within a defined context.	Eraut (2002)
Competence is the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that allows an individual to effectively carry out a task or activity.	Mulder, Weigel, and Collins (2007)
Competencies are not merely observable actions that can be easily replicated. Rather, competencies can be expressions of an underlying purpose driven by an individual's	Tripathi and Ranjan (2009)

fundamental personality traits, abilities, knowledge, and skills.	
Competencies are clusters of related knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to operate successfully in a given task.	Mourad et al. (2011)

Source: Authors Composition

A comparison of the definitions reveals that there is no consistent understanding regarding the nature of competencies (Heinsman, 2008). This lack of consistency is evident from the broad spectrum of definitions for the term "competence," even among a relatively uniform group of experts, highlighting the challenge of establishing a standard definition (Megahed, 2018). Shippmann et al. (2000) suggest that this lack of agreement is not unexpected, given the diverse fields where the terms "competence" and "competency" are applied.

Although the definitions mentioned above may initially seem inconsistent, they share three common elements. First, most definitions emphasize that competencies are essential for achieving efficient or effective job performance. Second, the essential nature of competence is that it is observable or measurable and relates to results and tasks. Third, these attributes must distinguish high performers from others. Competence, which focuses on results, task orientation, and performance measurement, differs from competency, which is person-oriented and defined as an individual's underlying attributes evident in attitudes and behaviours.

The current study focuses on competence in terms of task performance, job output, and results, as well as the set of skills that distinguish exceptional performers from others in specific job contexts. Competencies for performing tasks and achieving results can be assessed against established standards and cultivated through training and development programs. This exploratory qualitative study will adopt the definition of competence by Mourad et al. (2011), which emphasizes groups of interconnected knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for effective performance in managerial roles and tasks. This definition is well-suited for this exploratory qualitative study, which focuses on managerial competencies required for excellent policing performance, as it takes into account the multiple aspects that contribute to excellent managerial success in the SAPS.

2.3. TWO PERSPECTIVES ON COMPETENCIES: THE US COMPETENCY OR BEHAVIORAL APPROACH PERSPECTIVE AND THE UK TASK-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE OF COMPETENCE.

The concept of competencies was initially introduced by McClelland and McBer and Company under the leadership of Richard Boyatzis in the 1970s, and gained traction in the late 1980s. Competency research first emerged in the US in 1970, aiming to understand the characteristics of effective individuals (Boyatzis, 1982, 2008, 2011; McClelland, 1973, 1985). Competency is defined as a collection of related yet distinct behaviors organized around a foundational construct called 'intent'. The behaviors represent different expressions of the intent, suitable for various situations or contexts (Boyatzis, 2011). From a behavioral perspective, constructing competencies requires both action (i.e., a range of alternative behaviors that change based on the situation) intent (Boyatzis, 2011). As such, understanding competency involves assessing both the existence of the behaviour and deducing the intent. In the first two decades of this research, competencies were recorded through behavioral work samples video recordings of simulations, or first-hand observation. The American Management Association (AMA) initiated this research with the vision of identifying qualities that define competent managers and creating curricula to help managers acquire these competencies (Hefferman and Flood, 2000; Wu and Lee, 2005).

According to the US perspective, as described by Ulrich, Boyatzis, and others, competency is person-oriented and refers to a person's fundamental behaviours, including the presence of behaviours (e.g., EQ) and the inference of intent. In contrast, competence is task-orientated and assesses performance on the job and outcomes (Boyatzis, 2011; Khan and Ramachandran, 2012). Boyatzis (2011) notes that competency is a behavioural manifestation. It emphasizes identifying the necessary inputs to achieve competent performance, highlighting a strategy focused on inputs. The competency approach is often associated with observable behaviours in the workplace and how they contribute to job performance (McClelland, 1973). The US concept on competencies has significantly influenced HRM, with broad applications in recruitment, performance management, and training and development (Shippmann et al., 2000).

According to Tobin and Pettingell, (2008), as cited by Cloete (2015), the AMA Management Competency Model examines the specific skills and abilities required for various levels of leadership, ranging from individual professionals to managers overseeing organizational functions. This framework suggests that management competencies are increasing, meaning individuals must first achieve mastery of competencies at one level before advancing to the following set of more advanced skills. The model is divided into three main categories, each with distinct competencies:

1. Knowing and Managing Yourself (10 competencies)
2. Knowing and Managing Others (17 competencies)
3. Knowing and Managing the Business (19 competencies)

According to this approach, managers must demonstrate proficiency in the competencies of each successive level before effectively developing and applying the more complex skills required for higher leadership roles (Tobin and Pettingell, 2008). Scholars such as Smith (2012) and Jones (2014) contend that emphasizing observable behaviors can oversimplify the intricate nature of job performance, potentially overlooking the impact of organizational and cultural factors on employee effectiveness. Some experts, such as Johnson (2015), have proposed that a more comprehensive and context-sensitive approach to competencies might be essential for accurately evaluating and enhancing employee performance.

The US view of competency is grounded in the idea that outstanding leaders, managers, advanced professionals, and individuals in critical roles need three sets of behavioral habits as foundational skills, along with three sets of competencies that set apart superior performance (Boyatzis, 2011). The foundational competency clusters consist of: (1) expertise and experience, (2) knowledge (which includes declarative, procedural, functional, and meta-cognitive knowledge), and (3) a range of essential cognitive skills, such as memory and deductive reasoning (Boyatzis, 2011). Three clusters of competencies differentiate exceptional performers from average ones across various countries. These include: (1) Cognitive competencies, which encompass skills like systems thinking and pattern recognition; (2) EQ competencies, which involve self-awareness and self-management skills, including emotional self-awareness and self-control; and (3) social intelligence competencies, which involve social awareness and skills for managing relationships, including empathy and teamwork (Bray,

Campbell, and Grant, 1974; Boyatzis, 1982; Kotter,1998; Goleman, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, 2002; Boyatzis, 2008).

The competency or behavioural approach requires further research to explore the universality of competencies, the potential variations in particular behavioural expressions, and their overall applicability (Boyatzis, 2011). Rather than simply posing the usual question, "Which competencies are needed or necessary for outstanding performance?" David McClelland, in a paper published posthumously in 1998, posed the question, "How often do you need to show a competency to 'tip' you into outstanding performance?" If a researcher adopts the behavioural approach to competency, the focus is not on threshold managerial behaviours and attitudes but rather the distinctive managerial behaviours and attitudes exhibited by excellent performers in the SAPS especially in KZN. Differing from the US model, the UK's view on competency providesa more comprehensive and tailored approach to behaviour and attitudes of a person in specific contexts.

Second, it is crucial to note the irrelevance of vocational training and the necessity to compete with other economies prompted and informed the task-oriented or functionalist perspective of competence in the UK (Winter and Maisch, 1996). Courses and programs were said to focus primarily on acquiring knowledge and theory while overlooking performance, which is fundamentally what defines competence. Vocational qualifications were to be restructured into statements of competence that are pertinent to the workplace as the employer, with their needs becoming paramount (Winter and Maisch, 1996). Competence focuses on what individuals are capable of doing than their knowledge (Norris, 1991).

During the 1980s debate in the United Kingdom, competency was discussed as 'the ability to do a particular activity to a prescribed standard' (Working Group on Vocational Qualifications, 1986). Four key elements characterized the perspective of competence in the UK, in line with the notion of competence as focusing more on people's abilities than their knowledge (Tamkin, 2015). First, it is essential to clarify the context in which the actions occur. Second, competence is the outcome of what a person is able to accomplish. Competencies encompass a range of specific activities in which individuals have the necessary abilities, know-how, and comprehension to function effectively (Lester, 2015). This suggests that behavior can be measured in an objective and systematic manner. Additionally, competence does not reflect the learning process that an individual has experienced.

Third, there must be well-defined and generally available standards for measuring and accrediting performance in order to accurately assess someone's capacity for a given task. Lastly, competence is a gauge of an individual's abilities at a specific moment in time (Sandberg, 2000). The language of competence is frequently misinterpreted due to its ties to vocational training and skill acquisition, rather than a deeper understanding of the underlying principles. In this usage, competence is often limited to the capacity to perform specific tasks, which significantly diminishes its social, moral, and intellectual attributes (Westera, 2001).

Nevertheless, similar to the US perspective, the UK model has encountered criticism from researchers and professionals working in the field. According to Mbokazi et al. (2004), the US competency model prioritized the behavioural component of a person, characterizing it as a collection of behavioral traits that a person must possess to effectively execute activities and responsibilities in a position. On the other hand, the field of vocational education and training has had a greater influence on the UK's approach to competence, highlighting the role competence plays in fostering career development and continuous learning. In the UK context, competence is often associated with the development of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), which were introduced in the 1980s to promote a more flexible and outcomes-based approach to vocational education and training (Jessup, 1995). In this approach, competencies are defined as "the ability to perform activities within an occupation or function to the standards expected in employment" (Mansfield, 2005: 460).

While the UK approach prioritizes behavioural patterns and vocational education, some critics contend that it may overlook other crucial elements of job performance, including cognitive abilities, personal attributes, and interpersonal skills (Kraiger and Ford, 1993; Ashton and Sung, 2002; Kraiger and Ford, 2007). While both the US and UK approaches to competencies have their merits, the criticisms leveled against them highlight the importance of taking a holistic and context-specific approach when identifying the required competencies for excellent performance in different job roles.

2.4. AN OVERVIEW OF THE MANAGER AND MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES

A manager plays a crucial role in organizations by coordinating resources, guiding teams, and driving strategic objectives. Understanding the functions and competencies of managers is vital

for appreciating their impact on organizational success. This section will provide a definition of a manager and their key functions.

2.4.1. Defining a manager and their functions

Drucker (1974) defines a manager as an individual responsible for the performance of an organization, emphasizing that management involves planning, leading, organizing, and controlling to achieve desired outcomes. Koontz and O'Donnell (1976) describe management as a procedure that includes organizing, leading, planning, and regulating an organization's resources in order to accomplish particular goals. These two definitions form the basis for understanding the functions of management. Kotter (2001) further emphasizes that managers mostly concentrate on the formal facets of managing and overseeing their staff, assets, processes, and organizational structures. In contrast, Algahtani, (2014) posits that an effective manager requires a distinct set of qualities, including strong communication skills, organizational abilities, negotiation expertise, and proficiency in delegation.

Chandrasekhar (2011) concurs and suggests two approaches to fostering a positive work environment. The first approach focuses on shaping the physical workspace, while the second emphasizes the adoption of suitable management styles. Management styles enable managers to lead positively and influence employees' ethics, behavior, commitment, professionalism, motivation, and interpersonal relationships. Additionally, there are numerous strategies that managers and supervisors can implement to cultivate a supportive and motivating workplace where employees feel happy and engaged (Ruth et al., 2012). The presented definitions highlight the multifaceted nature of managerial roles, which involve both formal processes and the development of interpersonal competencies to lead teams effectively.

In a slightly different view, research indicates that effective management is built upon three essential skill sets: technical, human, and conceptual. Technical skills refer to a manager's expertise in a specific field, encompassing specialized knowledge and the ability to use relevant tools and techniques. Human skills are crucial for fostering collaboration, allowing managers to guide team members in achieving their tasks. Meanwhile, conceptual skills involve the capacity to engage with abstract ideas (Katz, 1955). In addition to these skill sets, successful managers should also demonstrate important qualities such as strong Effective delegating, negotiation strategies, strong communication, and organizational skills (Kappa, 1991). This

thorough comprehension of management emphasizes its dynamic nature and the critical blend of skills and qualities that contribute to a manager's effectiveness in achieving organizational objectives.

In the context of the SAPS, a manager is accountable for overseeing operations, ensuring the effective implementation of policies, and guiding personnel towards achieving organizational objectives. According to the literature, managers are individuals who coordinate and oversee other people's actions to accomplish organizational objectives. They are essential to performance management, resource allocation, and strategy planning within the police service (Cloete, 2015; Rasivhaga and Maree, 2022).

According to Schutte and Meyer (2004), police managers play a critical role in strategic management, which involves not only formulating strategies but also coordinating the contributions of various functions within the organization to enhance operational effectiveness. This perspective is supported by the notion that effective management in policing requires a blend of technical and managerial competencies, as highlighted by Koontz and O'Donnell (1976), who emphasize the challenges managers face in strategy implementation compared to analysis or formulation. Reddy (2014) notes that effective police managers must integrate knowledge, skills, and values to navigate the complexities of law enforcement. He emphasizes that managerial competencies are crucial for enhancing service delivery and operational effectiveness within the police force.

2.5. DISTINCTION BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

The concept of leadership commonly refers to a form of social influence (House, Wright, and Aditya, 1997). A leader, according to Peter Drucker, is someone who has followers (Drucker, 1999). The leader and follower dynamic are two sides of leadership. Kotter (1990) believes that leaders focus on motivation and inspiration. The study by David Wigfield titled "*Competent Leadership in the Police*" emphasizes the importance of defining leadership not just as a set of traits but as a socially constructed phenomenon influenced by various interactions and contexts (Wigfield, 1996). The distinction between managers and leaders is typically defined as managers focusing on what needs to be done, while leaders concentrate on how it should be done (Dean and Gottschalk, 2013). The capacity to motivate individuals

towards achieving organizational objectives can encompass both the actions of a manager and the manner in which they execute those actions.

Management and leadership are concepts often understood differently by various individuals. Although some people think the terms are interchangeable, others see them as entirely distinct (Ricketts, 2009). However, most acknowledge that there are both similarities and differences between the two roles (Algahtani, 2014; Northouse, 2025). Management is one of several crucial factors necessary for ensuring integrity and accountability in law enforcement. However, fostering and sustaining professional leadership remains a complex challenge (Dowell, 2017).

Leaders are visionaries who possess the ability to articulate what is possible and share this vision effectively with others. They develop strategies to bring their ideas to fruition, inspiring and motivating people while negotiating for the necessary resources to achieve their objectives (Wajdi, 2017). In contrast, managers focus on organizing and utilizing available resources efficiently to achieve optimal outcomes. They are primarily concerned with the day-to-day operations and ensuring that tasks are completed effectively. Leadership and management are distinct yet interdependent concepts. While they are not identical, they are closely related and function best when combined. Attempts to completely separate leadership from management may create more challenges than benefits (Wajdi, 2017). Effective organizations often require a blend of both leadership and management skills to navigate complexities and achieve their objectives, as highlighted by *The Guardian* (2013).

A study by Algahtani (2014), titled "*Are Leadership and Management Different*," emphasizes that while both roles share responsibilities in influencing people to achieve goals, management is primarily focused on planning, organizing, and directing organizational systems to fulfil missions and objectives. Conversely, leadership skills emphasize possible transformation by providing guidance, bringing people together, and inspiring and encouraging them (Algahtani, 2014).

Wajdi (2017) further asserts that effective managers should strive to be strong leaders, while successful leaders need management skills to maximize their impact. In essence, management and leadership skills are complementary; the best managers lead, and the best leaders manage. Below is Table 2.3, which outlines the differences between management and leadership as

defined by Kotter (1990). This table highlights key distinctions in roles and responsibilities, emphasizing how management focuses on planning and control, while leadership is centered on establishing direction and inspiring others. Understanding these differences is crucial for developing effective managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS.

Table 2.3: The difference between management and leadership.

Management	**Leadership**
Planning and budgeting	Establishing direction
Organizing and staffing	Aligning people
Controlling and problem-solving	Motivating and inspiring
Produces a degree of predictability and order	Produces change, often to a dramatic degree

Source: Kotter (1990:6)

Furthermore, the functions of a manager within the SAPS encompass several key responsibilities, including resource management, crime prevention planning, and the integration of information systems to enhance policing effectiveness. Burger (2007) notes that police managers must identify technological needs and adapt to evolving criminal landscapes, which requires innovative thinking and strategic planning.

Founded on the above literature, the adopted definition of manager for this study will be: "A manager is an individual who is responsible for planning, organizing, leading, and controlling resources within an organization, while fostering collaboration and empowering team members to achieve strategic objectives". This definition captures the multifaceted role of managers in the SAPS and aligns with contemporary views on effective management practices.

Palmer, Walls, Burgess, and Stough (2001) and Goleman (2000) assert that effective managers are able to make decisions, communicate, develop teams, and solve problems. In a similar vein, Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) and Topping (1997) stress communication, confidence,

teamwork, trust, and a desire to advance others. Research on managerial competencies has been conducted widely across various industries and nations, and the findings provide strong support for the idea that these competencies are key predictors of managerial performance.

2.5.1. Typology, level, and tipping point of managerial competences

First, Tyrańska (2016), in the article entitled, "*Managerial Competencies for Various Management Level"* argues that competencies can be categorized into threshold and differentiating competencies. A manager's professional knowledge, problem-solving abilities, communication, relationship-building, and use of consultants are examples of threshold competencies, which are necessary for the effective execution of a particular job. Threshold competencies are required for efficient and minimum performance and capability to meet the established targets expected of all managers.

Second, differentiating competencies are those that set an effective worker apart from others (e.g., values, motives, and attitudes). The list goes on to include leadership, empathy, openness to learning, uncertainty tolerance, innovation, future orientation, and value awareness for managers (Tyrańska, 2016). Similarly, there are three main categories into which managerial competencies can be broadly classified:

- The *first* category is conceptual competencies, which encompass cognitive abilities, strategic thinking, and problem-solving skills. These competencies enable managers to analyze complex circumstances and make knowledgeable choices, as stated by Katz in 1955.
- The *second* category is interpersonal competencies, which include communication, relationship-building, and EQ skills. These competencies allow managers to effectively influence and interact with others, as highlighted by Goleman in 1995.
- Lastly, the *third* category is technical competencies, which involve job-specific skills, knowledge, and abilities. These competencies enable managers to effectively perform their roles within their area of expertise, as mentioned by Bartlett and Ghoshal in 2002.

Third, it is crucial to underline that competence encompasses degrees of proficiency, mastery or expertise; the level of someone's competence can be marked on a scale. Competency proficiency level descriptors are used to assess and measure employee skills and competencies

(Campion, Fink, Ruggeberg, Carr, Phillips, and Odman, 2011). These levels often range from beginner (under development, very little utilization of the competency), fundamental (little application of the competency, requires additional training), intermediate (practical application of the competency); advanced (applied theory), and expert (highest level of proficiency). Each competency is divided into tiers that illustrate the behaviors expected for roles with varying degrees of complexity or responsibility. Each level builds upon the one before it, and the levels are cumulative (Succar, Sher, and Williams, 2013).

On the other hand, competence is often recognized as binary. For example, in the medical, legal and other professions, the question is usually whether someone is competent or incompetent. In this case, the concept of competence acquires a binary character (Walker, 2016). A certain threshold on the scale in question is involved. It is essential to emphasize that many discussions of competence are problematic from the outset because they do not clearly distinguish between graded proficiency and the binary sense of the term (Eraut, 2002). It is also key to note competence in the medical context is binary and adopts a task-related orientation of the concept. For example, a medical doctor can be competent in certain types of cases but incompetent in dealing with others. Threshold competencies are the minimum requirements needed to manage the cognitive complexity of a specific task (Boyatzis, 2011). Distinguishing competencies are the characteristics exhibited by top performers that distinguish them from the average.

Fourth, competencies also vary or differ according to management level. Tyrańska (2016) explains that while the anticipated competencies of managers at different levels of management are similar, they are different in certain ways. Consequently, it is important to take into account how specific the requirements are with regard to the various management levels. A universal and cohesive description of managerial competencies is ineffective. For instance, the highest-level managers perform the role of strategists, shaping the future and implementing strategy. Competencies that look to the future enable managers to set up the firm to operate efficiently and effectively in the future, thrive and grow, optimize long-term earnings, carry out the company's social mission, and defend it from risks that are internal as well as external. (Tyrańska, 2016; Boyatzis, 2011).

Mid-level management includes managers that hold responsibility for the organizational unit (department, division) and the variety of issues related to it while also serving as advisors to

the highest level of management. These managers not only decide on strategy at the functional level but also make tactical decisions that affect the organization on the organizational, financial, technological, and human resources side of the business (Hitt and Tyler, 1991; Butler, 2019). In this role, decisions concern medium- and short-term horizons. Mid-level managers act as integrators, tasked with organizing horizontal collaboration with external organizations, comparable organizational units, and internal work coordination (Martin-Rios, 2016).

The first line of management consists of people who collaborate closely with those who carry out the work. These managers concentrate on the efficient use of labor resources and make short-term decisions based on a given day's work. Tipping point analysis is key to identifying differentiating competencies for outstanding performers. The analysis determines the amount of competency needed for exceptional performance. As the focus is on outstanding performance, it differs from competency assessment, which just asks the basic question: “What are the behavioral characteristics or abilities needed for effectiveness in specific jobs, roles, or occupations?” (Boyatzis, 2011). Researchers should be aware that questions such as “Which competencies are necessary for effective or outstanding performance?” only provide a limited perspective on the relationship between performance and competencies. Adopting the idea of tipping points, also known as trigger points, is wise since it clarifies the amount of competency that must be shown to be adequate for outstanding performance (Boyatzis, 2011).

2.6. THE GENERIC COMPETENCIES OF A MANAGER

Managers working in a number of fields require a broad range of competencies, based on studies by Wickramasinghe and Zoysa (2009). Qiao, Khilji, and Wang (2013) assert that, the most essential skill for work success is job knowledge. The authors encourage organizational managers to prioritize personal healing, practice compassion, learn new things, and create a vision authorize decision-making, differentiate competencies, encourage others, be result-oriented, show determination, integrate abilities, and apply relevant reasoning and intent to become outstanding managers. Nonetheless, Hellriegel et al. (2004) maintain a similar structure, claiming that the following competencies are essential for a successful and effective manager: communication, self-management, teamwork, organization and planning, and strategic action. These competencies have been identified as key factors contributing to managerial success in numerous empirical studies and theoretical frameworks (Dainty et al., 2005).

This section of the literature identifies five different types of effective competencies, as discussed below:

- ***Communication competency:*** For managers and business owners in all organizations, McFarlin (2019) argues that communication skills are essential. A typical individual spends around 45% of their working life communicating (Steyn and Steyn, 2006). Communication skills are crucial for managers and business owners in the corporate world. According to Mkhize (2017), effective communication involves the ability to convey a message correctly within the shortest amount of time. Communication competencies come in three different forms: written, nonverbal, and spoken (Ncube and Chimucheka, 2019). Communication competency is defined by Hellriegel et al. (2007, 2013) as the capacity to efficiently communicate and share knowledge to ensure understanding among managers and employees. They go on to say that effective management entails delegating tasks to employees to ensure work is completed. Every manager requires communication competency. However, understanding the tipping points and the specific communication competencies that elevate performance is crucial when focusing on differentiating competencies.

- ***Self-management competency:*** Self-management skills are significant personal qualities and talents that aid in the development of individual efficacy in executing complex tasks, including managing a business (Ncube and Chimucheka, 2019). Hellriegel et al. (2013:53) assert that ethical behavior and integrity, individual drive and resilience, self-awareness, personal development, and achieving a balance between work and life are all components of self-management as a managerial competency. Competencies distinguish between average and outstanding managers. According to Williams (2007), self-management - often referred to as self-control - is a behavior control mechanism where managers and staff regulate their actions by establishing objectives, keeping track of their progress, as well as compensating themselves when they attain those goals. Managers may negatively impact the organization if they lack adequate competencies for self-management. Every manager requires self-management competency. However, understanding the tipping points and the specific self-management competencies that distinguish outstanding performance is critical for identifying differentiating competencies.

- ***Decision-making and problem-solving competency:*** Decision-making and problem-solving skills are critical 21st-century competences due to the increasing complexity of modern situations in various sectors. According to Lassoued, Awad, and Guirat (2020), effective decision-making skills are critical for managers to succeed. It is crucial to make wise choices based on available facts, whether selecting who to hire, which supplier to trust, or which strategy to implement. Individuals at all levels, both experts and non-experts, are frequently involved in decision-making, which may range from solving basic to complex problems. Involving employees in making decisions as well as solving problems can leverage their knowledge and creativity. Decision-making involves selecting the best option from several viable choices to accomplish a goal and ensuring consistent decision-making across managerial levels. Tiraieyari and Uli, (2011) sustains that as management level rises, the competency for decision-making and problem-solving must deepen.

- ***Leadership competency:*** Any organization needs strong leadership because when a true leader is in place, there are several advantages. For instance, leaders motivate their groups by increasing the confidence of team members and encouraging them to perform their duties effectively (Meraku, 2017). Without strong and visionary leadership, many businesses would struggle to stay afloat and expand, making long-term success unlikely (Kanyangale, 2017). Some experts have found that, leadership competency shows emerges in circumstances that call for quick thinking, risk management, challenging judgments, and adaptation to changes. These include moving constructively toward accomplishments, strengthening understanding through education, motivating personnel, assigning tasks appropriately, and providing rewards, which can improve employee performance and inspire employees to exceed expectations (Hawi, Alkhodary and Hashem, 2015). According to Meraku (2017), self-assured employees perform well under pressure, which benefits the organization. Businesses must promote employees with leadership abilities, enabling them to develop as leaders and mentor new hires. Kanyangale (2017) asserts that effective leaders possess four key abilities: balancing human and commercial aspects of their organization, prioritizing resources to drive value creation, and strategically positioning their organization for competitive advantage. These abilities enable leaders to navigate the balance between treating employees as valued individuals and leveraging them as assets, align priorities and resources to drive business outcomes, and exploit opportunities for competitive gain. Effective leaders within the SAPS must adopt a

thoughtful approach, ensuring tasks are delegated effectively, clearly communicate their vision, values, and priorities, and motivate their subordinates to achieve the organization's objectives. These leaders must strive to unlock the full potential of their team members, fostering a collaborative environment where everyone is committed to contributing to the success of the SAPS. Strategic leaders prioritize long-term goals and overall organizational outcomes over immediate concerns. However, it is important to understand the tipping points and specific leadership competencies that distinguish outstanding performers, particularly if the focus is on differentiating competencies (Nwankwo and Kanyangale, 2020).

