



School of Commerce, College of Law and Management Studies

Exploring the efficacy of employee motivation on municipal performance: A case study of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality

Thembelihle Patience MASEKO

**Student No:** 222106096

**Supervisor:** Prof TI Nzimakwe

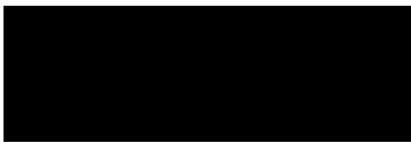
A Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Governance

2025

## DECLARATION

I, **Thembelihle Patience Maseko**, declare that

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain any other person's data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- (iv) This dissertation does not contain any other person's writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
  - a) their words have been re-written, but the general information attributed to them has been referenced; and
  - b) where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.
- (v) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the bibliography section.



---

Signature

27 November 2025

---

Date

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Firstly, I would like to thank GOD for giving me strength, courage and making it possible for me to achieve this goal. My deepest gratitude and thanks to my supervisor, Professor TI Nzimakwe for all the support, patience, with informative and constructive guidance during my research. Thank you for believing, motivating and for always being there for me when I needed assistance. You went an extra mile for this project to be a success.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the following people:

- My family for their unconditional love, motivation and support.
- My MUT family for their valuable advice and encouragement.
- I am grateful to all who had either directly or indirectly been supportive and helpful in making this research a success.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|      |                                                 |
|------|-------------------------------------------------|
| DPSA | Department of Public Service and Administration |
| EMA  | EThekweni Municipal Academy                     |
| IDP  | Integrated Development Plan                     |
| KPAs | Key Performance Areas                           |
| KPIs | Key Performance Indicators                      |
| KZN  | KwaZulu-Natal                                   |
| NDP  | National Development Plan                       |
| PM   | Performance Management                          |
| PMS  | Performance Management System                   |
| SADC | Southern African Development Community          |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals                   |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences     |
| UN   | United Nations                                  |

## ABSTRACT

Employee motivation has been identified as one of the most critical organizational phenomena in today's competitive business environment, particularly within public sector institutions where service delivery directly impacts community development. The eThekweni Municipal Academy plays a vital role in providing training to young people through trade programs and apprenticeships aimed at enhancing participants' socio-economic status. This study examined the relationship between employee motivation, managerial perceptions, and municipal performance within the eThekweni Municipal Academy.

The study aimed to ascertain the role of managerial perceptions in shaping employee behavior and motivation, understand motivation's impact on eThekweni Municipal Academy performance, and determine current motivational strategies' effectiveness on employee performance and satisfaction. A qualitative research approach utilizing correlational research design was adopted to explore relationships between variables. The target population comprised employees including training coordinators, facilitators, administrative staff, and management personnel. A purposive sample of 10 participants was selected. Primary data collection employed semi-structured interviews and observational methods, with interviews conducted across hierarchical levels to elicit experiences, perceptions, and understanding of employee motivation and management practices. Data analysis was conducted using NVivo software, employing thematic analysis grounded in Performance Management System theory.

The research revealed significant correlations between managerial perceptions and employee motivation levels. Participants commonly reported moderate motivation levels, with recognition and rewards identified as primary motivational factors. Key challenges identified included insufficient training opportunities, poor communication from management, and limited career advancement prospects. Participants unanimously agreed that improved employee motivation would enhance service delivery quality. The study contributed valuable insights to existing literature on motivation theory within public sector contexts while providing recommendations.

**Keywords: Employee motivation, municipal performance, performance management; rewards system; service delivery, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality.**

## Table of Contents

|                                                                          |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| DECLARATION.....                                                         | ii  |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....                                                    | iii |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....                                              | iv  |
| ABSTRACT.....                                                            | v   |
| 1.1 Introduction.....                                                    | 1   |
| 1.2 Background of the Study .....                                        | 2   |
| 1.3 Research Problem/Statement of the Problem .....                      | 3   |
| 1.4 Aim of the Study .....                                               | 5   |
| 1.5 Research Questions.....                                              | 5   |
| 1.6 Research Objectives.....                                             | 5   |
| 1.7 Preliminary Literature Review.....                                   | 6   |
| 1.7.1 Introduction.....                                                  | 6   |
| 1.7.2 Contributions, Weaknesses and Gaps .....                           | 6   |
| 1.7.3 Managerial Perception and Employee Drive .....                     | 6   |
| 1.7.4 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation .....                           | 6   |
| 1.7.5 Challenges of Poor Motivation .....                                | 7   |
| 1.7.6 Impact of Globalisation on Employee Motivation.....                | 7   |
| 1.7.7 Challenges of Poor Motivation .....                                | 7   |
| 1.7.8 Impact of Globalisation on Employee Motivation.....                | 8   |
| 1.7.10 Importance of Team Building .....                                 | 8   |
| 1.7.11 Perception of Managers and Employee Motivation.....               | 9   |
| 1.7.12 View of Managers and the Motivation of Employees.....             | 9   |
| 1.7.13 eThekwini Municipal Academy's new level of development.....       | 9   |
| 1.8 Research Methodology .....                                           | 10  |
| 1.8.1 Research Philosophy.....                                           | 10  |
| 1.8.2 Research Design.....                                               | 11  |
| 1.8.3 Research Approach .....                                            | 11  |
| 1.8.3.1 Advantages of Qualitative Research .....                         | 12  |
| 1.9 Target Population .....                                              | 12  |
| Figure 1.1: Map of eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality Shell House ..... | 13  |
| 1.10 Sample.....                                                         | 13  |