- ***Team management competency:*** An efficient team management system is essential for any organization that wishes to thrive. Organizing a group to plan and carry out particular activities is known as team management (Soni, 2020). Well-managed team members do work faster and more efficiently. According to Muthu (2021), strong team management is the foundation of a company, assisting it in overcoming challenges and increasing the likelihood of long-term success. Organizations must foster good team management practices, as they promote team development, higher productivity, and motivation. Teams that work collaboratively and harmoniously tend to be more enthusiastic and effective. Transparent and organized team management helps employees better understand their roles and the company's vision, leading to improved outcomes (Alqassimi and Upadhyay, 2018).

To summarize, managerial abilities are critical for efficiency. The five competencies outlined earlier must be well-understood by managers. As challenges evolve, managers must continually develop their competencies. However, researchers should explore beyond threshold competencies, focusing on tipping points and the specific competencies that distinguish outstanding performers.

2.7. UNDERSTANDING THE COMPETENCY MODEL

Competency models are widely utilized in organizations today to support human resource development, providing a competitive advantage (Megahed, 2018). McClelland (1973), known for his work on competencies and job performance, defines a competency model as a

framework outlining the specific competencies needed for successful job performance. McClelland (1973) emphasizes assessing competencies beyond traditional intelligence testing. Competency models focus on identifying and defining the essential skills, behaviors, and attributes needed for success in a job (Mulder, 2007).

Richard Boyatzis defines a competency model as "a set of competencies required for effective performance in a specific job or role." He emphasizes that competencies include a combination of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that contribute to successful job performance (Boyatzis, 1991). Byatzis (1991) is explicit that the focus of this definition is exclusively on competencies linked to effective job performance. Similarly, Spencer and Spencer (1993:9) in the book titled "*Competence at Work*" define a competency model as "an underlying characteristic of a person causally related to effective or superior performance in a job." This framework emphasizes competencies that contribute to outstanding performance rather than threshold abilities.

Kraiger, Ford, and Salas (1993) describe competency models as frameworks that specify the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required for effective job performance. They argue that competency models should be tailored to the specific demands of the job and the organization**.** In a similar way, Dubois (1993) describes competency models as the specific set of competencies needed for an individual to perform their job duties and responsibilities within an organization, including their relationships and interactions, in a manner that meets or exceeds expectations, while considering the organization's internal and external contexts.

Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) note that some competencies transcend specific roles and contexts, serving as foundational skills for organizational excellence. These core competencies, applicable across roles, form the bedrock of a unified standard of excellence defining the organization's identity (Connor, 2016; Rizvi, 2018). It is essential to align these competencies with organizational objectives to ensure training and development efforts are impactful and relevant. Burright (2021) emphasizes that competency models should include key competencies, proficiency levels, and behavioral indicators to assess and enhance performance effectively. It is prudent to emphasize the importance of aligning these competencies with organizational objectives to ensure that training and development efforts are relevant and impactful as they focus on the core skills, knowledge, and behaviors their employees need to be successful in the organization. Burright (2021) discusses competency models in the context

of nonprofit organizations, describing them as tools that clarify expectations and guide employee development. The scholars highlights that these models should include key competencies, proficiency levels, and behavioral indicators to effectively assess and enhance employee performance.

According to Hartley and Brown (2022), a competency model is defined as a structured framework that lists the precise abilities, know-how, and conduct required to carry out a given function effectively, especially in the context of online instruction. This model identifies critical competencies contributing to success, enabling organizations to assess instructors' capabilities in meeting goals. Among the various definitions of competency models, Boyatzis's (1991) definition is adopted for this study. This definition is particularly relevant as it directly addresses the specific competencies necessary or key in tipping employees to excellent performance in managerial positions. The inclusion of expertise, abilities, and character traits in the definition acknowledges the multifaceted nature of managerial competences for excellence police work performance. Organizations can evaluate managers using specific criteria that align development efforts with intended results. This method guarantees that the frequency and contextual application of competencies are analyzed, advancing research on managerial effectiveness.

2.8. THE USE OF THE COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK IN POLICING

Having elaborated the notion of a competency framework, it is critical to place the concept within the police context, focusing on the Competency and Values Framework (CVF) in the UK and the Police Competency Framework in the US.

2.8.1. Competency and Values Framework (CVF) - College of Policing

The CVF developed by the College of Policing in the UK outlines the essential behaviours and values required for effective performance in policing roles. This framework serves as a guide for recruitment, assessment, and development across all levels of police personnel, ensuring that expectations are clear and consistent. The CVF establishes principles and behaviors that are acknowledged nationally, offering a dependable basis for local and national procedures. Notably, the framework seeks to ensure clear expectations for all individuals working in policing, which raises standards for the public's safety and benefit. It illuminates the behaviours

expected of police personnel, explicitly linking these behaviors to effective performance in policing roles.

Since individuals possess diverse strengths, skills, abilities, and personal attributes, the CVF is designed to accommodate such differences. Assessments should be structured to allow candidates to demonstrate strengths in various areas. The CVF underwent significant updates with the introduction of its 2024 version, replacing the 2016 iteration. This updated framework is structured around three clusters, six competencies, and four core values, guiding recruitment, assessment, and professional development within policing. For managers, the CVF serves as a vital tool for performance assessment, recruitment, and professional development (College of Policing, 2024). It provides a clear framework for evaluating staff based on their competencies and adherence to core values, thereby facilitating more informed decision-making and leadership practices. Managers are encouraged to consider individual circumstances and the specific demands of each role when applying the CVF to ensure a fair and comprehensive evaluation process.

Below is Figure 2.1, which illustrates the structure of the CVF for policing in the UK. This figure outlines the key components of the CVF, including the competencies and values essential for effective performance in policing roles. Understanding this structure is vital for grasping how the CVF guides recruitment, assessment, and development processes within police organizations, ultimately aiming to enhance public trust and accountability in law enforcement.

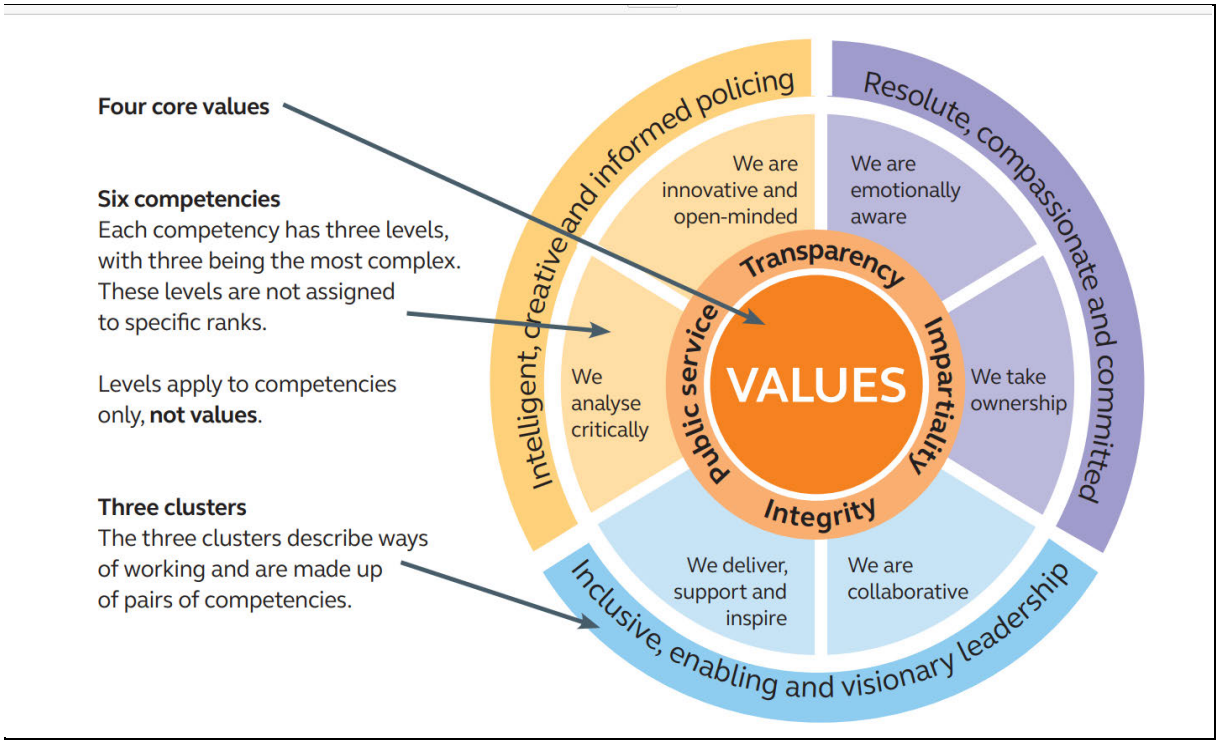


Figure 2.1: The CVF structure for Policing in UK.

Source: The Competency and Values Framework (2024)

The following are the competencies:

- We take responsibility for our actions
- We are emotionally aware
- We work together
- We provide, encourage, and assist
- We critically evaluate
- We are innovative and open-minded

These competencies are grouped into three clusters, which reflect the principal themes of effective policing.

Clusters consist of:

- Committed, caring, and resolute
- Visionary, inclusive, and enabling leadership
- Astute, innovative, and knowledgeable law enforcement

The CVF for policing in the UK includes a structured approach to competencies, which are categorized into three distinct levels allowing for flexibility in application across various roles within the police force (College of Policing, 2024).

Levels of Competency:

1. Level 1: Practitioner
2. Level 2: Supervisor/Middle Manager
3. Level 3: Senior Manager/Executive

Each level builds upon the previous one, indicating that individuals in higher positions are expected to demonstrate competencies from all of the lower levels. This cumulative structure ensures that, as manager's progress in their careers, they should reflect on the behaviours and skills acquired at earlier stages (College of Policing, 2024). The framework allows for flexibility in its application, meaning that the competencies can be tailored to fit the specific requirements of different policing roles (College of Policing, 2024). This adaptability is crucial for managers who must navigate the diverse challenges faced by both operational and administrative staff. The framework can be integrated into performance reviews, helping to identify areas for professional development and improvement.

Values:

- courage
- respect and empathy
- public service

Unlike competencies, the values outlined in the CVF are uniform across all levels of policing. Every individual, regardless of their role or rank, is expected to embody the same core values. This consistency reinforces a unified ethical standard within the police force, fostering a culture of integrity and accountability that is essential for effective management (College of Policing, 2024). By embedding the CVF into everyday practices, managers can cultivate an environment that prioritizes ethical behaviour and effective performance, which serves as a comprehensive tool for enhancing managerial competencies within policing, ultimately contributing to improved performance and ethical standards in organizations like the SAPS.

2.8.2. US Police Competency Framework

The Police Competency Model developed by the US Department of the Interior (DOI) aims to establish a common set of critical competencies and tasks for successful police performance across the department. This model, revisited in December 2020, builds upon the earlier 2007 Government-wide Police Competency Model by identifying critical competencies necessary for successful performance in various police roles (US DOI, 2020). The US DOI (2020) defines competencies as the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that are critical for successful performance in police roles.

The model encompasses a range of competencies which includes:

- Accountability
- Planning and Evaluating
- Decision Making
- Integrity/Honesty
- Interpersonal Skills
- Problem Solving
- Teamwork
- Technical Competence

The model also specifies the required proficiency levels for each competency across different grade levels, ranging from basic awareness to expert application.

Competency frameworks in policing are critical for establishing clear behavioral expectations and enhancing organizational effectiveness. They outline the necessary skills, knowledge, and attributes that officers must possess to perform their duties successfully, thereby linking individual capabilities to organizational goals (College of Policing, 2024). The application of competency frameworks in policing, such as the Police Competency Model, facilitates various human capital functions, including recruitment, assessment, training, and performance management. This model emphasizes the importance of managerial competencies, which are crucial for leadership roles within the police force.

Managerial competencies, such as decision-making, conflict management, and teamwork, are integrated into the framework to ensure that police leaders can effectively guide their teams

and navigate complex operational challenges (DPSA, 2018). Scholars argue that these frameworks not only standardize expectations across different levels of the police force but also promote a culture of accountability and continuous improvement (Essex Police, 2024). However, the competency frameworks are not without criticism. Some scholars point out that unyielding adherence to predefined competencies may overlook the unique contextual factors that influence police work, such as community dynamics and individual officer experiences.

Critics argue that a one-size-fits-all approach can stifle creativity and adaptability in policing, which are essential for effective community engagement and problem-solving (DOI, 2020). While the DOI Police Competency Model is specific to the US DOI, its underlying principles and applications can be adapted to inform the development of managerial competency frameworks for organizations like the SAPS. By identifying and promoting the competencies necessary for effective police leadership and management, such frameworks can contribute to improved performance and ethical standards within the police force.

2.8.3. Integrated Competency Framework (ICF)

The Integrated Competency Framework (ICF) is a structured model developed by Skills for Justice to enhance the performance and behaviour within the policing sector in the UK (Essex Police, 2024). It served as a precursor to later frameworks like the Policing Professional Framework (PPF) and the CVF - introduced by the College of Policing in 2016.

This framework is beneficial for managers as it provides a clear set of competencies that can be used for assessing and developing staff capabilities. The framework defines the essential competencies required for police officers, providing a comprehensive set of skills, knowledge, and behaviours necessary for effective policing (College of Policing, 2024). It aims to standardize expectations across various police forces, making sure police officers are prepared to handle the demands of contemporary law enforcement.

The ICF described an array of behaviours under four main themes:

1. Leading People
2. Leading the Organization
3. Leading the Way
4. Personal Qualities / Values

The ICF is utilized in several ways within police services. It supports recruitment processes by helping admission committees identify suitable candidates who possess the necessary attributes for policing roles. Additionally, the framework is instrumental in performance management and training, allowing police organizations to tailor development opportunities to individual officers based on their competency gaps (College of Policing, 2024). This alignment ensures that police personnel are not only skilled in their duties but also aligned with the ethical standards and values expected in the profession.

Scholarly input on the ICF emphasizes its role in promoting accountability and continuous improvement within police organizations. For instance, Bartram, (2005) highlight that competency frameworks help establish clear behavioural expectations, which can lead to enhanced service delivery and community trust. The ICF appears to be an early competency framework used in UK policing that laid the foundation for later models, with version 8 in 2006 promoting enhancements to search, linking it to standards, and improving performance management processes.

Furthermore, the integration of managerial competencies, such as decision-making, conflict management, and leadership into the competency frameworks is crucial for developing effective police leaders who can navigate the complexities of law enforcement. Having discussed the notion of management and management competences, the use of competence framework situated in the UK and US police, it is timely to understand training and development. Having established the significance of integrating managerial competencies into policing, it is essential to recognize that these competencies must be supported by vital training and development programs. Understanding the nature and types of training and development is crucial, as it lays the underpinning for equipping police leaders with the necessary skills to effectively implement their competencies in real-world scenarios. This next section will explore various training methodologies and developmental strategies that can enhance police performance and leadership capabilities.

2.9. UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE AND TYPES OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The term "training" describes an organization's deliberate attempt to help staff members acquire competencies relevant to their jobs (Noe, 2020). Training and development programs typically encompass educational activities aimed at enhancing an employee's knowledge and fostering increased drive to perform better at work. These programs are intended to assist staff members in learning new skills and gaining the professional knowledge necessary for career advancement. According to Noe (2020), effective training not only increases job-related competencies but also contributes to overall employee satisfaction and retention.

Organizational strategy and objectives are linked to training programs both directly and indirectly. Training that gives workers the abilities needed for their jobs has a direct effect on how well a firm performs. Providing opportunities for learning and development cultivates a positive workplace environment, which aligns with business strategies by attracting talented individuals and motivating current employees to stay. As noted by Salas et al. (2012), organizations that invest in employee development often see enhanced productivity and morale, leading to improved overall performance.

Historically, training has been thought of as a distinct program or event aimed at developing particular, explicit knowledge and abilities. However, human resource specialists, managers, and trainers have increasingly recognized the value of experiential knowledge—knowledge gained through experience that cannot be easily taught in a formal training setting. This shift has expanded training's scope to include learning and developing strategies for knowledge creation and dissemination within organizations. As highlighted by Garavan, (2007), organizations that cultivate an environment that values lifelong learning and knowledge sharing are more likely to achieve their strategic objectives.

2.9.1. Aligning training with competency and performance

Noe (2020) emphasizes the importance of aligning training initiatives with the competencies required for effective job performance. Furthermore, Salas et al. (2012) highlight the connection between training and performance by stating that effective training can result in higher job satisfaction, better performance, and turnover. This stresses the idea that well-designed training programs not only enhance individual competencies but also contribute to overall organizational success. Additionally, Blanchard and Thacker (2013) assert that training is a critical part of the strategy of an organization to enhance employee performance and ensure

that employees possess the necessary skills to meet the demands of their roles. This perspective reinforces the notion that training is not just an isolated event but an essential component of a company's broader performance management strategy. Mohanakumari, and Magesh (2017) confirm that, competencies enable organizations to assess the degree to which employees are exhibiting desired behaviours and identify areas where they may be deficient. In instances where employees fall short in certain competencies, there are opportunities for them to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge.

The main goal of training is to guarantee that staff members gain the abilities, information, and behaviours emphasized in training programs and effectively apply them in their daily roles. For organizations to achieve a competitive edge, training must extend beyond mere basic skill development (Noe, 2020). To leverage training as a means of gaining a competitive advantage, organizations should regard it as a strategy for cultivating intellectual capital. This intellectual capital encompasses not only fundamental skills necessary for job performance but also advanced skills, such as utilizing technology for information sharing, a comprehensive understanding of customer needs or production systems, and fostering self-motivated creativity.

According to Noe (2020), many organizations have shifted their focus towards high-leverage training that is directly linked to performance enhancement. Businesses have often wasted resources on training that is poorly designed, disconnected from performance challenges or business strategies, or inadequately evaluated for its outcomes. This approach of investing in training simply because it is perceived as beneficial is becoming obsolete. Nowadays, training is assessed not by the quantity of programs offered but by its effectiveness in addressing business needs related to learning, behaviour change, and performance enhancement. The current trend emphasizes that training should be performance-oriented, aimed at improving employee performance, which in turn leads to better business outcomes. Training is now viewed as one of various strategies to enhance performance, alongside other methods like redesigning a work or using incentives to boost employee motivation.

As highlighted by Noe (2020), there is a growing emphasis on the following aspects of training:

- Providing all staff with educational possibilities. These educational opportunities may involve training programs, but they also enable self-study, work rotation, and taking courses given outside the company;

- Performance improvement as a continuous, directly measurable process as opposed to a one-time training session; proving the value of training to managers, executives, and trainees;
- Demonstrating to executives, managers, and trainees the benefits of training;
- Senior management, trainer managers, and employees all have a stake in learning as a lifetime process; and
- Training is also utilized to assist firms achieve strategic business goals that provide them a competitive edge

The SAPS facilitates the development of junior, middle, and senior managers through its two management and leadership academies. One academy is located in the Western Cape Province, known as the Paarl Management and Leadership Academy, while the other is situated in the Free State Province, called the Thabong Management and Leadership Academy. These two institutions offer distinct programs tailored to the specific needs of managers at different levels within the SAPS hierarchy. The Thabong Academy primarily focuses on delivering junior management development programs, while the Paarl Academy concentrates on providing training and development opportunities for middle and senior-level managers (Cloete, 2015).

According to Folkman (2017), the top ten advantages of employee training and development programs include:

- Enhanced productivity: Keeping employees updated on new procedures and technologies can significantly boost their overall output.
- Decreased micromanagement: Empowered employees tend to work more independently and require less supervision.
- Development of future leaders: Organizations need a strong pipeline of well-trained, innovative leaders to ensure growth and adaptability over time.
- Improved job satisfaction and retention: Employees who receive effective training gain confidence in their abilities, leading to higher job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and better overall retention rates.
- Attraction of skilled talent: High-caliber candidates are drawn to companies that offer clear career paths supported by ongoing training and development.
- Greater consistency: Structured training ensures that tasks are completed uniformly, resulting in reliable quality assurance that the customers can depend on.

- Strengthened camaraderie: Training initiatives foster an attitude of cooperation and teamwork among employees.
- Increased safety: Constant training guarantees that staff members have the know-how to carry their duties in a safe manner.
- Cross-training skills: Regular instruction creates a knowledgeable team where employees can assist and train one another as needed.
- Increased innovation: Regularly trained employees are better situated to develop new strategies and products, contributing positively to the company's success (Folkman, 2017).

2.9.2. Training and development at the SAPS

The process of developing managers begins with the Basic Management Learning Programme (BMLP), which offers an introduction to management principles and is intended for junior positions in the SAPS. Progressing further, the Junior Management Learning Programme (JMLP) expands upon the knowledge gained in the BMLP. The Middle Management Learning Programme (MMLP) is specifically designed for middle management staff within the SAPS. Lastly, the Executive Management Development Learning Programme (EDLP) concentrates on improving the management abilities of senior executives (Cloete, 2015).

According to Salem (2019), the SAPS training methods are ineffective, and this inefficiency has significantly impacted the performance of police officers. The SAPS training and development programs faced several gaps, including insufficient resources, a one-size-fits-all approach, and a focus on immediate challenges rather than future trends (Moitsadi, Aphane, Mofokeng, and Mofokeng, 2024). Many challenges in organizations are more closely linked to organizational problems than learning interventions programs (Kekana and Montle, 2022). Some SAPS personnel are looking for work in the corporate sector in order to grow their careers and get the training they need because they have restricted access to employee training (Salem 2019).

The organization may not be able to fulfil its responsibilities effectively if subordinates lack the requisite competences, abilities, knowledge, and skills (CAKS) (Molupe, 2019). For the SAPS to operate effectively, it needs competent people in key positions. Police personnel must go through rigorous training in order to progress vertically in their careers and guarantee that

they acquire the abilities needed to occupy high positions. Olutola and Bello (2016) assert that the gained abilities significantly improve the overall performance of the SAPS. The majority of employees will often function well in their current roles, however, when they are promoted to higher positions, they often show difficulties and poor leadership behaviors (Künneke, Moers, and Grabner, 2024). Employee training is therefore crucial to their professional development since it equips them to take on the most challenging positions. The organization needs to keep making sure that workers are guided by the skills and competences that are most required (Gyeltshen et al. 2020).

According to Vermeulen (2011), employee development practices such as coaching and mentoring are essential for employees to gain new academic skills and abilities, increase their enthusiasm for the new work requirement, and increase their knowledge so they can assist the organization in achieving its goals. According to the SAPS Workplace Skills Policy (WSP), employee development is the process of acquiring skills to ensure that individuals are led, educated, cross-trained, updated, and prepared for their roles (SAPS, 1997). Every employee should have access to a personal development plan that fits their career objectives and the operational requirements of the organization (RSA, 2010). To overcome these challenges and enhance organizational performance, it is essential to ensure that there are sufficient resources for training and development. Additionally, the SAPS should adopt international standards for its training and development procedures. The management must develop a strategic plan to identify employees' needs and skills gaps and incorporate these into an evolving and improving training and development strategy (Moitsadi et al., 2024).

Employee development involves ongoing efforts to enhance job performance using techniques including leadership mentorship, coaching, and training sessions. Training is a particular activity intended to teach new knowledge or abilities, and it is frequently given to newly hired or promoted staff members. Training and development are essential functions of corporate human resources teams, who are typically tasked with planning and executing these initiatives.

2.10. THE CONCEPT OF PERFORMANCE AND EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE

As this study focuses on managerial competencies for excellent performance in the SAPS, it is important to examine the meaning of performance. What constitutes good employee performance varies from organization to organization and is a subjective concept. Employee

performance is a gauge of how well a worker does their job and behaves in the workplace. (Keijzers, 2010). It is crucial to note that an employee's output's quality, efficacy, and efficiency are important aspects of their performance (Brayfield and Crockett, 1955; Rizvi, 2018). But generally speaking, it means that a worker always meets or surpasses expectations, has a strong work ethic, is professional, and actively contributes to the team's and the organization's success.

According to Elena-Iuliana and Maria (2016), the concept of performance has garnered significant attention in recent decades, permeating nearly all areas of human activity. Performance, as a subjective perception of reality, accounts for the various critical analyzes surrounding the concept and its measurement tools (Elena-Iuliana and Maria, 2016). In a different vein, Didier and Etienne (2002) defines performance as achieving the goals assigned to you in alignment with the organization's objectives. Performance is not simply about obtaining a result; rather, it involves comparing the actual outcome to the intended goals. True performance is measured by how well outcomes align with set targets.

Employee performance can be measured in a number of ways to determine how well an employee is performing. The key to determining effectiveness is determining how well the work achieves the intended results (Donati, Viola, Toscano, and Zappala, 2021). Therefore, one must concentrate on the goal itself rather than the route to it. An employee's output can sometimes be readily measured. An employee's speed and efficiency can be measured in these kinds of work situations (technical work, sales, etc.). Frequently, the quality of the job done is a critical performance metric. To do this, a set of criteria must be established beforehand so that the work may be assessed against them (Bouckaert and Halligan 2008).

Consistency and trust are essential in the workplace. Employee performance will be influenced in part by their ability to work extra and their dependability in completing tasks independently and on time (Tan and Lau, 2012). Workers are more likely to care about their work and consistently complete tasks to the highest standards while adhering to the organization's standards when they feel that their work is in line with the company objectives (IMS, 2014). Job satisfaction, training and development, objectives and expectations, employee engagement, and corporate culture are important elements that impact employee performance (Rechter, 2010).

First, excellent performance may be defined in terms of consistently exceeding communicated expectations and performance requirements. In understanding performance, it is key to set performance standards with established criteria to evaluate the employees' job performance (Akinbowale, Lourens, and Jinabhai, 2014). These criteria are used as a benchmark to evaluate how successfully a worker is fulfilling their duties and accomplishing their goals.

The goals of the organization and the particular requirements of a job are usually the sources of performance standards (IMS, 2014). They give workers a clear idea of what is expected of them, including deadlines, the amount and quality of work, and any other pertinent performance metrics. In performance management, well-defined performance standards are essential because they assist managers and staff coordinate their efforts, establish goals, and track their progress toward the organization's mission and objectives (Popova and Sharpanskykh, 2010).

Secondly, excellent performance contributes to the success of the organization in ways that go far beyond the requirements of the job. Third, excellent performance contributes unique, innovative, and workable solutions to projects/problems (Rho, Lee, and Makkonen, 2020). Performance management is a multifaceted concept which is characterized as a management approach that incorporates and employs performance-related information to guide decision-making processes within organizations (Van Dooren et al., 2015). Encouraging individuals to perform at their highest level, coordinating their efforts with the organization's strategic goals, and fostering a happy and rewarding work environment are the goals of performance management (Williams and Williams, 2017).

2.11. MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Employee performance refers to the degree to which a team member within an organization is effective, efficient, productive, and produces high-quality work. It includes the degree to which workers fulfil their duties, accomplish predetermined goals and objectives, and add to the organization's overall performance (Pizzini and Furlan, 2012).

Employee performance is not solely based on quantitative metrics. Qualitative elements like teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and flexibility are also included. It is important

to note that, instead of measuring only the financial results as traditional organizations do, focusing on measuring productivity, the quality of work, and time management skills is crucial for employee performance (Pizzini and Furlan, 2012). There are six simple strategies that are helpful in measuring employee performance. One of the best ways to keep employees engaged and moving forward is to set measurable objectives and key results for them. This also helps to define the most important milestones and outcomes that are expected of them within a specific time frame (Doerr, 2018).

Sookdeo (2019) highlights the necessity of organizations to take a methodical approach to performance measurement, integrating it into their overall management strategies. This integration allows organizations to align their resources and processes effectively, ultimately leading to improved performance and productivity. Sookdeo (2019) concludes that a focus on work measurement can provide organizations with valuable insights that drive continuous improvement and operational excellence. Tan and Lau (2012) also maintain that the selection of performance metrics for assessing employee performance is crucial, as it can significantly influence employees' feelings regarding fairness, job satisfaction, and their commitment to the organization.

Akinbowale, Lourens, and Jinabhai (2014) define performance appraisal as the process of determining and communicating an employee's job performance, which includes establishing a plan for future performance improvements. A well-structured performance appraisal system is key in enhancing both organizational and employee performance. Individual performance encompasses more than merely completing designated tasks - it includes a wide range of organizational activities that significantly influence how job performance is understood and assessed. Although evaluating overall organizational performance is crucial for achieving organizational objectives (Popova and Sharpanskykh, 2010), assessing individual performance is essential for grasping the impact of different interventions on workplace effectiveness.

2.12. UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE KZN SAPS

Assessing the performance of law enforcement organizations like the KZN SAPS is crucial for determining areas that require improvement and implementing effective strategies (Eck and Maguire, 2000). KPIs may include crime reduction, public trust, and operational efficiency (College of Policing 2023). A performance management system is seen a procedure that

improves the organizational professionalism and ensures efficient service (Sostrin, 2013). Performance Enhancement Process (PEP) User Guide (2002:2), as cited by Krause (2004) discusses the PEP implemented by the SAPS for non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers.

The primary purpose of PEP is to serve as a professional development tool, providing officers with opportunities for improving their knowledge and abilities relevant to their jobs. The intended outcome of this employee development initiative is to improve the overall quality and effectiveness of service delivery across the SAPS, as the organization seeks to enable its personnel to perform their duties more efficiently and effectively (Krause, 2004). Performance management, often known as the performance evaluation process, involves enhancing organizational professionalism and effective service delivery (Smit, 2019).

Krause (2004) emphasizes the importance of aligning individual employee performance with the strategic objectives of the SAPS. To achieve this, it is crucial that the KPAs outlined in the performance agreements of managers are effectively cascaded to the next level of supervision. This guarantees that the strategic objectives of the SAPS are consistently communicated and implemented throughout the organization, from the top management level down to the individual employee level. By effectively cascading the KPAs, the SAPS can ensure that the efforts and contributions of all employees are aligned with the organization's overall strategic goals and priorities.

To enhance employee performance and motivation within the SAPS, managers must focus on training initiatives that improve the capabilities of police officers (Mofokeng and Aphane, 2022). Although talented competent managers can enhance organizations by being innovators, visionaries, leaders, and influencers, directorially competent managers can enhance their organizations' performance by being moral organizers, administrators, coordinators, and communicators (Torres-Rivera and Pedraza-Melo, 2023).

2.13. PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON COMPETENCE AND PERFORMANCE IN THE POLICE SERVICE

The study by Ketel (2005) focuses on the management competencies of police officers within the SAPS and their impact on service delivery. The dissertation, addresses the critical need for

effective management at police stations, particularly in the context of SA's unique socio-political environment. This study aimed to create a thorough list of managerial competencies that station managers should possess within the SAPS (Ketel, 2005). The research identified significant gaps in the management competencies of current station managers, particularly in the East Metropole of Cape Town.

The study posits that effective management is essential for the successful implementation of national policies and strategies aimed at crime prevention, and therefore, the competence of station managers is crucial for enhancing service delivery and addressing the challenges of crime in the country (Ketel, 2005). The study highlights that while there are sufficient personnel theoretically, the lack of effective management structures and training undermines the operational efficiency of the SAPS. The research also stresses that station managers also known as station commanders, face immense pressure from both higher authorities and the communities they serve.

This dual pressure necessitates a balanced expertise set that includes not only technical policing skills but also strong managerial competencies (Ketel, 2005). The research identifies significant gaps in management competencies at the station level, which is exacerbated by resource constraints and public expectations for improved police performance. Ketel's (2005) findings illuminate the pressing need for enhanced management programs for training and development customized to the particular challenges faced by police leaders. This suggests that future research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of these initiatives in improving managerial capacity and operational performance within the SAPS.

Cloete (2015) conducted a study, with the primary aim of assessing the effectiveness of the MMLP in developing competencies among middle managers in the SAPS. The study sought to identify the competencies that are essential for effective police management and assess whether the MMLP adequately addresses these needs (Cloete, 2015). The study is particularly relevant in the context of SA's ongoing challenges with crime and public safety, highlighting the critical role that competent management plays in enhancing police performance and service delivery. The dissertation also contextualizes the MMLP within the broader legislative and policy framework governing police management in SA, which is essential for understanding the unique challenges faced by the SAPS.

The study utilized a questionnaire based on established competency models, including the AMA competency model, to gather feedback from participants who completed the program between 2011 and 2013 (Cloete, 2015). Cloete's findings reveal several critical insights regarding the competencies required for effective police management. The evaluation indicated that while the MMLP covers a range of relevant topics, there are gaps in the training that need to be addressed to better equip middle managers. For instance, the study identified a need for greater emphasis on competencies such as strategic thinking, leadership, and change management, which are vital for navigating the complexities of modern policing (Cloete, 2015).

The findings indicated that while the program improved certain managerial skills, there were still areas for improvement. The findings and recommendations offered in the study serve as a foundation for ongoing research and development efforts aimed at enhancing the capabilities of police leaders in SA. Therefore, the study recommends future research to integrate development programs into a structured framework to further enhance managerial competencies in the SAPS (Cloete, 2015).

The study by Masilela (2013) critically evaluates the MMLP of the SAPS. Similar to that of Cloete (2015), this study aims to assess the effectiveness of the MMLP in enhancing competencies among middle management within the police force, thereby improving overall performance. The research lights several key areas regarding competencies and performance in police services, emphasizing the importance of structured training programs in fostering effective leadership and operational efficiency (Masilela, 2013). Through a thorough evaluation of the MMLP, the study found that while the program aimed to enhance managerial skills, there were significant gaps in its implementation and outcomes. Specifically, the study noted that many participants felt inadequately prepared for the complexities of their roles, indicating a need for more targeted training that aligns with the practical demands of police work (Masilela, 2013).

The findings suggest that the MMLP did not sufficiently equip middle managers with the necessary tools to lead effectively, which in turn affects the overall performance of the SAPS (Masilela, 2013). This is aligned with broader research indicating that competency-based training is essential for improving police performance and accountability. The study emphasizes that enhancing competencies through structured learning can lead to better

decision-making, improved community relations, and a more effective police force (Masilela, 2013).

The study by Efendi, Ansar, and Fattah (2020) titled "*The Effect of Leadership, Competence and Discipline on Police Performance in the Soppeng Police Station*" conducted in Indonesia, investigates the critical factors influencing police performance in a specific Indonesian context. The research aimed to explore how leadership styles, the competencies of police officers, and their disciplinary measures collectively impact their overall performance at the Soppeng Police Station (Efendi, Ansar, and Fattah, 2020). The authors posited that effective leadership enhances the competencies of officers and reinforces discipline, ultimately leading to improved performance outcomes. This focus is particularly relevant in the context of law enforcement, where the ability to respond effectively to community needs and challenges is paramount.

The study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing surveys distributed to police personnel to gather data on their perceptions of leadership, competence, and discipline (Efendi, Ansar, and Fattah, 2020). The findings revealed that all three factors significantly influence police performance. Specifically, strong leadership fosters a supportive environment that enhances officer competencies and encourages adherence to disciplinary standards (Efendi, Ansar, and Fattah, 2020).

The study titled Professional Competences Scale for Police Officers: Evidence of Psychometric Adequacy conducted in Brazil by Thiago Gomes Nascimento, Eda Castro Lucas de Souza, and Breno Giovanni Adaid-Castro focuses on evaluating the factorial structure and psychometric properties of a newly developed scale designed to measure the professional competencies of police officers in Brazil. This research is significant as it addresses a gap in the Brazilian literature regarding competency assessment within the police sector (Nascimento, Souza, and Adaid-Castro, 2020).

The development of the Professional Competences Scale for Police Officers (ECPP) involved a systematic approach divided into three phases, incorporating insights from both police officers and university professors with expertise in psychology and administration. A non-probabilistic sample of 916 state police officers was surveyed using the scale. The results from exploratory and confirmatory factor analyzes revealed a bi-dimensional structure comprising 16 items. The first dimension pertains to behavioural competencies, which encompass the

interpersonal skills and attitudes necessary for effective policing. The second dimension focuses on technical competencies, referring to the specific knowledge and skills required for performing police duties effectively (Nascimento et al., 2020).

The findings of the study indicate that the Professional Competences Scale for Police Officers demonstrates strong internal consistency and adequate psychometric validity, making it a reliable tool for assessing police competencies. The authors emphasize that this scale not only fills a critical void in the Brazilian context but also provides a practical instrument for evaluating professional competencies in police work. They suggest that the ECPP can be utilized alongside other organizational behaviour variables to better understand the antecedents and consequences of competencies (Nascimento et al., 2020).

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of professional competencies as indicators of work performance, advocating for further research to enhance the precision and generalizability of the Professional Competences Scale for Police Officers across different contexts. It also suggests that the scale can serve as a valuable management tool for police organizations, aiding in performance evaluations, strategic planning, and identifying training needs based on competency gaps (Nascimento et al., 2020). Overall, this research contributes to the broader understanding of professional competence in policing, particularly in the public sector, and underscores the necessity of developing robust competency measures to inform training and development initiatives.

The study by Romadhon and Soeling (2024), titled "*The Role of Competency and Compensation required by the Police to Face Performance Demands in the Society 5.0 Era*" conducted in Indonesia, examines the critical factors of competency and compensation that influence police performance in the context of Society 5.0. This era is characterized by advanced technology and a heightened demand for adaptability in various professional sectors, including law enforcement.

The researchers employed a qualitative approach, utilizing secondary data from existing literature to analyze the competencies and compensation necessary for police officers to meet the evolving performance demands. The findings indicate that police officers must possess a blend of hard skills, soft skills, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to navigate the challenges presented by Society 5.0. Specifically, the required competencies

include digital proficiency in technology-driven environments, the ability to collaborate with cyber systems, flexibility in work processes to accommodate stakeholder needs, a competitive mindset, and effective teamwork (Romadhon and Soeling, 2024). The study concludes by suggesting areas for future research, particularly the need to explore the development of specific competency frameworks tailored to the unique challenges of Society 5.0. It also calls for further investigation into the relationship between compensation structures and police performance, emphasizing the importance of aligning these factors to improve the effectiveness of police work in a rapidly changing environment.

The study titled "*Required Leadership Competencies for the Police Executive*" investigates the essential leadership competencies necessary for police executives to effectively lead municipal law enforcement agencies. Conducted by a group of researchers, this study aims to identify the key traits and skills that contribute to successful police leadership, particularly focusing on the unique challenges faced by police executives in contemporary society (Shea, 2015). The research employs a qualitative methodology, utilizing the Delphi method to gather insights from a panel of experts, including experienced police chiefs and leadership scholars. This iterative process allowed the researchers to reach a consensus on the competencies deemed critical for effective police leadership. The study identified a total of 34 competencies, qualities, and attributes that police executives should possess, categorized into three main areas: leadership competencies, management qualities, and personal attributes.

Among the identified competencies, key traits such as integrity, communication skills, decision-making ability, and EQ were emphasized as vital for building trust and fostering collaboration within law enforcement agencies (Shea, 2015). The findings suggest that these competencies not only enhance the effectiveness of police executives but also contribute to improving overall organizational performance and community relations. The study also highlights the importance of ongoing professional development for police leaders, suggesting that training programs should be tailored to address the identified competencies (Shea, 2015). Furthermore, it points out the need for future research to explore how these competencies can be effectively integrated into police training curricula and leadership development programs.

The study titled "*Performance of Police Members: How the Role of Motivation, Competency, and Compensation*" by Vita Mayastinasari investigates the interrelationships among motivation, competency, compensation, and the performance of police officers in Indonesia.

The research aims to analyze how these factors influence police performance, particularly in the context of the evolving demands of modern policing (Mayastinasari, 2023). Utilizing a quantitative survey method, the study involved 310 police officers selected through random sampling. Data was collected via online questionnaires designed with a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7.

The findings reveal that motivation, competency, and compensation all have significant positive effects on police performance. Specifically, higher levels of motivation lead to improved performance, as do enhanced competencies and adequate compensation. The study emphasizes that motivated officers are more likely to engage in productive behaviours, thereby increasing overall organizational effectiveness. The research highlights the importance of developing competencies that align with the demands of contemporary policing, as well as ensuring that compensation is satisfactory to foster motivation among officers (Mayastinasari, 2023). The study suggests that police organizations should focus on these key areas to enhance performance and meet the challenges posed by modern societal expectations. It advocates for ongoing efforts to improve these factors within police organizations, suggesting that future research could explore additional variables that may influence performance, such as organizational culture and job satisfaction.

These studies have focused on evaluating existing police management programs, developing competency assessment tools, identifying critical leadership competencies, analyzing performance drivers, and exploring competency needs in emerging contexts. They collectively highlight the importance of competencies, competency frameworks, and compensation in enhancing police performance. Future research could build on these findings by validating competency models across diverse police organizations, investigating long-term performance impacts, and incorporating additional organizational factors.

2.14. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review of the literature on managerial competencies essential for achieving excellent performance, introducing the concept of competencies and exploring various definitions to establish a foundational understanding of effective management. It highlighted key issues such as the significance of critical skills and attributes necessary for competent leadership, the exploration of various competency models

and frameworks, particularly in the context of policing, and the distinctions between management and leadership, emphasizing employee expectations of their managers. The discussion focused on managerial competencies within the SAPS, underlining the importance of aligning training and development initiatives with competency and performance to enhance organizational effectiveness. Additionally, the chapter defined performance and examined methods for measuring both organizational and employee performance, particularly within the KZN SAPS, while reinforcing the relationship between effective managerial competencies and superior performance outcomes in police services. The literature also discussed the levels and tipping points of managerial competencies, emphasizing how certain competencies can significantly influence performance outcomes. The synthesis of previous research underscored the critical role of these competencies in driving performance excellence, contributing to a deeper understanding of how they can enhance managerial effectiveness and organizational success. The next chapter will focus on the research methodology employed in this study, detailing the approaches and methods used to investigate managerial competencies within law enforcement in SA.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

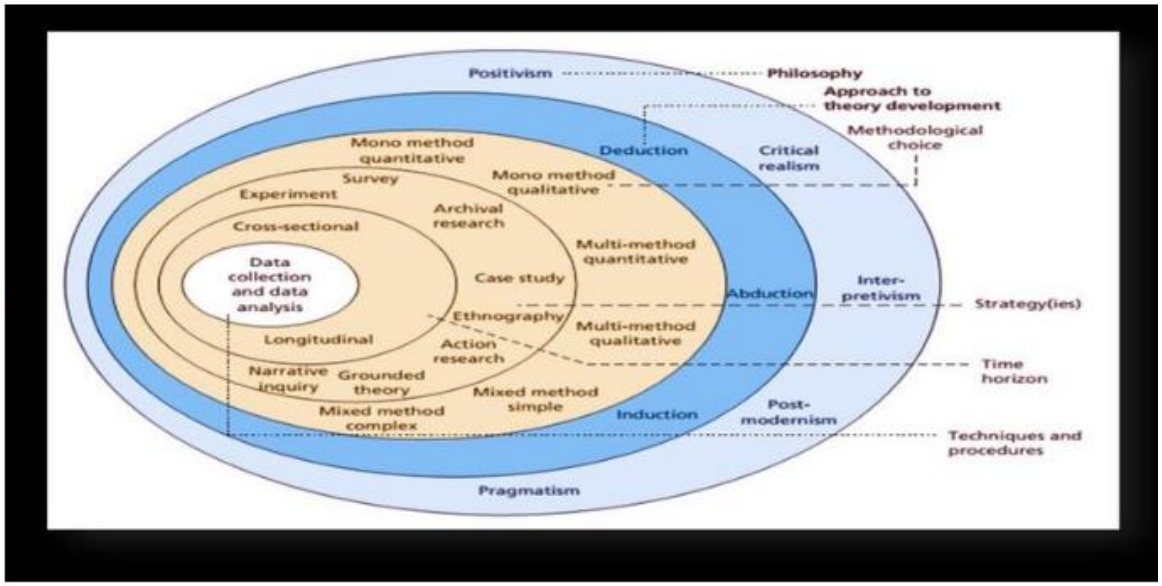
This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the research methodology employed in this study, outlining the systematic approach taken to investigate managerial competencies for excellent performance within the SAPS in KZN. The chapter begins by defining what research is and discussing the underlying research philosophy that guides this study. It then presents the research process using Saunders' Research Onion framework, which includes various layers such as research design, approach, and methodology choice. Following this, the chapter details the specific research strategies employed, including the study area, target population, and sampling methods. It further elaborates on data collection techniques and instruments used to gather information, as well as the processes for data analysis. Additionally, considerations regarding research quality and ethical implications are discussed to ensure the integrity of the study. The chapter concludes with a summary that encapsulates the key points covered.

3.2. THE DEFINITION OF RESEARCH

Fox and Bayat (2007) define research as a systematic process of investigation that involves discovering facts or obtaining information. Whereas, Welman, (2005) maintain that research is a course of action which comprises attaining scientific knowledge through the use of various procedures and objective methods to answer specific questions arising from a problem. The research process, therefore, involves developing a problem or question and applying appropriate methods to gather information to address those questions. This chapter is about how research methodology was used to investigate managerial competencies for excellent, rather than average, performance in the SAPS in KZN.

3.3. RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The presentation of the research process in this study is guided by the Research Onion framework by Saunders (2016).



Research Onion (Source: Saunders et al 2016)

Figure 3.1: The Research Onion. (Source: Saunders et al 2016:108)

Research philosophy refers to the underlying beliefs, assumptions, and principles that guide the research process. It deals with the source, nature, and development of knowledge (Bryman, 2016; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). There are four main research philosophies in business studies:

- *Positivism* - Positivists believe that reality is stable and can be observed and described objectively. They contend that phenomena should be isolated and observations should be repeatable. This paradigm believes that there is single and objective reality, independent of the researcher, which necessitates an arm's-length relationship between the researcher and researched to avoid bias.
- *Pragmatism* - Pragmatists advocate for a balanced approach that transcends extreme objectivism and subjectivism. Pragmatism is about identifying what works best in finding answers for the questions in the research. It is a practical way of understanding reality using various tools and research designs.
- *Interpretivism* - Interpretivists see the world as subjective and open to multiple interpretations. They favor qualitative methods over quantitative ones. Interpretivism posits that reality is socially constructed, meaning that individuals create and interpret their own realities through interactions and shared meanings.

- *Realism* - Realists offer a dynamic perspective, acknowledging both objective and subjective aspects of reality. Direct realism, often referred to as naive realism, is characterized by 'what you see is what you get.' This perspective suggests that individuals perceive the world directly through their senses. In contrast, critical realism posits that while humans do experience sensations and images of the real world, these perceptions can be misleading and may not accurately reflect reality. Critical realists acknowledge that varied factors, including sensory perceptions, can obstruct our understanding of the true nature of reality as researchers.

The researcher employed an interpretivist philosophy, utilizing qualitative methods, specifically interviews, to gather in-depth understandings that reflect the diverse perspectives of managers on the managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), the interpretive approach to research examines individuals' attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, emotions, and experiences to understand how they perceive a specific phenomenon.

3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is described by Babbie and Mouton (2001:75) as the chosen strategy for conducting a research project. It acts as a framework for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data, aimed at achieving the research objectives. A well-defined research design is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the research process, as it helps prevent misalignment between the research questions and the methodology employed (Jansen and Warren, 2023).

Research design can be classified into three primary types: descriptive, explanatory, and exploratory. Descriptive design focuses on detailing the characteristics of a phenomenon, answering the questions of what and how. Explanatory design aims to clarify relationships between variables, addressing what, why, and how. In contrast, exploratory design seeks to investigate a topic that is not well understood, allowing researchers to explore new insights and answer what and how (Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Stebbins, 2001).

This research adopts an exploratory design to delve into the complex and nuanced understanding of managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. Given the limited existing research on managerial competences for excellent performance within the SAPS in KZN, an

exploratory approach is appropriate as it enables the researcher to gather diverse perspectives from experienced and high performing police managers. This approach uncovers insights into the specific competencies that consistently drive managers toward outstanding performance, rather than generic managerial traits, in the SAn policing context. The frequency or regular demonstrations of behaviours, task execution, and results that reflect excellent police performance is crucial in identifying the managerial competencies for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS.

3.5. RESEARCH APPROACH

There are three main approaches to research: quantitative research, mixed methods, and qualitative research. According to Brynard and Hanekom (2006), qualitative methodology involves constructing descriptive information, typically through spoken or written accounts from participants about their experiences or observations. Qualitative research emphasizes understanding the standards, beliefs, and events being studied from the participants' perspectives (Walter, 2013). This approach adopts an interpretive and naturalistic stance, where researchers study phenomena in their natural context, striving to make sense of these experiences. Creswell and Poth (2016) argue that qualitative research is a situated activity that identifies the observer's role in the world and encompasses practices that can transform it.

In contrast, quantitative research focuses on assessing objective data represented by numerical values (Brynard and Hanekom, 2006). This approach involves the collection and analysis of numerical data to identify patterns, relationships, and trends within a given population or phenomenon. Mixed methods research design integrates elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Chih-Pei and Chang (2017) note that mixed methods are primarily utilized in social science theories and transformative paradigms.

This research adopts a qualitative approach because its aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the topic. Qualitative research methods facilitate a more comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon, allowing for close interaction with research participants to gather rich, detailed data that answers the research questions and produces a rich and thick description of the findings (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thick description involves providing a detailed account of participants' perspectives, intentions, contexts, motivations, meanings, and interpretations. Utilizing this qualitative research approach, the study will help the researcher gain a more profound understanding of managerial competencies critical for excellent performance,

characterized by consistently exceeding performance standards and contributing to the organizational success of the KZN SAPS.

While this research approach has its strengths, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the sample size was smaller than originally intended, with only 11 participants instead of the planned 22. This limitation arose due to the unavailability of potential participants during the busy organizational quarter. Although the sample size may appear small, it was sufficient to achieve data saturation and gather rich, qualitative insights from managers who met the criteria for excellence in the SAPS. Additionally, the use of purposive sampling, where participants were selected based on specific criteria, such as their rank and demonstrated excellence, limits the generalizability of the findings to the broader SAPS population. The study's findings are more reflective of the experiences and competencies of high-performing managers within the KZN SAPS.