|                                                                          |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1.10.1 Sample Size.....                                                  | 14 |
| 1.11 Data Collection .....                                               | 14 |
| 1.12 Data Analysis .....                                                 | 15 |
| 1.12.1 Measures of Data Collection for the Study.....                    | 15 |
| 1.12.1.1 Reliability.....                                                | 15 |
| 1.12.1.2 Validity .....                                                  | 16 |
| 1.13 Ethical Considerations .....                                        | 16 |
| 1.14 Structure of the Dissertation .....                                 | 17 |
| 1.15 Conclusion .....                                                    | 18 |
| CHAPTER TWO .....                                                        | 1  |
| 2.1 Introduction.....                                                    | 1  |
| 2.2 Contextualisation .....                                              | 1  |
| 2.3 International Perspectives on Employee Motivation .....              | 2  |
| 2.3.1 Case studies from developed countries.....                         | 2  |
| 2.3.1.1 Sweden employee motivation .....                                 | 2  |
| 2.3.1.2 Germany - effects of management on employee motivation .....     | 3  |
| 2.4 Lessons Learned from International Practices .....                   | 4  |
| 2.5 Continental Perspectives: Employee Motivation in SADC .....          | 5  |
| 2.5.1 Overview of SADC countries' management practices .....             | 5  |
| 2.5.2 Common Challenges in Employee Motivation.....                      | 6  |
| 2.5.2.1 Bureaucratic management styles.....                              | 6  |
| 2.5.2.2 Nepotism and its effects on morale.....                          | 6  |
| 2.5.3 Social Interventions within the Area.....                          | 7  |
| 2.6 South African Context: Public Sector Challenges .....                | 8  |
| 2.6.1 The South African Public Sector.....                               | 8  |
| 2.6.2 Specific Issues in KwaZulu-Natal .....                             | 8  |
| 2.6.3 Lack of Merit-Based Recognition.....                               | 9  |
| 2.6.4 Employee Turnover and Job Satisfaction Trends.....                 | 10 |
| 2.7 Managerial Perceptions and Their Impact on Employee Performance..... | 11 |
| 2.7.1 The Role of Managerial Support in Employee Motivation .....        | 11 |
| 2.7.2 Effects of Negative Managerial Perceptions on Performance .....    | 11 |

|         |                                                              |    |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 2.7.3   | Strategies for Improving Manager-Employee Relationships..... | 12 |
| 2.8     | Current Motivational Strategies in the Public Sector .....   | 13 |
| 2.8.1   | Overview of Existing Motivational Programmes .....           | 13 |
| 2.8.2   | Continuing Business Strategies.....                          | 13 |
| 2.8.3   | Gaps in Current Motivational Approaches .....                | 14 |
| 2.9     | Theoretical Framework.....                                   | 15 |
| 2.9.1   | Motivation Theories.....                                     | 16 |
| 2.9.2   | Managerial Perception Theories .....                         | 17 |
| 2.10    | Relevance of the Theory towards study objectives.....        | 19 |
| 2.12    | Conclusion .....                                             | 25 |
| 3.1     | Introduction.....                                            | 27 |
| 3.2     | Research Paradigm.....                                       | 27 |
| 3.2.1   | Essential Elements of Pragmatism.....                        | 28 |
| 3.2.1.1 | Epistemology of Pragmatism.....                              | 28 |
| 3.2.1.2 | Ontology of Pragmatism.....                                  | 29 |
| 3.2.1.3 | Axiology of Pragmatism .....                                 | 29 |
| 3.3     | The Research Design .....                                    | 30 |
| 3.3.1   | Exploratory Research.....                                    | 30 |
| 3.3.2   | Explanatory Research .....                                   | 30 |
| 3.3.3   | Correlational Research.....                                  | 31 |
| 3.3.4   | Causal-Comparative Research .....                            | 31 |
| 3.3.5   | Exploratory Research.....                                    | 31 |
| 3.4     | Study Population.....                                        | 32 |
|         | Figure 3.1: Map of Durban Station .....                      | 33 |
| 3.5     | Sample Size.....                                             | 33 |
| 3.6     | Sampling technique.....                                      | 33 |
| 3.6.1   | Rationale for Choosing Census in the Study .....             | 34 |
| 3.6.2   | Benefits of Census Sampling.....                             | 34 |
| 3.7     | Data Collection Methods .....                                | 35 |
| 3.7.1   | Semi-Structured Interview .....                              | 35 |