Another limitation was the relatively short data collection period, which may have restricted the diversity of perspectives captured. However, data saturation was achieved, ensuring that the insights gathered were comprehensive. Furthermore, the focus of the study on managerial competencies among high-performing officers in a specific province (KZN) limits the applicability of the findings to other regions of South Africa or to lower-ranking police officers who may face different challenges and competencies.

To mitigate these limitations and biases, several strategies were employed. Triangulation of data sources, such as performance appraisal scores, annual operational plans, and SAPS Excellence Awards criteria, helped ensure that the selected participants were truly high-performing and that the data was consistent across different evaluation methods. Data collection was also terminated once data saturation was reached, ensuring that the sample size, while smaller than initially planned, was still sufficient to provide comprehensive insights. To reduce response bias, the confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained, allowing them to provide honest and open responses. Finally, the researcher engaged in reflective journaling throughout the data collection and analysis process to monitor personal biases and preconceptions, ensuring objectivity in interpreting the data.

3.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY CHOICE

This exploratory study utilized a qualitative research approach. The use of a qualitative research methodology in the study provided the best opportunity to address the research questions, situating it within an interpretive paradigm. This paradigm was favored by the researcher because it is particularly effective for exploring interconnected, complex, and multifaceted phenomena. The data collected through qualitative methods provided rich insights into the phenomenon under investigation, allowing for the formulation of predictions and exploration of critical information in greater detail (Flick, 2018). By employing qualitative research, this study sought to uncover the underlying factors that contribute to effective management practices, ultimately informing the development of a competency framework tailored to the unique challenges faced by the organization. Qualitative methods facilitated a deeper understanding of participants' thoughts and behaviors, which quantitative research could not effectively capture (Creswell, 2015).

3.7. RESEARCH STRATEGIES

The research strategy outlines the overall direction of the study, including the methodology and processes through which the research was carried out (Wedawatta, Ingirige, and Amaratunga, 2011). Saunders et al. (2009) describe research strategy as the overarching plan that outlines how the researcher intends to address the research questions. This study adopted a phenomenological research strategy, which was particularly suited for exploring the lived experiences of individuals. By employing an exploratory method, the qualitative research aimed to uncover the specific managerial competencies that were either exhibited or lacking among police managers within the KZN SAPS. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of how these competencies influence operational effectiveness and performance outcomes, providing valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by the organization.

3.7.1. Observation

Observation is a fundamental aspect of qualitative research, enabling researchers to gather insights into behaviors and interactions within their natural context. Haury (2002), as cited in Oğuz and Yürümezoğlu (2009), emphasizes that while observations may be subject to the limitations of human senses, they remain central to scientific inquiry. For Haury (2002),

observation transcends mere visual perception; it involves the collection of data through all senses and the use of instruments that extend beyond these senses. Moreover, the observer's assumptions and theoretical knowledge significantly influence the observation process, highlighting the subjective nature of this method. In this study, observation served as a complementary strategy to semi-structured interviews, allowing for the triangulation of findings. The data collected through observation was recorded in the form of field notes, which captured descriptive details such as the date, time, location, and activities observed. Additionally, these notes included reflective comments on the researcher's thoughts, impressions, and interpretations (Creswell and Poth, 2016). By analyzing the observation data alongside the interview transcripts, the exploratory qualitative study aimed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem, ultimately enriching the insights into the managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS.

3.7.2. Open-ended surveys or questionnaires

Open-ended surveys or questionnaires are a classic approach to collecting primary data. They function as essential research instruments that enable researchers to gather information and insights about their study topics. Dalati and Marx Gómez (2018) claim that, open-ended questions, in particular, give responders the opportunity to freely share their ideas and opinions on the research subject. In this method, the researcher poses a question related to a research problem, and the respondent provides their answers (Dalati and Marx Gómez, 2018).

However, Reja et al. (2003) pointed out that the absence of an interviewer can lead to challenges in communication between the researcher and the respondent. This lack of interaction could result in various issues, such as significant selection bias. It's possible that respondents won't be motivated to finish the entire questionnaire without the presence of another person, potentially leading to incomplete submissions. Additionally, the inability to probe for further clarification is particularly problematic, especially for questions that require multiple responses or open-ended inquiries (Reja et al., 2003). Furthermore, since the data collection process was not directly observed, it remained unclear whether respondents fully comprehended and adhered to the provided instructions.

3.7.3. Document analysis

Document analysis is an important research technique that has been used extensively for a long time. This process involves identifying, verifying, and examining documents relevant to the subject of investigation. Some researchers may overlook the importance of document analysis due to a lack of awareness regarding its potential benefits (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). This method encompasses the examination of various document types, comprising scholarly journal papers, books, press stories, and institutional reports. In essence, any text-based document can be used as a reliable source for qualitative research (Patton, 2022).

Qualitative researchers often prefer methods such as interviews over document analysis, as they seek to engage more actively in field research (Morgan, 2022). However, analyzing documents requires the researcher to consider the perspective of the document's creator and the context in which it was produced, necessitating careful attention and expertise (Andrade et al., 2018). Additionally, the nature of the document, whether legal, technical, historical, or otherwise, must be taken into account during analysis, with the researcher ensuring the document's authenticity and reliability.

Document analysis serves a dual purpose - it is both a technique for data collection and analysis, as well as a comprehensive research method (Andrade et al., 2018). As a data collection and analysis technique, it complements other methods, enhancing the understanding of the study subject. As a research method, it provides a focused framework that guides the investigation, offering a rigorous methodological approach to the study.

3.7.4. Interviews

Kvale (2007) discusses the role of interviews as a method for gathering rich, detailed data from participants. He emphasizes understanding participants' perspectives and experiences. Brynard and Hanekom (2014) assert that an interview is a face-to-face interaction between two individuals, where the researcher can clarify any ambiguities to obtain high-quality information. On the other hand, Frey and Oishi (1995) describe an interview as a structured dialogue in which one individual, the interviewer, poses predetermined questions to another individual, the respondent. This process involves inquiries that connect to factual information, personal philosophies, perceptions regarding realities, emotions, intentions, and motivations behind actions or feelings (Leedy and Ormrod, 2013).

3.7.5. In-depth interviews

In-depth interviewing is characterized as a qualitative research technique that involves interviewing a small group of participants in-depth one-on-one to learn more about their opinions on a certain idea, initiative, or circumstance (Boyce and Neale, 2006:3). A notable advantage of interviews is their ability to foster an Interactive relationship, allowing researchers to engage deeply with participants about their perceptions and experiences (Patton, 2005). The planned duration for each interview is between 30 to 60 minutes. These in-depth interviews resemble conversations where the researcher steers the data collection process. Eleven participants were interviewed due to the limited availability of officers at the SAPS KZN provincial offices, particularly during this demanding time of the year. The interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams, as well as in-person, depending on the participants' convenience. With the consent of the participants, they were electronically recorded for subsequent analysis and interpretation by the researcher. Boyce and Neale (2006) provide a framework for conducting the interview process, suggesting a series of steps to ensure effective engagement and data collection that a researcher has followed:

3.7.5.1. Research Plan

The researcher must initially create a comprehensive plan that outlines the identification of study participants and confirmation of their willingness to participate. This plan should also include a list of interview participants and specify the sample size. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher is required to identify all necessary resources and information, as well as determine potential sources for that information. Additionally, it is essential for the researcher to ensure that the study adheres to both international and national research standards. Finally, approval to carry out the research is granted by the ethical research committee of the relevant accredited institution.

3.7.5.2. Development of Instruments

After receiving approval for the study from the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, as attached in Appendix One (1), the researcher must create the protocols and guidelines that will govern the interview process, both during and after the sessions. It is important to communicate these rules to the interviewees prior to the interviews. Establishing these guidelines will help ensure consistency throughout the interviews and improve the reliability of the findings. This process will encompass the formulation of

questions for participants, an explanation of ethical considerations to the interviewees, any necessary language translation, and the methods for analyzing and interpreting the interview results.

3.7.5.3. Training Data Collectors

For large-scale research projects, the principal investigator should ensure that all data collectors receive proper training on the strategies and systems to be used for data collection. This training should emphasize the importance of maintaining confidentiality to uphold ethical standards throughout the process. In this study, only one data collector was involved, and the necessary training was provided to conduct the research and interviews with participants. The training received by the researcher included a six-month course on research methodology as part of the curriculum, attendance at research seminars, and ongoing discussions with co-supervisors.

3.7.5.4. Data Collection

After completing the required training, data collection can commence once the researcher has secured informed consent from the participants. In this study, data was gathered through interviews. At the outset of each interview, the researcher should reiterate the purpose of the interview and explain why the participant was selected to take part. Additionally, the researcher should confirm certain pieces of information provided by the participant during the interview.

3.8. STUDY AREA

The research was carried out primarily at the KZN SAPS Provincial Head Office, located in Durban. This location was chosen as it is central office for all components within the KZN SAPS, and provides easy access to participants from different units and ranks.

3.9. TARGET POPULATION

The target population for this study consists of Police Act managers in the KZN SAPS, specifically those ranked as Lieutenant Colonels, Colonels, Brigadiers, and Major Generals (Ranks 10–14). This group was chosen due to their significant leadership roles within the SAPS and their ability to provide valuable insights into the unique managerial competencies that lead to excellent performance. These managers are directly responsible for strategic

decision-making and operational oversight, making their performance critical to the effectiveness of the SAPS in KZN.

As noted by Babbie and Mouton (2018), a population encompasses all potential respondents who can provide relevant information for the study. In this case, the target population was selected based on their rank and demonstrated excellent performance in their roles over the last two performance review cycles. By targeting managers at different ranks, the sampling strategy is key to obtaining rich and diverse views from police officers at different levels of seniority. The concept of "echelon" refers to the hierarchy of various levels or tiers within an organization. This hierarchical structure is often visualized as a pyramid, where each level represents a different rank or authority, facilitating the distribution of responsibilities and decision-making across the organization (Saiti and Stefou, 2020).

Participants in this study included individuals from both upper and middle management within the SAPS, encompassing a range of leadership roles responsible for strategic decision-making and operational oversight.

- Upper Management: Typically, senior-level police officers, such as Brigadiers, Major Generals, and Provincial Commissioners, who are responsible for strategic decision-making and oversight.
- Middle Management: Police managers at the Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel ranks, who oversee operational aspects and implement strategic directives.

3.10. SAMPLING

Blanche, Durkheim, and Painter (2006) define sampling as the procedure of selecting specific instances from the overall population for examination. A purposive sampling strategy was used to identify and select the target group of managers within the KZN SAPS. This approach allows for the selection of participants based on specific criteria, ensuring that the sample represents a diverse range of experiences and perspectives. The purpose of sample selection, according to Blanche et al. (2006), is to select a sample that fairly represents the population from which the researcher plans to draw conclusions. The criteria for selection were based on the participants' rank (Lieutenant Colonels, Colonels, Brigadiers, and Major Generals), as well as their demonstrated excellence in performance. Purposive sampling, according to De Vos, Strydom,

Fouche, and Delport (2011), entails choosing a specific instance since it identifies a particular procedure or component which is pertinent to a given report.

A total sample size of 11 participants were selected through purposive sampling from the target population of managers in the KZN SAPS who had demonstrated excellent performance in their roles for at least the last two performance review cycles. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, is a non-probability method where participants are chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the study (Nikolopoulou, 2022). The initial size was 22; however, only 11 participants were available. This sample size was deemed sufficient to obtain a diverse range of experiences and perspectives within the organization while still being manageable for in-depth interviews.

In this study, the recruitment process for participants was based on identifying those with consistently high performance across three key sources: Performance Appraisal Scores, the annual operational plan and the criteria established in the SAPS Excellence Awards.

- Performance Appraisal Scores: Only those with consistently high scores on performance appraisals over the last two cycles were eligible for selection. These scores provided quantitative evidence of effective performance.

- Annual Operational Plan: The annual operational plan was utilized to assess performance against specific indicators and activities. This involved identifying those individuals or components who consistently achieved or exceeded their targets. The operational plan provided measurable objectives that allowed for a clear comparison of performance levels among personnel.

- The SAPS Excellence Awards Criteria: The criteria outlined in the SAPS Excellence Awards were also instrumental in differentiating excellent performers. These criteria include:

  - Achievements towards strategic objectives linked to KPAs in terms of quality, quantity, time, and cost efficiency.

  - Dedication to duty, including instances where employees went beyond their standard responsibilities.

- Demonstrated creativity, initiative, innovation, and resourcefulness that positively contribute to service delivery.

- The impact or value added to service delivery. Below is a table depicting the details of research participants in this study.

Table 3.1: Profile of officers from the management echelon within the SAPS in KZN who participated in the study.

Role	Years of Experience	Gender	Qualification
Component Head	34 years	Male	B Tech in Policing
Component Head	30 years	Female	Bachelor of Science. Social Science
Component Head	20 years	Male	Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management
Component Head	37 years	Male	Master of Law
Section Commander	35 years	Female	National Diploma: Police Administration
Section Commander	29 years	Male	Diploma in Policing
Section Commander	23 years	Male	Postgraduate Diploma in Management
Section Commander	17 years	Male	Bachelor of Arts in Media Studies
Section Commander	16 years	Male	Bachelor of Technology in Cost and

			Management Accounting
Section Commander	14 years	Female	ND: In Cost and Management Accounting
Section Commander	13 years	Male	Bachelor of Technology in Operations Management

Source: Authors Composition

3.11. DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENT

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. (2014) define data collection as a process utilizing instruments to gather data concerning opinions, beliefs, and views related to a particular phenomenon. Researchers employ various tools to gather data in qualitative research, including interviews, questionnaires, document analysis, and observations. In this study, semi-structured and in-depth interviews were employed as the primary data collection methods due to their flexibility and ability to elicit rich, detailed responses from participants. Semi-structured interviews allow for open-ended questions while providing a framework that ensures all relevant topics are covered, facilitating a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives. Nieuwenhuis (2007) emphasizes that when a person is used as a source of data collection, the focus shifts to various forms of written communication that could provide insight into the phenomenon under investigation.

3.12. DATA COLLECTION

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with managers from various components of the KZN SAPS provincial head office not just to understand threshold competencies, but also to explore tipping points and the managerial competencies necessary for excellent performance. The tipping point occurs when a threshold is crossed, explaining how a specific

trend, process, moment, message, or idea spreads and sustain a new level. Tipping points represent the transition or crossing from being an average performer to becoming an excellent performer. Clarity on the competencies that account for the disproportionate positive influence required to cross the threshold and achieve excellence as a police manager is key to identifying managerial competencies for excellence.

During the interviews, the researcher utilized an interview guide (attached in Appendix 5) containing questions designed to explore the managerial competencies necessary for achieving excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. The guide also examined the context, conditions, and outcomes related to these competencies and the results they reinforced over time. The content and organization of the interview guide were informed by the research questions. Below is a table that aligns the research questions with the corresponding focus areas of the questions included in the interview guide.

Table 3.2: Matching research question and interview guide structure and content.

Research question	**Core content focused in interview guide to answer the question**	**Number of standing interview questions on the research question**
What managerial competencies are critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS?	To identify the managerial competences critical for excellent performance	4
How does managerial competencies impact on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS?	Managerial competences impact on performance outcomes	3
How does training and development opportunities shape the development of managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS?	Training and development opportunities	3

What managerial competencies are critical for excellent performance to constitute a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN?	Managerial competence for excellence to be in a framework for the SAPS managers	3

Source: Authors Composition

To guide the research methodology on data collection for this study, the work of Kvale (2007) was utilized. Kvale (2007) emphasizes the importance of preparation in conducting effective interviews, aligning with the researcher's need for key points to keep the interviews focused and intentional. These points are explained as below:

- Select an Appropriate Environment: Kvale (2007) stresses the importance of selecting a comfortable and distraction-free setting for interviews. This helps participants feel at ease, leading to more open and honest responses. In this study, four interviews were conducted in private meeting rooms at the SAPS KZN Provincial Head office, while seven were conducted via Microsoft Teams. All interviews were arranged at the participants' convenience, ensuring minimal interruptions. They were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy.

- Communicate the Interview's Purpose: Prior to interviews, the researcher outlined the interview's objectives to participants. This transparency helped set expectations and reassured participants about the significance of their contributions (Kvale, 2007).

- Address Confidentiality: The researcher assured participants that their identities would remain confidential and that only the researcher and supervisor would access the data. Participants were informed that the data collected would be used solely for the final report of the study. This reassurance encouraged openness during the interview (Kvale, 2007).

- Clarify Interview Format: While maintaining flexibility, the researcher followed a structured guide to ensure conversations stayed relevant. Kvale (2007) suggests

preparing open-ended questions to allow participants to express their thoughts freely while guiding them through key topics. The researcher introduced the topic of managerial competencies for excellent performance, explaining that the study aimed to contribute to improved management practices within the KZN SAPS, and enhanced service delivery.

- Setting Expectations for Duration: Participants were informed that interviews would last approximately 60 minutes. Most were completed within 30-45 minutes, with only one exceeding 60 minutes. Informing participants about the anticipated length helped them prepare and allocate sufficient time.

- Provide Contact Information: The researcher shared contact details, encouraging participants to reach out with any questions or concerns regarding the study.

- Explain the Interview Process: Before starting, the researcher explained what participants could expect during the interview and invited questions to clarify uncertainties. This improved participants' comfort levels.

- Obtain Consent for Recording: Prior to commencing interviews, participants were informed about audio recordings for accuracy. Consent was obtained by signed forms.

Data for this study was collected from September 6 to September 19, 2024. A total of 11 interviews were conducted for this research. Although the initial plan included 22 participants, data collection concluded early due to the unavailability of commanders during a busy organizational quarter. The researcher halted data collection without concern, as data saturation had been achieved. The management employees who participated held ranks of Brigadier, Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col). These ranks were selected due to their substantial leadership experience, influence on organizational outcomes, and recognition as excellent performers within the SAPS structure. Participants ranged in age from 37 to 56 years and met all selection criteria.

Specifically, the criteria consisted of the following elements:

1. Rank: Participation was restricted to officers holding the ranks of Brigadier, Colonel, and Lt Colonel.

2. Performance History: Participants had to achieve consistently high scores on performance evaluations over at least two consecutive years.

3. Operational Impact: Candidates were evaluated based on their contributions to operational efficiency and effectiveness.

4. Leadership Abilities: Strong leadership skills were mandatory for participation.

3.13. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis involves organizing, examining, grouping, combining, and summarizing data (Leedy and Ormrod, 2023). This study used thematic analysis to identify key managerial competencies for excellent performance among police managers in the KZN SAPS. The focus was on recognizing patterns of actions and behaviors exhibited by the SAPS participants and the carrying out of tasks which tipped these managers into excellent management and operational success within the policing context. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that systematically identifies, analyzes, and interprets patterns (themes) within qualitative data (Dawadi, 2020). It allows researchers to distil complex datasets into meaningful themes that capture participants' experiences and perspectives. Thematic analysis is considered effective for identifying similarities and differences (Burns and Grove, 2003:479).

Following the thematic analysis framework established by Braun and Clarke (2006), which provides a structured approach for analyzing qualitative data, this study employed a systematic approach to sort and organize data into relevant themes, adhering to their six-phase process. This process includes familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. By applying this method, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how specific managerial competencies influence performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS, ultimately contributing to the development of a tailored competency framework. Thematic analysis not only facilitates a structured interpretation of qualitative data but also enhances the overall approachability of the analysis (Dawadi, 2020).

Following the thematic analysis framework established by Braun and Clarke (2006), this study employed a systematic method to sort and organize data into themes:

1. Familiarization with the Data: The researchers immersed themselves in the data by reading and re-reading transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding.
2. Generating Initial Codes: Preliminary codes were identified, highlighting features that appeared meaningful. This involved labelling specific data segments reflecting key ideas.
3. Searching for Themes: Coded data was organized into potential themes by identifying patterns and relationships. Related codes were grouped into overarching themes.
4. Reviewing Themes: Themes were refined to ensure they accurately represented the data, with coherence checked within and across themes.
5. Defining and Naming Themes: Each theme was defined and named, succinctly capturing its essence in relation to the research question.
6. Producing the Report: A detailed report was created, explaining the analysis and findings, supported by relevant examples.

By adhering to this systematic approach, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how managerial competencies influence performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS, ultimately contributing to a tailored competency framework.

3.14. RESEARCH QUALITY

According to Polit and Beck (2008) and Lincoln and Guba (1994), there are no criteria for the validity and reliability of instruments used by qualitative researchers that are uniformly validated. Since these tests are unique to quantitative research, this study proves to be reliable in its position. The following four criteria were used to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research:

- Credibility

Credibility addresses the question: “How congruent are the findings with reality?” It ensures that research findings are plausible and trustworthy. A member check was conducted, allowing participants to review the transcribed data for accuracy in capturing their views. The study has also used direct quotes to accurately report the views of participants. An audit trail of the

detailed description of the research process is provided to further enhance the credibility of the study.

- Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research is challenging because qualitative studies are not designed for replicability but rather applicability. Transferability refers to the extent to which the results can be used to different circumstances or contexts. Transferability comes about when the reader seeks to transfer the interpretation of the findings from one context to another similar context. These kinds of transfer applications depend on the researchers' detailed descriptions, which include background details about the fieldwork location, the sampling techniques employed, and the participant selection criteria. This helps readers assess whether the results may be relevant or transferable to comparable populations or environments outside of the study context.

In order for the reader to assess the findings' relevance, a researcher must provide them with enough information regarding the study's participants and environment (Cope, 2014). To ensure transferability of findings in this study, the researcher has provided in-depth details about the context, description and selection of participants from the KZN SAPS, the type and level of research participants, methodology, timeframes of data collection and rich results for any reader to gauge whether the findings can be applied to a relevant context outside the KZN SAPS.

- Confirmability

Polit and Beck (2018) define confirmability as the degree to which the findings are solely the product of the participants and the study's condition, unaffected by the researcher's personal preferences. In order to guarantee that the results could be independently confirmed, this study kept an audit log and contained real quotes from participants under the themes that were found. A member check was also used, allowing participants to confirm that the transcripts reflected their views accurately.

- Dependability

Dependability pertains to the consistency of research findings over time. To ensure dependability, researchers rigorously document their approaches, techniques for data gathering, and procedures for analysis. This study maintained an audit trail—a comprehensive

log of decisions made during the research process—to enable other researchers to replicate the study. Such documentation guarantees the dependability of the results (Houghton et al., 2013).

3.15. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study adhered to the ethical procedures established by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). Prior to commencing the research, ethical clearance was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of UKZN (as attached in Appendix 1). Research ethics refer to the principles of right and wrong that guide researchers in their work (Brynard and Hanekom, 2006). This research followed proper ethical standards and responsibilities (Quinlan, 2011). The following ethical principles, as identified by Babbie and Mouton (2001), were applied:

- Voluntary Participation: Participants were informed that their involvement in the study was entirely voluntary. They were briefed on the study's objectives and assured that they could withdraw at any time without facing any consequences. This transparency fostered trust among the police managers involved in the research.

- Right to Withdraw: The participants were made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without legal repercussions. This assurance encouraged openness and comfort when sharing insights on managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS.

- Safety and Protection of Participants: The researcher prioritized the safety of participants, ensuring that participation would not result in harm or negative repercussions, especially given the sensitive nature of law enforcement work.

- Confidentiality and Anonymity: Confidentiality and anonymity were paramount in this study. Participants were informed that only the researcher and supervisor would have access to the recordings and transcripts of the interviews. To protect their identities, no personal identifiers were recorded; instead, code names were used in reporting findings.

- Ethical Clearance: Ethical clearance was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of UKZN (as attached in Appendix 1). The SAPS National Head Office also granted support and approval (see Appendix 2). The researcher also secured a gatekeeper’s letter from the SAPS to protect both the participants and the organization.

3.16. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the research methodology for exploring managerial competencies for excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. The study employed in-depth interviews with high-performing police officers purposively selected based on their relevant knowledge and experience, and evidence of exceptional performance. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, and trustworthiness criteria were applied to ensure research quality. Ethical considerations, such as voluntary participation, the right to withdraw, and confidentiality, were upheld to protect participants and enhance the study's integrity. The next chapter presents the findings of this research, detailing key themes and patterns regarding managerial excellence, specifically highlighting the tipping points that distinguish excellent performers within the organization. It explores the specific competencies and behaviors that contribute to outstanding performance, providing a deeper understanding of what it means to achieve excellence in management. The next chapter will focus on the findings from the interviews to unpack the managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the findings from the exploratory study on managerial competencies among police managers within the KZN SAPS. The presentation of findings is organized according to the four research objectives established for this study. The chapter begins by presenting themes on managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in KZN SAPS. Secondly, it outlines themes on the impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes. Thirdly, the chapter explores themes on how training and development opportunities shape competencies in the KZN SAPS. Lastly, it highlights themes critical for inclusion in a Managerial Competence Framework for excellent policing performance in the SAPS.

4.2. THEMES ON MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES CRITICAL FOR EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN THE KZN SAPS

The first research question in this study focused on: "What managerial competencies are critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS?" In response, the study identifies seven themes relating to competencies essential for ensuring excellent performance within the KZN SAPS.

These themes include:

(1) EQ to lead self and others
(2) Enhancing collaboration for effective work performance
(3) Effective communication across multiple forms to achieve desired results
(4) Decision-making in a variety of stable and VUCA contexts
(5) Command leadership agility
(6) Technology-savviness for informed policing
(7) Strategic thinking

The findings are summarized in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Themes on managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS.

Area of competence	Sub-theme of competence	Frequency
EQ to lead self and others	▪ High emotional control in the face of public scrutiny	4
Enhancing collaboration for effective work performance	▪ Team building and sustained cohesion ▪ Effective delegation to ensure shared leadership ▪ Effective planning and execution of integrated operations involving several units ▪ Interpersonal skills for team success	4 5 7 5
Effective communication across multiple forms to achieve desired results	▪ Strategic communication for effective operations ▪ Public speaking ▪ Presentation skills for internal and external stakeholder engagement	7 5 4
Decision making in a variety of stable, and VUCA contexts	▪ Managing upwards ▪ Thriving under multiple levels and rigid decisional spaces ▪ Effective decision making for solving problems ▪ Effective decision for resources	3 5 7 6
Command leadership agility	▪ Effective leader`s responsiveness and quick adaptation to situation and people ▪ Quickly being in charge and on the ground ▪ Effective leader presence ▪ Effective social influence and command of complex and integrated operations	6 5 6 5

Technology savvy and informed policing	▪ Effective technology enabled research ▪ Effective use of technology for police administrative work ▪ Effective use of technology for police operations	4 5 6
Strategic thinking	▪ Demonstrate creative and analytical thinking ▪ Planning for long-term success	5 6

Source: Authors Composition

4.2.1. Interpersonal skills for team success

The findings indicate that effective interpersonal skills are critical for team success and effective management within the KZN SAPS. Participants emphasized the importance of team-building and collaboration as non-negotiable managerial competencies. Participant 1 noted:

> *"Managerial competencies are non-negotiable skills that a manager must possess to effectively perform their job. They encompass a blend of knowledge, skills, and attributes. For example, these include technical skills gained through experience, as well as interpersonal skills essential for teamwork."*

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4.2.2. Enhancing collaborative work performance

In addition to interpersonal skills, team building was highlighted as essential for fostering collaboration. Participant 2 described it as:

> *"A set of motivational abilities and knowledge values necessary to enhance management performance. Examples include team-building skills that foster collaboration among team members."*

This underlines that effective collaboration is integral to achieving organizational goals within the SAPS, especially in complex environments where teamwork is critical.

Participants 2 further stressed the need for managers to effectively collaborate across different units, and foster strong inter-team relationships:

> *"Effective collaboration is crucial for achieving operational goals, especially given the complex nature of SAPS operations. A manager's ability to motivate and bring together diverse teams is fundamental to success."*

4.2.3. Effective communicator`s skills

Effective communication is a core competency, particularly in public speaking and presenting operational plans. Participant 1 articulated:

> *"Critical competencies include public speaking and presentation skills. You must be able to present that information clearly in a PowerPoint format."*

This accentuates the importance of communication in operational planning.

4.2.4. Good decision-making competence

Participants highlighted the significance of decision-making capabilities. Participant 8 elaborated on the competencies required for effectively utilizing resources, making good decisions, planning appropriately, and solving problems:

> *"What I understand about managerial competencies is that it's an ability of a manager to be able to fulfil his mandate by ensuring that he uses the resources of his company or organization effectively, that he ensures good governance or good management in his role. Basically, that is it. A manager to be competent has to have skills in decision making, skills in problem solving. And, another example is an ability of a manager to plan properly."*

This reflects how effective decision-making is integral to resource management.

Participant 3 highlighted the importance of decision-making capabilities and communication in solving problems, viewing these skills as key to performing tasks successfully and efficiently:

> *"These competencies are defined as the ability to perform tasks successfully and efficiently. Key examples include communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and decision-making capabilities."*

This statement highlights how the rigid hierarchy in the SAPS can affect communication and decision-making processes. Participant 2 elaborated on the impact of this structure on decision-making speed:

> " *As a national organization, SAPS has a complex command structure that affects decision-making speed. In contrast, Metro Police operates under municipal governance with fewer reporting levels, allowing quicker decision-making processes. The layers of hierarchy within SAPS can create holdups; reports often take months to reach higher authorities like the Minister or NASCOM due to multiple approvals required at various levels. This complexity hampers our ability to respond rapidly to urgent operational needs."*

Participant 1 articulated:

> *"The SAPS operates within a hierarchical structure where rank significantly influences authority. For example, a Sergeant is more likely to be heeded than a Constable, regardless of educational qualifications. This hierarchy contrasts with the flatter structures found in agencies like Metro Police, where democratic practices are more prevalent. Such rigid hierarchies can impede communication and decision-making processes, creating challenges for managers who must navigate this complex landscape."*

Participant 1 highlighted another dimension of communication by specifying the significance of public speaking skills to convey operational plans, as well as the importance of technology and research skills.

"Critical competencies include public speaking and presentation skills, which are non-negotiable for any manager in SAPS. For instance, when preparing an operational plan (ops plan), you must be able to present that information clearly in a PowerPoint format. Additionally, IT skills are crucial; if you can't log on to Microsoft Teams or use Excel effectively, you're at a significant disadvantage. We're not just talking about basic access to technology and systems like Persal or capturing leave documents; we need managers who can handle research, compile documents, and manage communications efficiently through technology."

4.2.5. Command leadership agility

Participant 5 elaborated on command leadership agility when under high pressure:

> *"For excellent performance in KZN SAPS, certain managerial competencies are critical. Given the unique environmental challenges, we face, leadership and command skills are paramount. For example, during large-scale public events such as elections or protests, a SAPS manager must lead their team under high pressure. They need to provide quick and clear directives while maintaining order among officers and the public. This requires not only the ability to inspire discipline but also to adapt quickly to changes in the environment to manage crowd dynamics effectively."*

Participant 5 added that the size, nature and complexity of operations (where the competence of leading and commanding operations effectively) is manifested by excellent senior police officers:

> *"The managerial competencies listed earlier are closely related to the specific challenges and demands of working in KZN SAPS, which operates in high-pressure, dynamic, and sometimes dangerous environments. Some of these competencies include leadership and command skills as well as operational planning and coordination. In SAPS KZN, there is a challenge; KZN is home to a complex criminal network, and large-scale operations often require coordination between various units such as intelligence services, detective services, and public order policing."*

4.2.6. Leading by effective solving of problems

Participant 6 highlighted leadership, especially in the context of solving problems and execute duties effectively and efficiently, as revealed below:

> *"Managerial competencies are traits or characteristics that a manager should possess to effectively and efficiently execute their duties. These are basically the basic requirements of a manager. A manager must be able to lead, so leadership is one example. A manager should be able to solve problems."*

Participant 6 also emphasized the importance of being present as a leader:

> *"You need to be on the ground as a leader to show that you are in charge. I've seen personally at many crime scenes where there have been shootouts, where the Provincial Commissioner has visited. Members comment and say we are motivated to do the job because this man is always with us on the ground."*

Participant 10 also stressed the importance of proficiency in various forms of communication, such as written, and verbal communication in meetings, but also communication for coaching others and task execution, as reflected below:

> *"Based on my personal experience and my years in the service. Communication is, in my eyes, the most important thing. It can be written or verbal. There are meetings to be conducted and coaching taking place. For your members to understand what is expected of them, you must be able to explain clearly what they need to do to complete their tasks effectively."*

Additionally, problem solving was highlighted as follows by participant 10:

> *"Additionally, problem-solving is critical; things don't always go smoothly. As a manager, you must analyze problems thoroughly and involve your team in finding solutions because they may have insights into issues related to their specific work areas."*

Capability decision making in turbulent and unpredictable times is essential for achieving operational goals and minimizing setbacks. Participant 6 stated:

> *"A manager must be able to lead; leadership is one of the core competencies necessary for effective management. This includes not only guiding team members but also being able to solve problems as they arise. In our environment, challenges can come unexpectedly; therefore, a manager's ability to navigate these issues while maintaining team morale is crucial. A good leader must also foster an environment where team members feel comfortable bringing forward their concerns or suggestions without fear of retribution."*
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> .

4.2.7. Strategic thinking

This highlights that strategic thinking which embraces creative and analytical thinking and planning for long term success is essential for guiding teams effectively through challenges, particularly in high-stakes situations. Participant 9 emphasized strategic thinking as a foundational competency:

> *"The critical one for excellent performance is proper planning. I would say that planning is number one because naturally, proper planning leads to favourable outcomes and reduces negativity within the team. If you plan properly from the outset, you will achieve the results you desire. Lastly, critical thinking is also vital; managers must process thoughts rationally and analytically while focusing on key factors that influence long-term success."*

4.2.8. Effective planning and execution of integrated operations involving several supporting unit's

The study found that the competencies discussed by participants are closely related to the unique challenges faced by the KZN SAPS, particularly resource limitations and the necessity for effective teamwork. Participants highlighted how these challenges impact their ability to manage effectively and achieve operational goals.

Participant 4 noted:

> *"They relate to such an extent that the manager's behaviour or skills will improve service delivery if they possess vast knowledge in any given field, whether it's investigation or prevention of crime."*

This response emphasizes that managerial competencies directly influence service delivery and operational effectiveness.

Participant 2 discussed the impact of scarce resources on performance recognition:

> *"Currently, there are a lot of members who are performing exceptionally well. But the challenges of scarce resources. The organization struggles to acknowledge all high performers equally, which can affect morale and motivation. Therefore, teamwork is encouraged in SAPS because you cannot eradicate criminal activities alone."*

Participant 5 elaborated on delegation of power, as follows:

> *"Delegation is key part of ensuring leadership presence and also empowering others. Leadership is very important in Kwa-Zulu Natal, along with delegation of power. This is a big province; if something is happening in Zululand, you can't be there on time, even if you want to go. So, you need to delegate... The one who's being delegated must be decisive because they need to take ownership of their decisions."*

Participant 11 discussed coordination among different units:

> " *They relate because when you're in fieldwork, there's a lot of units involved. You need coordination of efforts... For instance, in operations involving multiple units like the DOG Unit, proper communication is essential. If we don't coordinate effectively, it can lead to confusion and hinder our ability to respond promptly to incidents."*

This highlights that strong organizational skills are essential, and that managers must be adept at coordinating efforts among various units during significant operations, such as combating crime syndicates.

This response highlights that managers must create detailed tactical plans addressing potential risks while effectively deploying resources for routine policing and major operations. The insights from participants reveal that managerial competencies such as leadership, communication, organization, and decision-making are vital for navigating the specific challenges faced by the KZN SAPS. The interplay between these competencies and the realities of resource limitations highlights an urgent need for strategic management practices that prioritize effective resource allocation and team collaboration.

4.2.9. The competence of thriving with limited response speed in operations

This difference stresses the challenges faced by the SAPS managers in responding swiftly to operational needs compared to their counterparts. Participant 4 noted the necessity for emotional control within the SAPS due to public scrutiny:

> ” *The unique nature of SAPS requires members to manage their behavior carefully when facing public scrutiny. This necessity for emotional control is less emphasized in other organizations where interactions may not be as confrontational. The pressures of public perception and media scrutiny mean that SAPS managers must possess high emotional intelligence to navigate these situations effectively.”*

This insight reflects the high-pressure environment in which the SAPS operates and the importance of EQ as a managerial competency. The ability to stay composed and lead effectively in the face of external stressors is critical in an environment where decisions are often made under public and media scrutiny. Emotional control becomes particularly important in maintaining effective decision-making and team cohesion, even under the intense pressure that the SAPS managers routinely face. Participant 9 added depth to this discussion by stating:

> *“The main objective of SAPS is preventing, combating, and investigating crime while maintaining public order and securing the inhabitants of South Africa. Management should possess competencies that enable them to understand these objectives and allocate resources effectively. The specific goals of SAPS necessitate distinct managerial skills tailored to its unique operational context.”*

This perspective emphasizes that the specific goals of the SAPS require distinct managerial skills compared to other law enforcement agencies. Participant 5 articulated:

> *"The managerial competencies required for excellent performance in KZN SAPS differ from those in other law enforcement or public sector organizations primarily due to the unique challenges and socio-political context of our region. While there is significant overlap in basic competencies like leadership and communication skills, several key differences arise due to the particular dynamics of crime politics and community relations in KZN."*

Participant 5 additionally articulated:

> *"For example, crisis management in KZN often involves life-and-death situations, rapid responses to escalating violence, and public safety concerns, unlike other sectors where crisis management may focus more on logistics or resource constraints."*

These insights collectively illustrate that the hierarchical nature of the SAPS, and this necessitates distinct managerial competencies compared to other law enforcement agencies. The complexity of its command structure and the need for emotional control under public scrutiny further differentiate the competencies required for effective management within the SAPS compared to other organizations.

4.3. THEMES ON THE IMPACT OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES ON PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES IN THE KZN SAPS

The second research question in this study focused on: "How do managerial competencies impact on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS?" In response, the study identifies seven themes relating to the competencies that influence performance outcomes within the organization.

These themes include:

(1) Decisive leadership competency

(2) Communication competency

(3) Decision-making competency

(4) Knowledge and expertise competency

(5) Management and administrative competency

(6) Analytical thinking

(7) Problem-solving competency.

Each theme highlights specific competencies and their impact on performance aspects, as shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Themes on the impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS.

Theme	Competency Involved	Performance Impact
1. Decisive Leadership Competency	Leadership (e.g., decision-making, motivation)	Fosters high morale, decisiveness, accountability; directly influences crime management effectiveness. Effective leadership results in better service delivery and a positive community image.
2.Communication Competency	Communication (e.g., clarity, adaptability)	Reduces misunderstandings, errors, and conflict. Improves operational efficiency. Poor communication leads to inefficient operations and poor community relations.
3. Decision-Making Competency	Decision-making (e.g., timely, informed decisions)	Enables resource allocation, quick response to crime, and clear direction. Poor decision-making hinders operations and service delivery.
4. Knowledge and Expertise Competency	Knowledge and expertise (e.g., understanding crime trends)	Improves crime prevention, investigation, and resource deployment. Lack of expertise

Theme	Competency Involved	Performance Impact
		affects the ability to respond to modern crimes.
5. Management and Administrative Competency	Management skills (e.g., task delegation)	Ensures smooth operations and efficient use of resources. Poor management leads to inefficiencies and poor response to incidents.
6. Analytical Thinking	Analytical Thinking (e.g. data analysis, problem-solving, critical evaluation, and decision-making based on evidence)	Enables proactive responses to crime patterns and enhances operational planning and effectiveness.
7. Problem-Solving Competency	Problem-solving (e.g., identifying issues)	Resolves issues that hinder operations. Prevents minor issues from escalating into major problems; ensures smooth operations and effective crime prevention. Poor problem-solving leads to inefficiencies and escalated problems in crime management.

Source: Authors Composition

4.3.1. Decisive leadership competency

Participants emphasized that the ability to lead decisively and make informed decisions directly influenced operational success, team morale, and public trust.

- Competency Involved: Leadership (e.g., leading by example, motivating teams, decision-making, and setting a positive tone for operations).

- Performance Impact: Strong leadership results in high morale, trust, and discipline within teams. Effective leadership in the KZN SAPS ensures that officers feel supported - leading to better service delivery, enhanced crime response, and overall effectiveness. It also helps in fostering a positive image of the SAPS, especially in high-pressure environments, improving community trust and respect.

Participant 6 expressed the vital role of leadership:

> *" The presence of leadership has gained respect for the province. If leadership is not there and we are not on the ground, in touch with the officers, they tend to become despondent and demoralized. When that happens, they do not give their all while doing their job, which means crime rates will rise, and criminals will escape from police custody. Low morale leads to unmet targets. For instance, if a manager is not decisive during a strike, when people are blocking roads without permission, nobody can close those roads without proper authority. You need to be decisive and show leadership; you must demonstrate emotional intelligence by not just listening to so-called experts but doing what you believe is right. A good leader must be able to motivate their staff; if you motivate them well, they will perform their duties without expecting any compensation. We are seeing that KZN is now being cast in a good light because of how the police are taking action, and that's because of a leader who leads from the front."*

As demonstrated in the findings, strong leadership is pivotal in tipping employees towards high performance by inspiring confidence and promoting teamwork. Participant 5 stated how these competencies tip employees into the realm of exceptional performance.

> *"Managerial competencies significantly impact performance outcomes in SAPS KZN because the effectiveness of leadership directly influences both operational success and public trust. In a high-crime, resource-constrained, and politically volatile region, competent management is essential for achieving key objectives such as crime reduction and efficient resource use. For example, during a violent taxi strike, an SAPS manager with excellent leadership skills can rely on their officers to ensure clear directives are given and maintained under pressure. This results in successful crowd control, fewer injuries, and quicker resolution of unrest. Another example would be*

when a manager decides to deploy additional officers and resources to known gang hotspots in Durban based on recent intelligence reports."

This insight emphasizes the critical role that effective management plays in achieving key objectives, and its impact on performance. Participant 1 discussed the importance of monitoring and evaluation in a leader:

"Leadership means showing what needs to be done while also monitoring and evaluating whether those tasks are being executed properly. It's essential to praise team members when they perform well but also to assist when things go wrong by implementing corrective actions. For instance, if I inspect a docket and notice that a detective failed to take down crucial details about the crime scene while taking a statement, it's my responsibility as a leader to guide them on how to improve their documentation practices."

This response accentuates that effective leaders must actively engage in oversight while providing constructive feedback to enhance performance.

The finding reveals that leadership is pivotal in shaping organizational culture and operational effectiveness. When leaders actively engage with their teams, it not only boosts morale but also reinforces a sense of accountability and respect within the community.

4.3.2. Communication competency

The findings revealed the following:

- Competency Involved: Communication (e.g., clarity, adaptability, and ensuring understanding among team members).
- Performance Impact: Clear communication directly influences operational efficiency and reduces conflict. Poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, errors, and a lack of coordination among team members, which negatively affects overall performance and service delivery. In the KZN SAPS, communication breakdowns may also contribute to frustration, internal conflict, or even violence between police members, as explained by Participant 10:

"Apparently, in my viewpoint, instructions issued are not fated to the lowest level. For us in the provincial office, we all have access to email and the intranet, but for the people on the ground, the spade workers. They don't have access to emails or similar resources. Managers often fail to communicate effectively with staff members. This is a big problem. For example, during the recent elections, there was a lack of clarity when compiling call-up instructions, which affected SAPS's performance. We all looked like we didn't know what we were doing because deployment took place without members being issued resources on time, and the communication regarding call-up instructions was very poor. If communication can improve, then KZN SAPS can perform much better. I see a lack of proper communication result in work or instructions not being properly understood which affects the performance of the SAPS."

This response highlights how ineffective communication can lead to confusion and operational inefficiencies, emphasizing the need for managers to ensure that all team members are informed and prepared. Participant 7 added:

"Throughout my years of experience, I've learned that many challenges arise because people lack knowledge or information. When there is no communication, it leads to misunderstandings and mistakes. Recently, the Provincial Commissioner issued a directive that Station Commanders must engage with community committees on a monthly basis because this engagement is crucial for our success. If we improve communication, people will start to understand what we are doing and how they can help us. This also boosts our intelligence efforts, leading to more arrests and increased public confidence in SAPS."

This insight emphasizes that proactive communication not only improves internal operations but also strengthens community relations and enhances public trust. Participant 9 reinforced this idea:

"Clear communication is crucial in order to avoid unnecessary conflicts and mistakes in the workplace. If key personnel do not possess these skills, the future of the organization is at risk. They would make decisions without proper plans, leading to

chaos where people do as they please. If these competencies are present, then SAPS would be in a better state governed by policies and procedures that are accessible to all employees."

This statement underlines the necessity of clear communication in maintaining organizational structure and ensuring that all members are aligned with the SAPS's objectives. The insights from participants reveal that clear communication not only facilitates understanding among team members but also enhances overall performance by reducing misunderstandings and fostering collaboration. Addressing communication gaps is essential for improving morale and operational effectiveness within the organization.

4.3.3. Decision-making competency

The findings indicate that effective decision-making is a critical competency that significantly impacts performance outcomes within the KZN SAPS. Participants emphasized that the ability to make informed decisions directly influences operational success and team morale.

- Competency Involved: Decision-Making (e.g., timely, informed, and strategic decisions).
- Performance Impact: Effective decision-making allows managers to allocate resources efficiently, respond to emerging threats, and prevent crime. In the KZN SAPS, a failure in decision-making leads to the misallocation of resources, delayed responses to crime, and a lack of direction, which results in poor service delivery and reduced community safety.

Insights from participants reveal how impactful effective decision-making is on excellent performance. Findings from participant 6 revealed:

"Decision-making helps us stand firm in situations and gain respect from the community."

Findings from Participant 5 revealed that:

"Timely decisions can prevent escalation of crime. If we wait too long to respond to emerging threats, it can lead to serious consequences."

Participant 5 further added:

> *"Without proper decision-making, the SAPS would not respond adequately to crime, leading to increased crime and public dissatisfaction."*

Participant 7 identified that:

> *"These competencies have a huge impact on performance outcome. Where you were supposed to use a lot of funds on, you manage to save a lot because you've got people who are making the right decisions at the right time, which is critical."*

4.3.4. Knowledge and expertise competency

- Competency Involved: Knowledge and expertise (e.g., understanding the core functions, crime patterns, and operational requirements).
- Performance Impact: Managers with the right knowledge and expertise can address complex issues like crime prevention, investigation, and resource allocation effectively. For instance, understanding crime patterns allows for targeted interventions, such as deploying officers to hotspots at strategic times, which improves crime prevention and reduces criminal activities.

Participant insights emphasize the importance of this competency: Participant 4 stated:

> *"When you have knowledge, such as how to investigate a crime, it enhances your managerial competencies. Skills in investigation and crime prevention are critical because they directly impact the performance of SAPS. "*

This highlights that expertise in crime investigation and prevention equips managers to address specific operational challenges effectively, thereby directly contributing to improved outcomes. Participant 1 revealed that:

> *"Understanding crime trends allows you to adjust patrols and crime prevention activities effectively."*

This insight illustrates the practical application of knowledge. It demonstrates how a deep understanding of crime patterns enables managers to implement targeted and timely

interventions that enhance overall police efficiency. Participant 2 emphasized the consequences of a lack of expertise, particularly in addressing modern crimes such as cybercrime.

> *"If managers lack expertise, they fail to address rising issues like cybercrime, resulting in poor performance and public dissatisfaction."*

The inability to adapt to such challenges undermines organizational performance and erodes public trust in the SAPS. Participant 11 elaborated on how both the presence and absence of knowledge and expertise can affect performance:

> *"The absence of knowledge and expertise negatively affects morale and prevents individuals from performing their duties to the best of their ability. On the positive side, having the right capabilities and skills ensures that we can achieve our objectives in areas like member conduct, work performance, and command and control."*

A well-informed leader fosters capabilities and effective behavior among team members, ensuring proper command and control, which is critical for operational success in a bureaucratic system like the SAPS. These responses emphasized that knowledge and expertise are foundational for effective managerial functioning. They enable leaders to tackle complex operational requirements and foster an environment of efficiency and accountability, ensuring that performance outcomes align with the SAPS's objectives.

4.3.5. Management and administrative competency

- Competency Involved: Management and administrative Skills (e.g., task delegation, time management, resource allocation, and budget control).
- Performance Impact: Strong management ensures tasks are delegated efficiently, resources are used optimally, and operations run smoothly. Poor management, on the other hand, leads to inefficiency, reduced staff morale, and operational delays. In the KZN SAPS, managers equipped with these competencies can ensure clarity in instructions, effective resource allocation, and well-coordinated team performance, directly contributing to excellent service delivery. Participant responses highlighted the importance of this competency, Participant 8 articulated:

> *"If managers lack skills in resource management and delegation, it creates confusion and delays in responding to emergencies, which frustrates both the staff and the public."*

This quote directly identified how gaps in management skills negatively affect both operational efficiency and public trust. Participant 7 underscored the role of proper management in fostering team cohesion and ensuring tasks are completed effectively, even in challenging conditions:

> *"A well-managed team knows their roles, has the resources they need, and works cohesively to achieve objectives, even under pressure."*

Participant 9 emphasized the critical need for clarity in communication and instruction as part of administrative competency:

> *"The success of the organization depends on clear instructions. When managers give unclear directions, tasks are done incorrectly, wasting resources and time."*

This statement illustrated the detrimental effects of poor management on resource utilization and productivity. This quote provided by Participant 11 highlighted how resource allocation and planning directly impact the success of operations, linking these competencies to excellent performance in the SAPS:

> *"If we don't allocate resources properly, operations will collapse. Proper planning and delegation are what keep us moving forward and ensure performance outcomes."*

The participants' responses collectively demonstrated that effective management and administrative skills are indispensable for the KZN SAPS. These skills ensure that operations are coordinated, resources are used efficiently, and staff are well-guided. Therefore, managers who excel in resource allocation, clear communication, and team coordination enable their teams to meet performance expectations, even under pressure. Without these competencies, the organization risks inefficiency, low morale, and dissatisfaction among both employees and the public.

4.3.6. Analytical thinking

- Competency Involved: Analytical thinking (e.g., data analysis, problem-solving, critical evaluation, and decision-making based on evidence).
- Performance Impact: Managers with strong analytical thinking skills can process data, evaluate evidence, and make informed decisions. In the KZN SAPS, this competency is crucial for identifying crime patterns, optimizing resource deployment, and solving complex problems. Analytical thinking ensures that operational strategies are grounded in logic and evidence, leading to more effective outcomes and enhanced performance.

Participant responses emphasized the value of analytical thinking in ensuring operational success. Participant 9 highlighted the link between analytical thinking, decision-making, and achieving reliable outcomes:

> *"Analytical thinking allows managers to gather information, analyze it, and process it into actionable decisions. This ensures accurate and unquestionable results, which are key to excellent performance."*

Participant 11 emphasized the role of data-driven decision-making in enhancing problem-solving and improving operational efficiency:

> *"Using data and problem-solving techniques effectively is essential. Data analysis ensures we are informed and can respond to challenges with proficiency and effectiveness."*

Participant 1 stated:

> *"Understanding crime trends allows you to adjust patrols and crime prevention activities effectively."*

This insight directly connects analytical thinking to operational strategy, showing how it helps in adapting to evolving challenges.

Participant 2 articulated:

> *"If managers don't analyze problems carefully, they can't address key issues like resource shortages or crime hotspots. This impacts overall performance negatively."*

Participant 2 pointed out the consequences of a lack of analytical thinking, linking it to missed opportunities for effective resource allocation and crime prevention.

The participants' insights collectively emphasized the importance of analytical thinking for managerial excellence in the KZN SAPS. This competency enables managers to process complex information, identify patterns, and devise effective strategies for tackling challenges such as crime hotspots or resource limitations. Informed decision-making, based on evidence and critical evaluation, not only improves performance outcomes but also enhances public trust and organizational efficiency.

4.3.7. Problem-solving competency

- Competency Involved: Problem-solving (e.g., identifying issues and implementing practical, timely solutions).
- Performance Impact: Effective problem-solving ensures smooth operations by addressing challenges before they escalate. In the KZN SAPS, managers with strong problem-solving skills can maintain operational efficiency, resolve conflicts, and improve staff morale. Conversely, a lack of problem-solving competency can lead to unresolved conflicts, inefficiencies, and diminished productivity, ultimately undermining crime prevention efforts.

Participant responses highlighted the significance of this competency and its impact on performance, specifically, Participant 6 stated:

> *"You must be able to solve problems. If you hear that there are many members in conflict, be there to try and solve those problems so that there is harmony at work. When there's harmony at work, there's productivity."*

This quote emphasized the direct link between resolving workplace conflicts, fostering harmony, and improving overall productivity. Furthermore, Participant 1 stated:

> *"Managers must be able to solve problems quickly, such as reallocating resources to address specific threats."*

This insight illustrated how problem-solving skills contribute to operational adaptability and resource optimization. Moreover, Participant 5 articulated:

"If issues are not addressed promptly, they escalate into larger problems that harm SAPS operations."

This perspective underlines the consequences of poor problem-solving, where unresolved issues can disrupt police effectiveness.

The participants' feedback emphasized that problem-solving is a critical managerial competency for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS. Managers equipped with this skill ensure swift resolution of conflicts and operational challenges, contributing to a cohesive workforce and efficient resource utilization. By fostering harmony and addressing issues proactively, problem-solving enhances the organization's ability to meet its objectives and maintain public trust.

4.4. THEMES ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN SHAPING MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES IN THE KZN SAPS

The third research question in this study focused on: **"**How does training and development opportunities shape the development of managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS?" The analysis identified six prominent themes concerning training and development in shaping managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS.

These themes are:

(1) Leadership Development
(2) Communication Skills
(3) Problem-Solving
(4) Interpersonal Skills
(5) Junior Leadership
(6) Strategic Thinking

These themes illustrate how various training and development initiatives impact the acquisition and enhancement of critical competencies, shedding light on the availability, quality, and effectiveness of these opportunities in addressing organizational demands as detailed in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Themes on training and development in shaping managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS.

Theme	Training/Development Opportunity	Competencies Developed	Competencies Shaped	Availability	Quality
Leadership Development	Middle Management Learning Program (MMLP)	Leadership, delegation, decision-making	Long-term decision-making, discipline management	Moderate	Moderate
Communication Skills	Report Writing Course, Community Forums	Written/verbal communication	Interpersonal effectiveness	Low	Mixed
Problem-Solving	Tactical Training, Command and Control	Negotiation, crisis management	Effective decision-making under pressure	Moderate	Good
Interpersonal Skills	Diversity Training, Mentorship Programs	Cross-cultural understanding, collaboration	Building workplace harmony, stress management	Low	Good
Junior Leadership	Junior Management Leading Program (JMLP)	Foundational leadership, confidence	Early and confidence in decision-making	Low	Moderate
Strategic Thinking	Strategic Management Courses	Long-term planning, creative thinking	Strategic decision-making	Moderate	Good

Source: Authors Composition

4.4.1. Leadership development

The Middle Management Learning Program (MMLP) emerged as a cornerstone in developing leadership competencies such as delegation and decision-making among the KZN SAPS managers. Participants emphasized its role in equipping managers with the tools to lead effectively and make informed decisions.

Participant 6 noted the impact of the program on improving leadership skills:

> *"There is a Middle Management Leading Program for captains and above, which teaches how to manage staff effectively at those levels. Managers also attend strategic management courses where they learn how to think creatively and relate to their team members. Those who did that course… they also do discipline management. So, they are able to lead their team. They give directions as a leader, then they delegate."*

Participant 10 also highlighted the distinction between leadership and management, emphasizing the need for appropriate training to enable managers to understand their roles and responsibilities effectively:

> *"Training new managers is very important. Previously, we had to attend officer courses before being promoted. These courses prepared you for all aspects required to manage effectively. Now people get promoted into a position and they don't even know the work... If you've got no knowledge, how are you going to make a decision?"*

Despite some positive impacts, Participant 8 pointed out significant challenges in ensuring broad access to training due to budgetary constraints:

> *"The biggest problem with training is that there are courses, but there's no proper funding to send people for even smaller courses in management competencies. The biggest concern is the budget. Managers who only possess diplomas or degrees in policing would benefit from short courses in management to understand what is expected of them as managers."*

Furthermore, Participant 3 identified a critical gap in the distribution of leadership training, stressing that senior managers must cascade their knowledge and skills to junior managers to ensure a holistic development of leadership competencies:

> *"Senior management skills need to be cascaded down to the junior managers… because they come across problems that require decision-making."*

These findings suggest that while the MMLP has proven effective in shaping leadership competencies, several factors limit its widespread impact. The availability of the program is moderate, and budget constraints hinder further opportunities for training, particularly for those with only basic policing qualifications. Additionally, leadership development at junior levels appears insufficient, and better efforts are needed to ensure that senior managers actively share leadership knowledge and skills with their subordinates. Addressing these issues could enhance leadership development across all levels of the KZN SAPS.

4.4.2. Communication skills

Training and development opportunities are crucial in shaping the development of managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS, particularly when it comes to enhancing communication skills. Both written and verbal communication are key areas of competency that contribute to effective managerial performance. Participant 9 reflected on the long-term benefits of this training, which not only helped with drafting reports but also equipped managers with essential communication tools to apply in the workplace:

> *"We have limited training offered to management. I feel that at least one course should be offered to every manager or supervisor to keep them updated on developments. I still remember everything from the report writing course I attended, and it was more than 10 years ago. It taught me how to draft reports and how to communicate effectively in the workplace. Those are the kinds of trainings that have had a lasting impact on us as managers."*

This statement highlighted how the training opportunity directly shapes the development of communication skills, particularly the ability to draft reports and communicate effectively

within the organization. These competencies are essential for managerial roles, enabling managers to relay information clearly and efficiently.

Furthermore, community engagement initiatives such as the Imbizo forums in rural areas were identified by Participant 11 as another opportunity for shaping communication competencies. These forums, which require effective interpersonal communication, play a significant role in enhancing how managers communicate with communities, thus reinforcing their communication capabilities:

> *"Your service charter is part of marketing SAPS. We have communication levels, for instance, the Imbizo, especially in rural areas."*

This form of communication training allows managers to engage with the community effectively, which in turn shapes their ability to represent the SAPS and convey important messages, thus influencing their managerial effectiveness. Participant 11 further emphasized that communication skills must be developed to ensure accurate and efficient transmission of information across all levels of the organization, from senior managers to junior officers:

> *"The competencies that need to be developed here involve communication skills. They must be developed so that when senior managers are conveying a message to junior managers or, if I can say, to the operational members who are on the ground, it must be communicated correctly. They need to perform their duties according to the correct information received from higher levels."*

In this context, the development of communication skills is essential for ensuring that operational members execute tasks correctly, based on the accurate information received from higher management levels.

However, Participant 5 highlighted a significant issue regarding the quality and availability of communication training. The participant pointed out that poor-quality programs and outdated content can diminish the impact of training initiatives, limiting the development of communication competencies:

> *"Training and development opportunities provided by SAPS play a critical role in shaping managerial competencies. Through targeted training, mentorship, and professional development initiatives, managers gain practical tools to enhance their effectiveness in decision-making, leadership, communication, and other vital areas. A lack of opportunities or poor-quality programs can significantly hinder managerial effectiveness."*

This feedback suggests that while communication training has the potential to shape managerial competencies, the lack of well-structured, relevant programs can impede the full development of these skills.

Finally, Participant 3 underscored the need for consistent communication skills development to ensure that information flows effectively within the organization:

> *"Communication skills need to be developed so that when managers convey messages, they are communicated correctly."*

This statement points to a key gap in training, suggesting that the effectiveness of communication across levels is contingent on the continuous development of communication competencies.

In conclusion, training and development opportunities in communication, such as the Report Writing Course and community engagement initiatives, are crucial in shaping managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. While these opportunities offer valuable skills, challenges regarding the availability and quality of training programs need to be addressed to ensure that communication competencies are fully developed. The effective shaping of these competencies is essential for improving both internal communication within the SAPS and the organization's interactions with the public, ultimately contributing to better managerial performance.

4.4.3. Problem-solving

Training programs such as Tactical Training and Command and Control in Crisis Situations were recognized for equipping managers with crucial problem-solving skills. Participant 7 highlighted the significant impact of these skills during field operations:

> *"We conduct a lot of operations which become more successful because of those competencies. We've identified individuals who are good at problem-solving and negotiations, enabling us to persuade or convince people to disperse in some instances, without the use of force. We have demonstrated on numerous occasions that we can effectively engage and resolve problems. These skills contribute significantly to achieving a positive impact for the organization."*

This quote illustrated the practical application of problem-solving and negotiation skills, which are essential for achieving operational success and positive outcomes.

Participant 3 emphasized the necessity of integrating both operational and administrative knowledge for effective problem-solving:

> *"Managers must combine operational and administrative knowledge to make decisions and solve problems."*

This statement underscored the importance of a comprehensive skill set that includes both practical and theoretical knowledge for effective problem-solving.

However, Participant 8 pointed out a significant challenge to widespread access to problem-solving training:

> *"The biggest concern is the budget. Training would assist if there was funding available to provide short courses in management."*

This highlights a barrier to developing problem-solving competencies due to budget constraints, limiting the availability of relevant training programs.

Participant 10 echoed these concerns from a long-term perspective, reflecting on his extensive service experience:

"I have been in the service for 35 years, now entering my 36th year. Honestly, I cannot recall a specific course designed to improve a person's competencies across the board, not just in KZN. The only course I remember attending was a diversity course, and the other course or thing I recall is the officer's course, where they also deal with a lot of aspects, not specifically just about how to communicate. Problem-solving and whatever, I feel sometimes you must use your initiative as a person in order to develop yourself as well."

This quote indicated that while some training exists, there are gaps in comprehensive problem-solving training, and personal initiative is often necessary for skill development. These insights suggested that while problem-solving training is moderately available and of good quality, budget limitations restrict its accessibility. The effective development of problem-solving skills is critical for enhancing managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS, as it directly contributes to improved crisis management and operational efficiency.

4.4.4. Interpersonal skills

Interpersonal skills are crucial for fostering collaboration, maintaining workplace harmony, and enhancing overall productivity in the KZN SAPS. Diversity training emerged as a significant training opportunity for developing cross-cultural understanding and improving workplace relationships. Participant 10 reflected on the benefits of this training:

"It provides a better understanding of other people, including different races, and how they think or reason."

This insight highlighted the role of diversity training in fostering mutual respect and effective collaboration among colleagues from varied backgrounds.

Participant 9 emphasized the importance of interpersonal skills in day-to-day interactions and their impact on workplace dynamics:

"What is currently lacking in SAPS is soft skills training. I'm talking about stress management and interpersonal skills. When it comes to interpersonal skills, the way

you approach people plays a vital role in the workplace. The way you approach someone will determine how they respond to you. If your approach is poor, you won't achieve your goals, regardless of whether you are a manager or a junior. Interpersonal skills are very important; they play a huge role. These skills also affect performance—if you are stressed, you are not going to perform well."

This statement underscored the need for focused training on interpersonal skills and stress management, both of which are integral to improving managerial performance.

Participant 11 further elaborated on the role of interpersonal skills training in fostering a harmonious work environment:

"Training helps in shaping competencies like relationship-building, which fosters workplace harmony."

This viewpoint ties interpersonal skills training to the objective of shaping managerial competencies that enhance collaboration and productivity.

Participant 6 pointed out how strong interpersonal relationships directly contribute to workplace productivity and the resolution of conflicts:

"You need to have good interpersonal relationships with the people you are working with. Imagine if a manager does not relate well with co-workers or other managers, there will be conflict. As long as there's harmony among managers, there will be productivity."

Although diversity and interpersonal skills training programs are impactful, their limited availability diminishes their potential to drive organizational change across the KZN SAPS. The findings suggest that targeted and more frequently available interpersonal skills training could significantly enhance managerial competencies, aligning with the objective of exploring how training and development opportunities shape these competencies.

4.4.5. Junior leadership development

The Junior Management Leading Program (JMLP) is a key initiative for developing foundational leadership competencies among junior managers in the KZN SAPS. This training aims to shape managerial skills at the early stages of a leader's career, preparing them for future responsibilities. Participant 6 described the program's focus on cultivating leadership at lower ranks:

> *"For warrant officers, sergeants… it helps to grow their skills at lower levels."*

Participant 7 emphasized the importance of prioritizing leadership training for junior personnel, advocating for a proactive approach to developing leadership skills early:

> *"Unfortunately, we don't have enough capacity to train everyone we need to train at the same time. But at least something is happening now. It's not like it was before, the gap was too large. It will take time to close it, but as long as we are working towards it, it will work. What I recommend is prioritizing training people at the junior level. As they grow, they will already know what to do. By the time they gain experience, they'll also have some skills from the training they've received, which they can link with their experience."*

However, Participant 3 pointed out that the limited availability of junior leadership programs often leaves younger managers unprepared for leadership roles:

> *"Training must be cascaded to junior managers who are always on the ground with subordinates."*

Participant 1 elaborated on how a skills audit is conducted within the SAPS to prioritize relevant training opportunities for junior leaders, but also highlighted the challenge of limited resources:

> *"In SAPS, we have what you call a skills audit. We audit all personnel. For example, if we have 22,000 personnel, we conduct audits to identify skills gaps. Should a warrant officer regularly act in a station commander role, they may be prioritized for the Station Management Learning Program (SMLP). However, if there are only 100 spaces and 1,000 people require the course, it gets allocated based on cost affordability per*

province. Proper training and development will go a long way if the right person is sent for the relevant training. It equips them with the knowledge, skills, and attributes to handle duties like station management, inspections, charge office responsibilities, and visible policing."

These responses underscored the need for expanded junior leadership training to address the skills gap at entry levels. While programs like the JMLP and SMLP are impactful, their limited availability and resource constraints hinder their broader implementation.

4.4.6. Strategic thinking

Strategic management courses play a pivotal role in equipping managers within the KZN SAPS with long-term planning and decision-making skills, essential for navigating complex challenges in law enforcement. Participant 6 described the benefits of these courses, particularly their emphasis on creativity and integrating managerial roles:

"Managers here also attend strategic management courses where they learn strategies, how to strategize, think creatively, and relate to their team members. These courses teach them how to be effective managers."

Participant 5 highlighted how leadership development programs incorporate strategic thinking components, such as managing large-scale operations and resource allocation under pressure:

"Training and development opportunities provided by SAPS play a critical role in shaping managerial competencies. These programs equip managers with the skills to navigate the unique challenges of law enforcement in a complex region like KZN. Leadership development courses, for instance, include workshops on leading under pressure, motivating teams, and handling team dynamics. For example, a manager attending a command-and-control in crisis situations course learns how to lead a team during large-scale operations, manage resources under pressure, and maintain discipline."

Similarly, Participant 11 emphasized the value of mid-management and senior management training in addressing unique challenges and shaping managerial competencies:

"SAPS provides mid-management and senior management training, and these are continuously offered to develop and shape management competencies."

These strategic management courses enable managers to align operational and administrative strategies effectively. However, gaps remain in the availability of these programs and their alignment with specific managerial levels, limiting their broader impact. This discussion demonstrates that training and development programs in the KZN SAPS significantly shape managerial competencies, including strategic thinking. Expanding access to these programs and tailoring their content to the unique needs of various managerial tiers could further enhance their effectiveness.

4.5. THEMES ON CRITICAL MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES IS ESSENTIAL FOR EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN CONSTITUTING A MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE SAPS IN KZN

The fourth research question was: "What managerial competencies are critical for excellent performance to constitute a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN?" in response to this question, the study reveals five themes related to the managerial competencies that are critical for excellent performance in constituting a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN.

These themes include:

(1) Strategic planning and execution

(2) Operational leadership and decision-making

(3) Community engagement and conflict management

(4) Technical and administrative competence

(5) Ethical and professional conduct

This is shown in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Themes on critical managerial competencies essential for excellent performance in constituting a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN.

Theme	Frequency	Example of Specific Policing Task	Importance
Strategic Planning and Execution	12	Annual operational planning for resource allocation and coordination in high-crime areas.	Ensures alignment of resources and actions with organizational goals, enabling proactive measures to prevent crime and improve service delivery.
Operational Leadership and Decision-Making	10	Leading emergency responses, such as natural disaster rescues or large-scale protests.	Enables managers to make informed, timely decisions under pressure, ensuring safety and efficiency in dynamic and high-risk situations.
Community Engagement and Conflict Management	8	Building relationships during community forums (CPF meetings) and resolving disputes within policing teams.	Fosters trust and collaboration between the SAPS and communities, reducing tensions and enhancing cooperation in crime prevention and resolution.
Technical and Administrative Competence	9	Preparing and managing budgets for operational teams while aligning with national priorities.	Balances resource availability with operational needs, ensuring sustainable and efficient use of human and physical resources.

Theme	Frequency	Example of Specific Policing Task	Importance
Ethical and Professional Conduct	7	Upholding the SAPS's integrity by ensuring compliance during evidence collection and handling sensitive cases with discretion.	Maintains public trust and ensures adherence to legal and ethical standards, which are critical for the legitimacy and credibility of the SAPS operations.

Source: Authors Composition

4.5.1. Strategic planning and execution

Participant 9 emphasized the importance of strategic planning and execution:

> *"For any successful organization, there should be a very strong strategy, which is effective, working as a team, because if your strategy is not working, your business will fail."*

This finding revealed that, for the SAPS to perform effectively, managers must have a clear strategy in place. It is not solely about having a plan, but ensuring that the whole team is aligned with that plan, which is vital for success in policing operations. Participant 7 highlighted the importance of adaptability in strategic planning:

> *"Strategic planning should not only focus on current operations but also anticipate future challenges. Managers must constantly evaluate and adjust their plans to respond to evolving issues within the community, criminal activities, and internal processes*."

This perspective reveals that, the SAPS managers must be proactive and adaptable, adjusting strategies as new challenges arise, which is key for continuous improvement and performance excellence.

Participant 6 revealed that regular evaluation and adaptation of strategic plans are essential to stay effective

"It's not just about implementing a plan; it's about continuously assessing and adapting to the changing environment. If SAPS managers do not revisit their strategy regularly, they risk falling behind the curve."

This means that the SAPS managers must be committed to revising strategies based on internal and external factors, ensuring that the organization remains relevant and efficient in achieving its objectives.

4.5.2. Operational leadership and decision-making

The study found that there is a need for quick, decisive action in operational leadership, as participant 10 stated:

"My main thing is communication, Training, problem-solving, and I would say decision-making. It's very important because things happen in the blink of an eye. Sometimes you don't have time to consult; so, you must make a decision at that particular second."

This statement emphasizes that the SAPS managers must possess strong decision-making skills to handle real-time incidents effectively, ensuring that operations continue smoothly even in high-pressure situations.

The insight from Participant 8 underlined the high-pressure nature of policing and the necessity of having managers who can make sound decisions quickly. Effective decision-making leads to efficient operations and ensures the safety and success of policing efforts in volatile environments:

"There's a lot of pressure in policing. Sometimes you are faced with split-second decisions where there's no time to consult with your team. As a manager, you must have the confidence to make those decisions and the judgment to make the right call."

Participant 9 contributed valuable insights about making decisions under pressure while considering long-term outcomes, which is vital for operational success.

"Decisions in policing aren't just about reacting. It's about thinking strategically in the moment and assessing the impact of your choices. A manager must always consider the broader implications of their actions, even when time is tight."

This highlighted the balance the SAPS managers must strike between quick decision-making and strategic thinking.

4.5.3. Community engagement and conflict management

Participant 6 stated:

> *"Strong leadership and team management foster a positive work environment, improve team cohesion, and enhance overall productivity. Effective leaders inspire their teams, provide clear direction, and ensure that all team members are aligned with the mission and goals of the organization."*

This directly relates to the need for the SAPS managers to have strong leadership and team management skills. By managing internal conflicts and engaging positively with the community, managers can maintain trust and improve overall team performance.

Participant 7 added:

> *"Managing the community's expectations is as important as managing your internal team. If your officers are not trained to handle community interactions, it can cause serious friction. A manager needs to ensure that there's always open communication between the police and the public."*

This insight emphasized the need for the SAPS managers to excel not only in internal conflict management but also in engaging with the community. This is crucial for maintaining public trust, which directly influences the effectiveness of the SAPS operations and its overall performance.

Participant 8 articulated:

> *"Conflict management within the team is just as critical as resolving conflicts with the public. A manager must create an environment where internal conflicts are resolved swiftly to prevent them from affecting the broader mission of SAPS."*

Effective conflict management ensures that internal tensions do not spill over into external operations. By managing both team dynamics and community relations, the SAPS managers contribute to the success of the organization, improving overall performance.

4.5.4. Technical and administrative competence

Participant 8 emphasized the role of technical and administrative competence in the SAPS performance:

> *"If we're talking about the framework, that means we're talking about legislation or a law. Its legislation that will ensure maybe like a National Instruction that will ensure that the managers are competent."*

This insight reveals that managers must be well-versed in legal and administrative matters to ensure their decisions comply with laws and regulations, which is essential for effective policing.

Participant 10 stated:

> *"Technical skills are essential in budgeting, logistics, and operational planning. A good manager knows the details of how to allocate resources efficiently. Without this technical expertise, even the best strategies and leadership can fall apart."*

The need for technical competence in areas like budgeting and logistics is clear. Without these skills, the SAPS managers cannot effectively allocate resources or plan operations, which undermines performance and operational success.

Participant 5 further elaborated on the technical and administrative competence:

> *"Understanding the legal framework, especially the regulations that govern our operations, is fundamental. A manager without this knowledge is likely to make decisions that compromise the integrity of SAPS."*

This reinforced the importance of legal and technical expertise. The SAPS managers must be proficient in legal matters to uphold the integrity and effectiveness of their decisions, which contributes directly to the organization's performance.

4.5.5. Ethical and professional conduct

Participant 5 stated:

"A structured framework provides clarity and direction for all personnel involved in management roles. It ensures that everyone understands their responsibilities and how they contribute to the broader objectives of SAPS."

This finding connected the importance of ethical conduct to a clear framework that guides the SAPS managers. Ethical behavior ensures accountability and maintains public trust, which are vital for achieving excellent performance.

Participant 9 revealed that ethical and professional conduct is foundational for the SAPS managers:

"As a manager, your role is not just to enforce laws but to model ethical behavior. How you act will influence how your team behaves. If you act with integrity, your team will follow suit, and that builds the culture of the entire organization."

Leading by example fosters a culture of integrity, which directly impacts the effectiveness of the entire force. This is essential for the SAPS to achieve high performance and credibility.

Participant 7 highlighted:

"Without a strong moral compass, a manager's decisions are easily swayed by personal interests. SAPS managers must be aware of the ethical implications of their actions, and they must ensure fairness and transparency in every decision they make."

This reinforces the importance of ethical behavior and integrity. The SAPS managers who lead with ethics create a transparent, accountable environment, which is vital for ensuring that the organization functions at its highest potential.

These insights, drawing from multiple participants, underscore the broad spectrum of managerial competencies required for the SAPS managers to excel. Strategic planning, operational leadership, community engagement, technical competence, and ethical conduct are all vital areas that contribute to the overall performance of the SAPS. A comprehensive framework for the SAPS managerial competencies must integrate these areas to ensure managers are equipped to lead effectively and achieve operational excellence.

4.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the thematic findings addressing the four research questions of the study. It explored the critical managerial competencies essential for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS, including EQ, collaboration, communication, decision-making, leadership agility, technology-savviness, and strategic thinking. The chapter also examined the impact of these competencies on performance outcomes, highlighting decisive leadership, problem-solving, and knowledge management. Additionally, the role of training and development in shaping competencies was analyzed, emphasizing leadership development, communication, and strategic thinking. Finally, it outlined competencies crucial for constituting a Managerial Competence Framework, focusing on strategic planning, operational leadership, and ethical conduct. The next chapter provides a discussion of the study's findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the key findings of this study concerning critical managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. The findings are organized into four main themes: managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS, the impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes, training and development opportunities in shaping managerial competencies, and the critical managerial competencies essential for constituting a Managerial Competence Framework for the SAPS in KZN. This chapter aims to contextualize the results within existing literature and relevant previous studies. The insights gained from participants provide a deeper understanding of how specific competencies can enhance organizational performance and address the unique challenges faced by the SAPS.

5.2. FINDINGS

This study explicitly identifies several critical managerial competencies essential for effective management and leadership within the KZN SAPS. The findings revealed four main themes, with each theme comprising several sub-themes.

- Managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS

The study identified seven key competencies that are considered critical for managerial performance in the KZN SAPS, and is discussed below.

Participants in this study expressed a strong belief in the importance of EQ for effective leadership. They emphasized that EQ, particularly in terms of self-awareness, self-regulation, and empathy, is crucial in managing teams and fostering a positive work environment. Several participants highlighted how EQ helps leaders manage stress, resolve conflicts, and build trust with their teams.

These findings align with Goleman's (1995) theory of EQ, which highlights that emotional competencies are key to leadership effectiveness. According to Goleman (1995), leaders with high EQ are better at managing their own emotions and understanding others, leading to improved team dynamics and performance.

This finding is also consistent with Ketel's (2005) study, which suggests that EQ is a foundational skill for leaders in the police force, enabling them to deal with the emotional challenges of policing while maintaining professionalism. Similarly, Cloete (2015) emphasized that EQ is essential for building trust and rapport, which in turn enhances police performance. Mayer and Salovey's (1997) EQ also suggests that leaders with high EQ can manage both their emotions and those of others, which can significantly influence team morale and performance. The SAPS should integrate EQ training into leadership development programs to help officers enhance their interpersonal skills and emotional resilience. EQ should be a key criterion in the recruitment and promotion processes for the SAPS leaders, ensuring that those promoted are equipped with the emotional competencies necessary for leadership.

Participants highlighted the importance of collaboration, both within the department and across other law enforcement agencies. They mentioned that fostering collaboration is crucial for sharing information, coordinating efforts, and ensuring that all units work toward common goals. Managers who emphasize collaboration tend to achieve better performance outcomes in complex, resource-constrained environments. This finding is supported by Torres-Rivera and Pedraza-Melo, (2023), who argue that collaboration is critical for organizational success, particularly in policing, where managers need to coordinate multiple teams and resources.

The idea of transformational leadership, as proposed by Bass (1985), also supports this theme, as transformational leaders inspire and motivate their teams to work together toward a shared vision. The importance of collaboration has been emphasized in several studies, including Masilela (2013), who pointed out that collaboration between departments within the SAPS is essential for improving efficiency and overall performance. Additionally, Cloete (2015) found that effective collaboration fosters innovation and problem-solving in police management.

The SAPS should invest in team-building activities and workshops that encourage collaboration both within the SAPS and with external stakeholders, such as community organizations and other law enforcement agencies. The SAPS leadership programs should emphasize collaborative leadership and communication strategies that foster cross-functional teamwork.

- Effective communication across multiple forms to achieve desired results

Participants emphasized the critical role of communication, not only in managing teams but also in interacting with the community and stakeholders. They highlighted the need for both formal and informal communication, including digital tools, to ensure that important messages are delivered effectively. Good communication was seen as essential for problem-solving, motivating teams, and aligning organizational goals. The importance of communication is aligned with Bass's (1990) transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes the role of leaders in clearly articulating their vision and goals. Effective communication, according to Northouse (2025), is one of the key components that help leaders build trust and foster motivation in their teams.

Ketel (2005) highlighted communication as a key competency for police leadership, stating that effective communication is central to operational success. Cloete (2015) and Masilela (2013) also found that communication skills, particularly in crisis situations, were essential for building relationships and ensuring that police departments could carry out their duties effectively. Hackman and Johnson (2009) argue that communication is a cornerstone of effective leadership, helping leaders align their teams with organizational goals and promoting transparency. Griffin et al. (2017) emphasize that effective communication leads to better decision-making and ensures that team members are on the same page during high-pressure situations. The SAPS should enhance communication training in leadership programs, emphasizing both internal communication (e.g., between departments) and external communication (e.g., with the public). Invest in communication tools and platforms that allow for rapid information sharing and feedback, particularly in high-stress situations like emergencies.

Participants identified the need for strong decision-making skills, particularly in unstable and VUCA environments. Managers noted that being able to make quick, informed decisions during crises or in fast-changing environments is crucial for maintaining order and ensuring that operations run smoothly.

This finding ties closely with Herbert Simon's Bounded Rationality Theory (1947), as cited in Simon (2013), which suggests that decision-making is constrained by the information available, cognitive limitations, and the environment. Heifetz's Adaptive Leadership Model (1994) also supports this, emphasizing that leaders must be able to navigate complex, uncertain

environments and make decisions that adapt to changing conditions. Efendi et al. (2020) noted that effective decision-making is a vital competency for police officers, especially in times of crisis or uncertainty. This finding resonates with Johnson et al. (2021), who emphasize that effective decision-making during high-pressure situations is essential for law enforcement agencies. The SAPS should focus on decision-making training, particularly in high-stress or uncertain situations, to improve the agility and effectiveness of its leaders. The SAPS could implement simulation-based training exercises to help managers improve their decision-making skills under pressure.

- Command leadership agility

Participants described the need for leaders to be agile, adaptable, and capable of responding quickly to changing circumstances. The ability to adjust one's leadership style depending on the situation and the people involved was seen as an important competency for the SAPS managers. This finding aligns with Joiner and Josephs' (2007) Leadership Agility Compass, which identifies four key dimensions of leadership agility: context-setting agility, creative agility, stakeholder agility, and self-leadership agility.

In particular, context-setting agility is relevant to the SAPS managers as it involves anticipating and responding to environmental changes while maintaining strategic focus. Creative agility further supports police leaders by enabling them to think innovatively and develop practical solutions to unique challenges, such as shifting priorities in crisis situations. These concepts emphasize that leadership agility is not just about flexibility but also involves the strategic and creative application of leadership styles based on situational demands.

Studies by Torres-Rivera and Pedraza-Melo, (2023) and Cloete (2015) have also highlighted that agile leadership is essential for police management, as it allows leaders to adapt to shifting priorities and ensure that their teams remain focused and effective. The SAPS should prioritize leadership agility in training programs, integrating the principles of the Leadership Agility Compass to ensure that managers develop the necessary context-setting and creative agility skills. Fostering a culture of agile leadership will empower the SAPS managers to shift leadership styles dynamically and address evolving challenges with confidence and creativity.

- The impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS

Participants identified knowledge and expertise as fundamental competencies influencing managerial effectiveness in the KZN SAPS. A deep understanding of policing practices, laws, regulations, and community engagement strategies enables managers to lead effectively and make informed decisions.

This finding links to Katz's (1955) concept of technical competencies, which refers to the specialized knowledge and expertise required to manage specific functions. Similarly, Lazenby (2015) notes that technical expertise remains crucial for police managers, as it directly impacts their credibility and authority in managing day-to-day operations. Masilela (2013) also found that a lack of relevant knowledge and expertise among police leaders resulted in lower performance levels, underscoring the importance of continuous professional development. The findings of this study highlight the need for the SAPS managers to stay updated on both the latest law enforcement technologies and evolving legal frameworks. The SAPS should invest in continuous learning opportunities for managers to build and maintain the knowledge necessary for effective leadership. Specialized programs should focus on legal updates, technology adoption, and advanced policing techniques.

The study identified management and administrative competency as another key area impacting the SAPS performance. Participants emphasized that effective management of resources, personnel, and operations is critical for organizational success. The ability to streamline administrative processes, allocate resources efficiently, and maintain organizational discipline directly affects police performance.

This links to Katz's (1955) managerial competencies, which highlight the importance of overseeing operations and managing resources effectively. Hersey and Blanchard (1969) also highlight the role of management competency in creating structured environments that support performance and growth. Cloete (2015) found that poorly managed administrative processes in the SAPS contributed to inefficiencies and low morale among officers. Therefore, ensuring that the SAPS managers possess strong administrative skills is essential for improving overall performance and organizational outcomes. The SAPS should focus on strengthening the administrative competencies of their managers, providing training in resource allocation, time management, and operational planning to improve organizational efficiency.

The final competency identified as influencing performance is analytical thinking and problem-solving. Participants highlighted that the ability to analyze complex situations and devise effective solutions is crucial for effective policing. In an environment characterized by frequent challenges and evolving threats, this competency ensures that managers can identify issues early and implement appropriate solutions. This links to Katz's (1955) conceptual competencies, where analytical thinking is key for problem-solving and decision-making. Masilela (2013) also emphasizes that problem-solving skills enable managers to navigate the complexities of law enforcement and public safety.

Lazenby (2015) argues that managers who lack problem-solving skills often struggle to address operational challenges, resulting in a direct impact on police performance. By enhancing analytical thinking, the SAPS managers can better understand problems, generate innovative solutions, and improve performance outcomes. The SAPS should incorporate problem-solving and analytical thinking modules in their managerial training programs to help develop these critical competencies, ensuring that managers are equipped to handle complex and evolving challenges in policing.

- Training and development in shaping managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS

Leadership development was identified as a core theme in shaping managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. Training programs focusing on leadership skills are crucial in equipping managers with the necessary tools to guide teams effectively and make strategic decisions. The study found that these programs aim to develop both technical leadership skills and the softer skills needed to manage diverse teams in high-pressure environments.

The importance of leadership development is supported by Paz and Odelius (2021), who argue that managerial competencies are essential in cultivating leaders who can inspire trust, engage their teams, and make critical decisions in volatile and complex environments. Leadership training within the SAPS aligns with this, ensuring that managers are prepared to handle diverse challenges and lead with authority. As highlighted by Ketel (2005) and Ansar and Fattah (2020), leadership development programs enhance the effectiveness of police leadership, fostering improved decision-making and accountability. However, the study also found that leadership training, although valued, often lacks the depth necessary to tackle all leadership challenges in the SAPS. This highlights the need for tailored, advanced leadership programs

that consider the specific and evolving challenges faced by police leaders, such as managing personnel in high-stress situations or navigating the complexities of public relations in the ever-changing digital world.

Communication skills were repeatedly cited as a critical area of focus in the training programs. Effective communication is vital for police leaders to coordinate with both internal teams and external stakeholders, such as the public and other law enforcement agencies. The findings show that communication training is often integrated into leadership programs but is sometimes fragmented or insufficient for specific managerial contexts. Previous research, such as Lazenby (2015), suggests that communication is a fundamental competency for managers at all levels, especially in organizations like the SAPS, where clear, concise communication can influence operational success.

The study aligns with Goleman's (1998) findings on EQ, noting that emotional awareness and communication are integral to effective leadership. While EQ was emphasized in the first research question, its inclusion in communication training further reinforces the development of effective interpersonal relationships, which are critical for police managers to succeed in their roles. The emphasis on EQ aligns with findings by Goleman (1998) assertion that leaders who understand and manage emotions foster better relationships and enhance team performance.

Problem-solving emerged as a central theme in the training and development of managerial competencies in the SAPS. These skills are essential for addressing day-to-day operational challenges, as well as more complex strategic dilemmas within policing. The study reveals that while problem-solving is included in leadership and decision-making training, it requires a more targeted approach to address specific law enforcement challenges.

Katz's (1955) competency model underscores the necessity of problem-solving skills for effective management. Problem-solving not only enhances managerial effectiveness but also strengthens decision-making in unpredictable environments. This finding aligns with Cloete (2015), who argued that training programs should emphasize these practical skills to improve overall police performance. However, the study found that training programs often lack sufficient focus on developing critical thinking in managers, suggesting a need for more structured, scenario-based training exercises tailored to real-world policing challenges.

Training in interpersonal skills was identified as a key driver for developing managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS. Skills such as conflict resolution, empathy, and relationship-building are critical for fostering positive team dynamics and improving interactions with the community. Managers in the SAPS often oversee diverse teams and maintain positive relationships with the public, making interpersonal skills crucial for effective policing. Research by Goleman (1998) emphasizes that EQ and interpersonal skills are critical for leaders, as they directly influence team motivation, trust-building, and conflict management. The findings of this study support this assertion, showing that interpersonal skills are fundamental to effective management and leadership in the SAPS. However, there remains a need for further training in how to handle highly charged or emotionally difficult situations, which are common in policing.

The theme of junior leadership highlights the importance of training programs designed specifically for lower-level managers and emerging leaders. Kouzes and Posner (2012) emphasize that leadership development should begin early in an officer's career, equipping them with the necessary skills to progress into higher roles. Day (2000) supports this notion, noting that leadership development is a lifelong process that prepares individuals for future challenges by enhancing their ability to adapt and lead effectively. These programs are essential for preparing future leaders within the SAPS, as they provide the foundation for managerial skills that will be built upon as officer's advance in their careers. While Cloete (2015) and Masilela (2013) stress the importance of junior leadership development, the study found that there are gaps in the availability and quality of such programs within the SAPS. Effective junior leadership training is vital for building competencies early on in officers' careers, ensuring that they are well-equipped to take on higher managerial roles in the future. This theme reveals a critical area where the SAPS can improve by introducing more structured, targeted training at the junior level to create a pipeline for future leadership.

Strategic thinking emerged as a critical theme in shaping managerial competencies. Managers in the SAPS are required to think strategically to align their teams' actions with broader organizational goals and the shifting demands of law enforcement. In line with Katz's (1955) conceptual competencies, strategic thinking involves understanding complex operational environments, anticipating challenges, and fostering innovation. Mintzberg (1994) further emphasizes that strategic thinking is both an analytical and intuitive process, critical for

adapting to rapidly changing situations. While the study revealed that strategic thinking is often mentioned in training, it identified gaps in areas such as long-term planning, risk assessment, and resource allocation, which are essential for effective decision-making.

Liedtka's (1998) Strategic Thinking Model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the dimensions of strategic thinking, which include systems perspective, intent-focused thinking, thinking in time, hypothesis-driven problem-solving, and intelligent opportunism. The study revealed that excellent performers in the SAPS demonstrated strengths in systems perspective and hypothesis-driven problem-solving, evident in their ability to understand complex operational environments and make data-driven decisions. However, gaps were noted in areas such as thinking in time (balancing past experiences with future planning) and intelligent opportunism (leveraging unforeseen opportunities to advance strategic objectives).

The findings align with Paz and Odelius (2021), who emphasize that strategic thinking is a cornerstone of managerial competencies, enabling managers to contribute to organizational stability and growth. To address these gaps, the SAPS should incorporate Liedtka's (1998) dimensions into targeted training programs. For instance, focusing on thinking in time can enhance managers' ability to integrate historical insights with future-oriented planning, while developing intelligent opportunism can improve adaptive decision-making in dynamic policing contexts. By leveraging Liedtka’s (1998) model, the SAPS can foster a more comprehensive approach to strategic thinking, ensuring managers are equipped to navigate both predictable and emergent challenges effectively.

- Managerial competencies critical for excellent performance to constitute managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN

Strategic thinking emerged as a key competency in constituting a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN. Effective strategic thinking ensures that the SAPS leaders can analyze complex situations, anticipate challenges, and optimize resources in alignment with broader organizational goals. Participants emphasized that the ability to think strategically—through both critical thinking (for assessing situations logically) and creative thinking (for generating innovative solutions)—is crucial for achieving long-term organizational success.

The importance of strategic thinking is supported by Paz and Odelius (2021), who argue that managerial competencies must include the ability to analyze the environment, identify strategic opportunities, evaluate and prioritize options, and devise strategies that address both current and future organizational needs. These findings align with Katz's (1955) model, which emphasizes conceptual competencies such as strategic thinking, forecasting, and problem-solving. For the SAPS, strategic thinking is particularly critical given the complex and evolving security landscape in SA.

While training for strategic thinking is available, participants agreed that more comprehensive programs are needed, especially in resource allocation and risk management. This highlights the need for the SAPS to strengthen its focus on embedding strategic thinking at all levels, ensuring officers at all ranks are equipped to contribute effectively to the organization's goals. It is also critical for police officers to apply frameworks such as value, rarity, inimitability, and organization (VRIO), first proposed by Barney (1991). The VRIO framework is a useful tool designed to help organizations identify and leverage unique resources and capabilities to create sustainable competitive advantages. In the context of the SAPS, applying the VRIO framework would help optimize resource allocation, identify strategic opportunities, and enhance overall performance.

Operational leadership and decision-making were another critical theme identified for a managerial competence framework. Effective operational leadership ensures that the SAPS managers can make sound decisions, lead their teams under pressure, and maintain high performance in the field. Lussier and Achua (2015) argue that adaptive decision-making under stress is a vital component of leadership, particularly in high-stakes environments like policing. Shea (2015) further highlights that effective leaders inspire trust, a critical quality when making decisions in times of crisis, ensuring that teams remain united and focused even under pressure. Participants in the study pointed out that these competencies are essential for handling daily operational challenges, from managing resources to making decisions in rapidly evolving situations. This finding resonates with Cloete (2015), who asserts that police leaders must be adept at decision-making in both routine and crisis scenarios. Furthermore, Katz's (1955) interpersonal competencies are also relevant, as effective decision-making often relies on strong leadership skills such as empathy and team management.

Moreover, Shea (2015) emphasizes that police executives must possess leadership skills that can inspire trust and foster a sense of collective responsibility within their teams, ensuring that decisions are well-communicated and understood by all stakeholders. The study highlights that while operational leadership training is available, there is a need for more focused programs to address real-time decision-making in the field. Participants called for greater integration of scenario-based training and leadership simulations to prepare managers for high-stakes situations that are common in policing.

Community engagement and conflict management are integral to the success of police organizations, especially in a diverse and volatile territory like KZN. Effective police managers must engage with the community to foster trust, maintain public order, and prevent conflict. Skogan (2006) asserts that community policing strategies are essential for building sustainable relationships between police and the communities they serve, which is particularly important in areas with high tension. Moreover, Borum (2000) emphasizes that police leaders must be adept at conflict management, especially in volatile environments. Integrating emotional intelligence with conflict resolution strategies allows police managers to de-escalate situations and create a positive public perception. The study's participants stressed that managerial competencies in community engagement are critical for enhancing relationships between the SAPS and the communities they serve, especially in the face of rising tensions and public scrutiny. This finding aligns with Goleman's (1998) framework of EQ, which includes competencies such as social awareness and relationship management. Effective community engagement requires police managers to understand public concerns, resolve conflicts, and demonstrate empathy. Furthermore, Lazenby (2015) stresses that police leaders must have the ability to navigate complex social dynamics and manage conflicts to ensure public safety.

However, the study by Lazenby found that while community engagement is prioritized in the SAPS, there is still room for improvement in training officers in areas such as cultural competence and de-escalation techniques. The SAPS managers need more comprehensive programs that equip them with the tools to handle diverse social contexts and resolve conflicts effectively. Technical and administrative competence was also highlighted as a key competency for the SAPS managers. These competencies encompass both the technical knowledge necessary for law enforcement duties and the administrative skills required to manage personnel, budgets, and operations. Participants emphasized that the SAPS managers

must be proficient not only in policing but also in managing organizational processes and resources effectively.

The significance of technical competence aligns with Katz's (1955) descriptions of technical competencies, which refer to the job-specific skills required for managerial success. Cloete (2015) further supports this by noting that the SAPS managers need to balance both technical expertise and administrative efficiency. The study found that while the SAPS offers training in specific technical skills, there is a need for further development in administrative competencies like project management, budgeting, and HRM. This theme underscores the importance of integrating more advanced administrative training into the SAPS leadership programs to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of managerial functions.

Ethical and professional conduct emerged as a final critical competency for the managerial competence framework. The integrity of police leaders is essential for maintaining public trust, ensuring accountability, and upholding the rule of law. Punch (2009) highlights that corruption within the police force can erode public trust and hinder effective law enforcement. Paoline (2003) stresses that continuous ethics training is necessary to prevent corruption and to ensure police officers demonstrate integrity in all aspects of their work. Furthermore**,** Goldstein (1977) argues that ethical leadership is crucial for fostering organizational legitimacy, which directly impacts the effectiveness of policing. The study highlighted that the SAPS managers must demonstrate high standards of ethics and professionalism in all aspects of their work, from managing personnel to interacting with the public. This theme directly ties to the concept of organizational culture discussed by Shea (2015), where strong ethical foundations are central to an effective police force. The study emphasized that ethical leadership not only fosters internal trust but also ensures that the police serve their communities with respect and fairness. Lazenby (2015) also reinforced the idea that the SAPS managers must lead by example, setting a high bar for ethical conduct across all levels of the organization.

Participants in this study acknowledged that while the SAPS emphasizes ethics training, there is often a, disconnect between the formal training and day-to-day practices. There is a need for the SAPS to develop more robust training programs that address ethical decision-making, the management of corruption, and fostering a culture of accountability within the force.

5.2.2. Proposed managerial competences framework for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS

Informed by the findings of this study, it is evident that effective management within the KZN SAPS requires a diverse set of competencies essential for navigating the complexities of modern policing. This framework synthesizes the findings from previous sections, highlighting the critical competencies necessary for excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. By focusing on these competencies, the framework provides a structured approach to developing the skills required for navigating the complex environment of law enforcement.

- Key considerations for the proposed framework

In proposing this framework for managerial competencies, it is important to consider two key aspects. First, competency models are widely used across various organizations, contributing to substantial human resource development and providing these organizations with a competitive advantage (Megahed, 2018). David McClelland (1973), known for his work on competencies, defined a competency model as a framework that outlines the specific competencies needed for successful job performance. McClelland (1973) emphasized that competencies extend beyond traditional intelligence testing and should include a wide range of skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

This study aligns with McClelland's (1973) insights by identifying essential skills such as effective communication, decision-making, and EQ, which are foundational to successful management within the SAPS. By adopting these competencies, the SAPS can enhance the effectiveness of its leadership at every level, ensuring both individual and collective success. Second, the proposed framework is designed to ensure that the KZN SAPS leaders acquire competencies that not only meet basic requirements but also elevate them to a level of exceptional performance. Tyrańska (2016) argued that understanding tipping points—the point at which a competency reaches a level that ensures outstanding performance—is essential for the development of effective leaders. Identifying these tipping points allows the SAPS to distinguish between competencies required for baseline success and those that push leadership to the next level of excellence.

At its foundation, the framework integrates a hybrid set of knowledge and skills, reflecting the competencies required for effective leadership, community trust, and operational effectiveness. These competencies enable the SAPS leaders to lead themselves, others, and cross-sector collaboration.

In developing this framework, it is essential to outline specific performance indicators that allow for the measurable assessment of each competency. These indicators are essential for gauging whether a competency is being applied effectively and whether it contributes to organizational performance. Below, Table 5.1, is a proposed list of critical managerial competencies, each with its corresponding definition and performance indicators.

Table 5.1: Proposed managerial competences framework for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS.

Competency	Definition	Behavioral Indicators	Performance Indicators
Public Speaking	Ability to convey important information effectively	Engages audiences; communicates strategies clearly; uses appropriate body language and tone	Delivers clear and impactful messages; engages audiences and fosters clear communication across all levels.
EQ	Understanding and managing one's own emotions and those of others	Demonstrates empathy; fosters supportive relationships; manages stress and conflict effectively	Demonstrates self-awareness and social awareness; manages emotional responses to enhance team collaboration.
Operational Efficiency	Familiarity with policies, rules, and regulations governing operations	Conducts audits; ensures compliance with procedures; resolves inefficiencies promptly	Ensures compliance with procedures; identifies and resolves operational inefficiencies.

Competency	Definition	Behavioral Indicators	Performance Indicators
Strategic Planning	Ability to formulate long-term plans aligned with organizational goals	Develops long-term strategic goals; adapts plans based on emerging challenges; assesses environmental impact	Develops clear, actionable objectives; adjusts strategies to meet evolving organizational goals.
Crisis Management and Problem-Solving	Skills required to effectively handle emergencies	Responds decisively to crises; implements immediate problem-solving measures; maintains operational control during emergencies	Responds swiftly and effectively in crisis situations; mitigates risks and resolves critical issues under pressure.
Leadership and Team Management	Guiding teams effectively towards achieving goals	Inspires confidence in team members; fosters collaboration and trust; resolves conflicts and promotes teamwork	Promotes a positive team environment; drives team success and maintains high morale; resolves team conflicts promptly.
Interpersonal Skills	Ability to build positive relationships among team members	Demonstrates respect and active listening; encourages collaboration; resolves conflicts in a timely manner	Builds strong relationships with team members and colleagues; facilitates open communication and cooperation.
Strategic Thinking	Analyzing situations and challenges using a combination of critical, creative, and strategic thinking to make informed decisions.	Identifies critical issues; generates innovative solutions; evaluates options with foresight; adapts strategies based on new information.	Makes timely, informed decisions by evaluating multiple perspectives; applies both creative and analytical thinking to address complex

Competency	Definition	Behavioral Indicators	Performance Indicators
			problems; aligns decisions with long-term goals.
Effective Communication	Capacity to convey information clearly across various mediums	Clearly articulates ideas; adapts communication style to the audience; ensures transparency in information sharing	Ensures clarity in messaging; maintains transparency and openness in communication with team members and stakeholders.
Good Decision-Making	Ability to make timely and informed decisions under pressure	Analyzes data effectively; allocates resources wisely; considers the long-term implications of decisions	Makes data-driven decisions; demonstrates effective judgment in resource allocation and crisis situations.

Source: Authors Composition

This framework offers a comprehensive approach to understanding and developing the managerial competencies necessary for achieving excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. By identifying and prioritizing key competencies such as strategic planning, operational leadership, community engagement, technical competence, and ethical conduct, this framework ensures that the SAPS leaders are equipped to navigate the complexities of modern policing. The integration of training and development opportunities with these competencies will enable the SAPS to enhance leadership capabilities, improve operational outcomes, and foster stronger community trust, ultimately contributing to more effective policing in KZN.

5.3. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the key findings of the study on critical managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. It examined four main themes: managerial competencies critical for excellent performance, the impact of these competencies on performance outcomes, training and development opportunities shaping these competencies, and, the competencies necessary to

create a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in KZN. The chapter contextualized these findings within existing literature and relevant studies, offering insights into how specific competencies could enhance organizational performance and address the unique challenges faced by the SAPS. Finally, the chapter proposed a framework for managerial competencies aimed at achieving excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. The next chapter provides the study's conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

Following the presentation and discussion of the findings of this exploratory study, this chapter aims to tie the objectives of the study to the main findings and conclude the research study. This exploratory and qualitative study focused on exploring the managerial competencies for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS. The chapter summarizes the main findings, present the conclusions drawn from these findings, offer recommendations for practice, and identify areas for future research.

6.2. REALIZATION OF OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this study was to explore the managerial competencies for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS. This exploratory study utilized qualitative in-depth interviews involving eleven experienced managers within the organization. These interviewees were instrumental in providing insights into their understanding and experiences related to managerial competencies and their impact on performance outcomes.

Data were gathered using semi-structured interviews and analyzed using a thematic approach to identify dominant themes. The themes included the following:

- Managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS,
- Impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS,
- Training and development opportunities in shaping managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS, and
- Critical managerial competencies essential for excellent performance in constituting a managerial competence framework for the SAPS in the KZN.

The results of this study revealed managerial themes relating to competencies that are essential for ensuring excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. These competencies included:

1. Effective communication
2. EQ to lead self and others,
3. Enhancing collaboration for effective work performance,

4. Effective communication across multiple forms to achieve desired results,
5. Decision-making making in a variety of stable, and VUCA contexts,
6. Command leadership agility,
7. Technology-savviness for informed policing, and
8. Strategic thinking

These competencies are critical for navigating the unique challenges faced by the KZN SAPS, particularly in a high-crime and resource-constrained environment. Furthermore, the findings indicated that while training opportunities exist, significant gaps remain due to funding constraints and limited access to essential soft skills training. The study revealed the need for targeted training programs aimed at enhancing these critical managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS.

The analysis highlighted how specific managerial competencies can tip employees towards excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. For instance, effective communication not only facilitates better teamwork but also enhances operational efficiency by ensuring that all team members are aligned with organizational goals. Similarly, strong leadership and EQ empowered managers to inspire their teams, fostering an environment where employees felt valued and motivated. Participants emphasized that these competencies are not just beneficial but essential for addressing specific challenges faced by the KZN SAPS, thereby differentiating its operations from other law enforcement agencies. The ability to effectively manage crises and make informed decisions under pressure was particularly noted as a tipping factor that influences overall service delivery.

This study has provided valuable insights into the practices and challenges of managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. It has identified key areas for improvement in leadership practices and recommendations will be offered for developing a comprehensive framework for managerial competencies tailored to the specific demands of the organization.

The realization of each objective will be discussed next, followed by the recommendations for improvement.

- Objective 1: To identify the managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS.

This study uncovered seven themes relating to managerial competencies that are critical for excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. These themes included EQ to lead self and others, enhancing collaboration for effective work performance, effective communication across multiple forms to achieve desired results, decision-making making in a variety of stable, and VUCA contexts, commanding leadership agility, technology-savviness for informed policing, and strategic thinking. The findings demonstrated that managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS are a blend of knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary for navigating a high-crime, resource-constrained environment. Managers emphasized competencies such as effective leadership, team building, and communication as essential for fostering collaboration and ensuring operational success.

Interpersonal and communication skills were highlighted as key in building strong teams capable of addressing the complexities of the SAPS operations. Managers recognized the need for motivational leadership to inspire team cohesion, particularly in a challenging environment where resource scarcity often creates barriers. Participants stressed the importance of decision-making competencies in areas such as operational planning and resource management. Effective decision-making was linked to organizational success, as it allowed managers to respond proactively to challenges while maintaining team morale.

The study further revealed that strategic thinking and integrated operational planning are critical for the SAPS managers to navigate dynamic environments and mitigate risks. Strategic leadership, involving coordination across multiple units and functions, was seen as integral to combating complex criminal networks and ensuring seamless execution of operations. Unique challenges in the SAPS, such as rigid hierarchies and public scrutiny, were seen to shape the managerial competencies required. EQ and agility in high-pressure situations were identified as vital, given the socio-political dynamics of policing in KZN. Compared to other law enforcement organizations, the SAPS requires managers to excel in areas like emotional control and hierarchical navigation, which differ significantly from the flatter structures of municipal policing services.

Barriers to excellence included delays in decision-making caused by the rigid chain of command, resource limitations, and the pressure of maintaining public trust. Despite these challenges, managers highlighted opportunities for growth through enhanced leadership

training, fostering a culture of accountability, and integrating technology to support managerial tasks.

- Objective 2: To explore the impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS

This research objective was realized by the study as it explored how specific managerial competencies influence performance outcomes within the KZN SAPS. The findings revealed that competencies such as decisive leadership, communication, decision-making, knowledge and expertise, management and administrative skills, analytical thinking, and problem-solving significantly impact operational effectiveness, team morale, and public trust. For example, decisive leadership was shown to boost team cohesion and discipline, while effective communication and decision-making were critical for reducing confusion and improving response times during high-pressure situations. The study also highlighted that a lack of knowledge in key areas, such as crime investigation, can hinder performance, whereas strong analytical thinking and problem-solving skills enable managers to adapt strategies and optimize resource use. In conclusion, while these competencies were found to drive performance in various areas, the study also noted that the SAPS must further develop these skills to achieve sustained improvements in operational efficiency and community safety.

- Objective 3: To explore how training and development opportunities shapes the development of managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS

This research objective was realized by the study as it explored the impact of various training and development opportunities on shaping managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. The findings revealed that programs such as the Middle Management Learning Program (MMLP) and Junior Management Leading Program (JMLP) played a significant role in developing leadership, communication, problem-solving, and strategic thinking competencies. For instance, the MMLP helped enhance leadership skills, such as delegation and decision-making, enabling managers to lead effectively and make informed decisions. However, challenges such as limited access to training due to budget constraints and insufficient cascading of knowledge from senior to junior managers were identified as barriers to widespread development.

Communication skills were also shaped through report writing courses and community engagement initiatives, though gaps in the quality and availability of these programs were noted. Additionally, problem-solving skills were developed through tactical training, but again, limited resources hindered broader participation. The study further highlighted the importance of interpersonal skills training, particularly diversity training, for fostering collaboration and workplace harmony. Despite the positive impact of these initiatives, the research pointed to a need for more consistent and accessible training across all managerial levels to ensure the holistic development of managerial competencies within the KZN SAPS. In conclusion, while training programs significantly contributed to shaping managerial competencies, their full potential is constrained by resource limitations and the unequal distribution of training opportunities. Expanding access to these programs and ensuring their relevance across various managerial tiers could enhance overall managerial effectiveness in the organization.

- Objective 4: To recommend managerial competencies which are critical for performance to constitute a managerial competence framework for the SAPS managers

This research objective was realized by identifying key competencies that are essential for the KZN SAPS managers to excel in their roles and navigate the complexities of modern law enforcement. The proposed managerial competence framework synthesizes the study's findings and highlights the critical competencies required to achieve excellent performance within the SAPS. These competencies included strategic thinking, operational leadership and decision-making, community engagement and conflict management, technical and administrative competence, and ethical and professional conduct. By focusing on these competencies, the SAPS can foster effective leadership and operational success at every level of management.

The proposed framework is designed to equip the SAPS managers with the skills necessary for both day-to-day operations and long-term strategic leadership. It is informed by key models of competency development, including McClelland's (1973) model, which emphasizes a comprehensive set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes for successful job performance. The framework is further enhanced by Tyrańska (2016) concept of "tipping points," which suggests that the SAPS leaders should not only meet baseline competencies but strive to reach a level of excellence that ensures exceptional leadership and organizational performance.

The framework also emphasizes the importance of specific performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of each competency. These indicators will allow the SAPS to measure the impact of managerial competencies on both individual and organizational outcomes, ensuring that leadership is continuously improving and aligned with the dynamic challenges of modern policing. Overall, the proposed managerial competence framework is designed to provide a structured approach to developing the SAPS leadership and operational effectiveness, thereby driving performance excellence across the organization. One of the major limitations of this qualitative study is that it only used interview data, and the sample size was small.

Future research should consider using performance records of participants as well as the comments from the superiors. In this study, the focus was solely on individual excellent leaders who provided self-report. Future research should also include the perspectives of employees and managers to achieve a comprehensive 360-degree understanding of what constitutes excellent performance and managerial competencies among police workers in practice. However, while the results of this study are not generalizable, they may be transferable to similar contexts within the South African Police Service (SAPS) and potentially to other settings.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings from this study have significant practical implications for the KZN SAPS in terms of improving managerial performance and operational effectiveness. The conclusions of this study offer profound insights into the competencies needed for excellent managerial performance within the KZN SAPS. The practical implications of these findings extend to both the organizational structure and individual leadership development, affecting both the operational effectiveness of the force and its ability to respond to evolving challenges in the policing environment. The following implications emerge from the study's conclusions:

- Enhancing Leadership Training and Development:

The study highlights that EQ, strategic thinking, and decision-making in VUCA contexts are essential for effective management in the KZN SAPS. As a result, practical action should be taken to strengthen these competencies in training programs. Specifically, SAPS should:

- Integrate EQ training into management development programs, ensuring that managers are equipped to handle stress, manage conflict, and communicate effectively with their teams. This will improve team cohesion, morale, and overall performance.
- Enhance decision-making training to equip managers with the skills to make sound judgments in rapidly changing, high-pressure situations. Given the dynamic and unpredictable nature of policing, the ability to make clear and decisive choices is crucial for success.

SAPS leadership should prioritize these competencies as core elements of managerial development, ensuring that they are included in all levels of training for police managers.

- Creating a Structured Competency Framework for SAPS Managers:

The study's development of a managerial competency framework offers a structured approach to defining and assessing the competencies required for effective policing in KZN. The practical implication is that SAPS should adopt this framework to guide recruitment, training, and performance evaluation. This can be done by:

- Defining clear competency standards for each managerial level in the SAPS, based on the key themes identified in the study. For example, competencies such as command leadership agility, technology-savviness, and effective communication should be incorporated into leadership job descriptions and evaluation criteria.
- Assessing the competencies of current managers against these standards and identifying areas for targeted development. This would help ensure that all managers possess the skills needed to navigate the complex policing environment in KZN.

By institutionalizing this competency framework, SAPS can align its management practices with the identified competencies critical to improving performance outcomes.

- Strengthening Interpersonal and Collaboration Skills:

Given the emphasis on team collaboration and interpersonal skills as key to excellent performance, SAPS should take concrete steps to foster collaboration and teamwork at all levels of the organization. Practical actions include:

- Promoting cross-departmental collaboration through joint training exercises and regular inter-unit meetings. This will help break down silos within the organization and encourage shared problem-solving across different components of SAPS.

- Implementing mentorship programs where senior leaders can pass down knowledge and facilitate the development of interpersonal and collaboration skills in junior managers.

These actions will create a more cohesive organizational culture, improve communication, and enhance the ability to tackle complex crime-related challenges in KZN.

6.4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While this study offers valuable insights into the managerial competencies necessary for excellent performance within the KZN SAPS, several limitations must be acknowledged. These limitations influence the scope and generalizability of the findings.

One of the primary limitations of this study is the small sample size of 11 participants. While the sample was purposively selected to ensure a focus on high-performing managers within the KZN SAPS, the relatively small number of participants limits the breadth of the findings. Additionally, the study only focused on managers, which may not represent the experiences of lower-ranking officers or frontline workers, whose competencies and challenges may differ. The study focused exclusively on the KZN SAPS and may not fully represent the experiences or challenges of police managers in other provinces or contexts. While the findings provide valuable insights into the specific challenges and competencies within the KZN region, they may not be directly applicable to the SAPS as a whole or to police forces in other countries. Additionally, the contextual and regional factors in KZN, such as crime rates, socio-political dynamics, and resource limitations, may differ significantly from those in other regions, limiting the transferability of the study's conclusions.

Despite these limitations, this study provides valuable insights into the managerial competencies necessary for excellent performance within the KZN SAPS. Future research should consider expanding the sample size, incorporating quantitative methods, and including data from other stakeholders, such as lower-ranking officers and superiors, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the competencies needed for effective policing. Additionally, incorporating performance data and conducting longitudinal studies could further enrich the findings and provide clearer links between competencies and actual performance outcomes.

6.5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are made to improve managerial competence and performance within the KZN SAPS, as follows:

6.5.1. Implementation of a Comprehensive Managerial Competence Framework

It is recommended that the KZN SAPS adopts and implements the proposed managerial competence framework. This framework, grounded in strategic planning, operational leadership, community engagement, technical competence, and ethical conduct, will ensure that the SAPS managers possess the critical competencies needed for effective performance. The framework should be used as a guide for recruitment, training, and professional development, as well as for performance assessments to align managerial capabilities with organizational goals.

6.5.2. Continuous professional development programs

The KZN SAPS should invest in regular, targeted professional development programs aimed at enhancing the identified competencies, particularly in areas such as decision-making, conflict management, and strategic planning. Leadership training should focus on both technical and interpersonal skills, ensuring managers are equipped to lead their teams effectively under pressure and adapt to evolving policing challenges.

6.5.3. Strengthening strategic planning and adaptability

As the study highlighted the importance of strategic planning and adaptability, it is recommended that the SAPS managers be encouraged to continuously assess and adapt their strategies to meet emerging challenges. Regular reviews of operational strategies should be implemented, with a focus on flexibility and forward-thinking approaches. This will help managers remain proactive and responsive to evolving criminal activities and community needs.

6.5.4. Enhancement of community engagement and public relations

Community trust is crucial for effective policing. The SAPS managers should prioritize building and maintaining positive relationships with the communities they serve. Training programs focused on community engagement, conflict resolution, and public relations should be expanded. Additionally, the SAPS leaders should foster transparency and open communication with the public to strengthen the police-public relationship, thereby improving public trust and cooperation.

6.5.5. Promotion of ethical leadership and accountability

Ethical conduct and professional integrity were identified as core competencies. The SAPS managers should lead by example, modeling ethical behavior in all decisions and actions. To reinforce this, the SAPS could introduce ethics training, with a specific focus on promoting fairness, transparency, and accountability at all levels of the organization. Furthermore, mechanisms should be in place to hold managers accountable for any breaches in ethical conduct, ensuring that integrity is maintained throughout the force.

6.5.6. Focus on resource allocation

Prioritize strategic resource allocation to ensure that training programs are adequately funded and accessible to all managers. This will help bridge the identified gaps in training opportunities and enhance overall managerial effectiveness.

6.5.7. Evaluate training effectiveness

Implement mechanisms to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of training programs and managerial competencies within the SAPS. This can include performance assessments, feedback from participants, and analysis of operational outcomes to ensure continuous improvement.

6.5.8. Adapt to evolving challenges

Encourage adaptability among managers by providing training that prepares them for emerging challenges in policing, including technological advancements, changing community dynamics, and evolving crime trends. These recommendations aim to enhance managerial competencies

within the KZN SAPS, ultimately leading to improved organizational effectiveness and better service delivery to the community.

6.5.9. Use of performance indicators for ongoing competency assessment

The introduction of performance indicators for each identified competency will allow the SAPS to systematically assess the effectiveness of its managerial leadership. These indicators should be integrated into regular performance reviews to track the progress of the SAPS managers in areas such as strategic execution, decision-making under pressure, and community relations. The use of data-driven evaluations will provide a basis for continuous improvement.

6.6. AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study provides valuable insights into the competencies required for effective management in the KZN SAPS, several areas warrant further exploration, s follows:

- **Impact of managerial competencies on organizational performance:** Future research could explore the direct correlation between the development of managerial competencies and overall organizational performance within the SAPS. A longitudinal study examining how improvements in managerial skills affect operational outcomes such as crime reduction, public satisfaction, and internal morale would provide a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of the proposed framework.

- **Evaluation of training programs and their effectiveness:** Research could focus on evaluating the current training programs within the SAPS to determine whether they adequately address the competencies highlighted in this study. This research could assess the effectiveness of existing training methods, identify gaps, and suggest improvements to ensure that training is aligned with the evolving needs of modern policing.

- **Exploring the role of EQ in police leadership:** EQ was identified as a crucial competency in leadership, particularly in managing conflict and stress. Future studies could focus on the role of EQ in police leadership, exploring how it impacts decision-making, team

management, and community engagement. Research could also assess how EQ can be cultivated through training and development programs.

- **Leadership styles and their impact on organizational culture:** Further research could examine the various leadership styles within the SAPS and their impact on organizational culture. Understanding how different leadership approaches influence morale, productivity, and ethical behavior within the organization could help refine leadership strategies and improve managerial effectiveness.

- **Exploring gender and diversity in managerial competency development:** Future research could explore how gender and diversity affect the development and application of managerial competencies within the SAPS. Investigating the challenges faced by female and minority managers could provide valuable insights into how the SAPS can create a more inclusive and equitable leadership development framework.

- **International comparisons of police managerial competencies:** Comparative studies between the SAPS and other police services, both regionally and internationally, could offer a broader perspective on best practices in police leadership. These studies could highlight areas where the KZN SAPS excels or where improvements are needed, particularly in areas like community policing and crisis management.

By exploring these areas, future research can contribute to the continuous improvement of managerial competencies in the SAPS, ensuring that the force is well-equipped to address the dynamic challenges of modern policing in KZN.

6.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the conclusions and recommendations derived from the study on managerial competencies in the KZN SAPS. It highlighted the implications of these competencies for improving organizational performance, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive managerial competence framework, continuous professional development, and enhanced community engagement. The chapter also addressed the limitations of the study, and suggested areas for future research. The findings offer valuable insights into how managerial

competencies can be strengthened to improve service delivery and performance within the SAPS.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

26 August 2024

Sthembokuhle Precious Shangase (220063768)
Grad School of Bus & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear SP Shangase,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00007057/2024
Project title: Exploring the managerial competencies for excellent performance in KwaZulu-Natal South African Police Services
Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 15 May 2024 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

Incidents of adverse events and serious adverse events (AEs and SAEs) should be reported in writing to HSSREC, the study sponsors, and any regulatory authority (where appropriate), within 7 working days of the occurrence for local sites and 14 days for all other South African sites.

This approval is valid until 26 August 2025.
To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

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

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)
/nng

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 **Email:** hssrec@ukzn.ac.za **Website:** http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics
Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix 2: Gatekeeper's Letter

South African Police Service | Suid-Afrikaanse Polisiediens

Privaatsak Private Bag X94	Pretoria 0001	Faks No. Fax No.	(012) 432 7866

Your reference/U verwysing:

My reference/My verwysing: **3/34/2**

THE HEAD: RESEARCH
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
PRETORIA
0001

Enquiries/Navrae: **Col (Dr) Smit**
W/O Thenga
Tel: **(012) 432 7866**
Email: ThengaS@saps.gov.za

SP Shangase
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE: UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL: MASTERS DEGREE: EXPLORING THE MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES FOR EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN KWAZULU-NATAL SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE: RESEARCHER: SP SHANGASE

1. The above subject matter refers.

2. You are hereby granted approval for your research study on the topic mentioned above in terms of National Instruction 4 of 2022.

3. Further arrangements regarding the research study may be made with the following office:

   The Provincial Commissioner: KwaZulu-Natal:

   - **Contact Person**: Colonel I Walljee
   - **Contact Details**: 031 325 4841/4962
   - **Email address**: IssacWaljee@saps.gov.za

4. Kindly adhere to paragraph 8 of our attached letter signed on **2024-07-08** with the reference number above.

[redacted]
BRIGADIER
THE ACTING HEAD: RESEARCH
DR GJ SCHWARTZ

Date: 2024 · 08 · 07

Appendix 3: Introductory Letter

Information Sheet to Participate in Research

Date: 2024/04/21

Dear Madam/Sir

My name is Sthembokuhle Shangase, a Masters student in the Graduate School of Business & Leadership at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. My contact number is [redacted] and my email address is 220063768@stu.ukzn.ac.za

You are being invited to consider participating in my study that seeks to understand the managerial competencies required for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS. As a public sector organization tasked with maintaining law and order in the province, the KZN SAPS plays a critical role in ensuring the safety and security of citizens. Effective management and Leadership are essential for the SAPS to carry out its mission. By understanding the unique competencies required for excellent performance, this research aims to contribute to improved management practices within the KZN SAPS, which could lead to enhanced service delivery.

The SAPS National head office has granted support and approval to conduct the research (please see the attached approval letter).

You have been selected to participate in this study because you have demonstrated excellent performance in your role as one of KZN SAPS managers, as evidenced by your consistently achieving or exceeding key performance indicators. Your knowledge, experience, and insight will be valuable in helping to understand the competencies that contribute to effective management within the organisation.

If you chose to participate, you will be asked to complete an in-depth interview that will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview will be audio recorded for accuracy and analysis. This study is being conducted for academic purposes only.

The study has no foreseen risks and/or discomforts that may be suffered by participants. The study might not provide direct benefits to the participants. However, the research may bring greater visibility and awareness to the challenges faced by managers within the organisation, potentially leading to improved support and resources for these managers in the future.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_HSSREC/00007057/2024).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at [redacted] and my email address is 220063768@stu.ukzn.ac.za or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Appendix 4: Informed Consent

CONSENT

I ……have been informed about the study entitled Exploring the managerial competencies for excellent performance in Kwa-Zulu Natal South African Police Services by Miss SP Shangase. I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

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

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

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (provide details).

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

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview: YES

_____ _____

Signature of Participant **Date**

_____ _____

Signature of Witness **Date**

(Where applicable)

_____ _____

Signature of Translator **Date**

(Where applicable)

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Biographical information

KZN SAPS PHQ COMPONENT NAME	POSITION	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	AGE	GENDER

Interview Questions

Sub-research objective 1: To identify the managerial competencies critical for excellent performance in KZN SAPS.

1. Please explain what do you understand by the term “managerial competencies”? Give me some clear examples

2. Which managerial competencies do you believe are critical for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS? Give me examples of each.

3. How do these competencies relate to the specific challenges and demands of working in the KZN SAPS?

4. When compared to other law enforcement or public sector organisations, how would you say the managerial competencies required for excellent performance in the KZN SAPS differ?

Sub-research objective 2: To explore the impact of managerial competencies on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS.

5. According to you, in what specific ways does managerial competencies impact on performance outcomes in the KZN SAPS? Give me example of this

6. Which managerial competences do you think impact most on performance outcomes of a manager? Give me examples of these key competences? Give me examples

7. How do you think the presence or absence of these competencies affects the overall performance of the KZN SAPS?

Sub-research objective 3: To explore how training and development opportunities shapes the development of managerial competencies in KZN SAPS.

8. According to you, how does training and development opportunities provided by the KZN SAPS shape managerial competences? Give me specific examples of managerial competences and how each was developed?

9. What training and development opportunities are currently lacking or could be useful to improve managerial performance?

If these missing training and development opportunities are there, what competences would they actually develop? Give me examples

10. Do you think that the availability and quality of these opportunities influences the overall effectiveness of managers in the KZN SAPS? Elaborate to me

Sub-research objective 4: To recommend managerial competences which are critical for performance to constitute a managerial competence framework for SAPS managers

11. Based on your experiences, what managerial competencies do you believe *are critical enough* to be included in a managerial competency framework for the KZN SAPS? Give me three examples, at least

12. According to you, how would each of the identified managerial competence contribute to excellent performance of a manager in the KZN SAPS? Give me clear examples for each competence

13. If you were to come up with a framework of key managerial competence for excellent performance in SAPS, what components would you include? Tell me how many? Why each of these?

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix 6: Letter from the Editor

Professional Editors (South Africa)

To: S P SHANGASE
Contact: [redacted]

From: Valentina Govender
Email: [redacted]

08 January 2025

Please accept this letter in lieu of work completed.
Document: Master of Commerce in Leadership Studies (MCLS) Dissertation
Title: "Exploring the managerial competencies for excellent performance in KwaZulu-Natal South African Police Services"

The document has been improved with due effort. Editing was carried out according to the scope and criteria as per the candidate's instructions - language and grammar. Suggestions for improvement have been made in the form of comments.

I trust that you may find the work satisfactory. I wish you all the best in your submissions.

Thank you kindly,
Valentina Govender
Professional Editor and Writer (South Africa)