|                                                                                                                  |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 3.7.2 Documents Review .....                                                                                     | 35 |
| 3.8 Data quality control.....                                                                                    | 36 |
| 3.9 Data analysis and presentation.....                                                                          | 37 |
| 3.10 Limitations of the study .....                                                                              | 37 |
| 3.11 Ethical considerations .....                                                                                | 38 |
| 3.12 Conclusion .....                                                                                            | 39 |
| CHAPTER FOUR.....                                                                                                | 40 |
| FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS.....                                                                                    | 40 |
| 4.1 Introduction.....                                                                                            | 40 |
| 4.2 Overview of Participants.....                                                                                | 40 |
| 4.2.1 Participant Demographics.....                                                                              | 40 |
| Table 4.1: Participant Demographics and Experience .....                                                         | 40 |
| 4.2.2 NVivo Data Analysis Process .....                                                                          | 41 |
| Phase 1: Data Preparation and Data Importing.....                                                                | 41 |
| Phase 2: Initial Coding.....                                                                                     | 41 |
| Phase 3: Thematic Development .....                                                                              | 42 |
| Phase 4: Data Saturation and Validating Coding .....                                                             | 42 |
| 4.3 Research Findings by Research Objectives .....                                                               | 42 |
| 4.3.1 Research Objective 1: Role of Managerial Perceptions in Shaping Employee<br>Behaviour and Motivation ..... | 42 |
| 4.3.1.1 Leadership Recognition and Performance Feedback Systems .....                                            | 42 |
| Table 4.2: Recognition and Feedback Mechanisms.....                                                              | 43 |
| 4.3.1.2 Communication Styles and Trust Building.....                                                             | 44 |
| Communication Quality Analysis:.....                                                                             | 45 |
| 4.3.1.3 Performance Management Effectiveness.....                                                                | 45 |
| 4.3.2 Research Objective 2: Impact of Poor Motivation on Organisational Performance...                           | 46 |
| 4.3.2.1 Quality and Consistency Standards .....                                                                  | 47 |
| 4.3.2.2 Efficiency and Resource Utilisation .....                                                                | 48 |
| 4.3.2.3 Service Delivery and Stakeholder Impact.....                                                             | 49 |
| 4.3.3 Research Objective 3: Effectiveness of Current Motivational Strategies.....                                | 50 |
| 4.3.3.1 Intrinsic Motivation Factors.....                                                                        | 51 |

|                                                                |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 4.3.3.2 Extrinsic Motivation Systems .....                     | 52 |
| 4.3.3.3 Organisational Culture and Values Integration .....    | 53 |
| 4.4 Cross-Cutting Themes and System-Level Issues .....         | 54 |
| 4.4.1 Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Challenges ..... | 54 |
| 4.4.2 Continuous Improvement Culture.....                      | 55 |
| 4.5 Challenges of Poor Motivation: Theoretical Linkages .....  | 55 |
| 4.6 Summary of Research Objective Findings .....               | 56 |
| 4.6.2 NVivo Analysis Validation and Reliability .....          | 57 |
| 4.6.3 Theoretical Framework Integration .....                  | 57 |
| 4.7 Conclusion .....                                           | 58 |
| CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....                           | 59 |
| 5.1 Introduction.....                                          | 59 |
| 5.2 Summary of Chapters .....                                  | 59 |
| 5.3 Research Questions .....                                   | 60 |
| 5.4 Research Objectives.....                                   | 61 |
| 5.4.1 Research Question 1 .....                                | 61 |
| 5.4.2 Research Question 2 .....                                | 62 |
| 5.4.3 Research Question 3 .....                                | 63 |
| 5.4.4 Research Question 4 .....                                | 65 |
| 5.5 Recommendations based on findings.....                     | 66 |
| 5.5.1 Recommendations for Management .....                     | 66 |
| 5.5.2 Recommendations for Employees .....                      | 69 |
| 5.5.3 Recommendations for Government and Policy Makers .....   | 70 |
| 5.6 Significance of the Study .....                            | 71 |
| 5.7 Recommendations for Future Research .....                  | 72 |
| 5.8 Conclusion of the study .....                              | 75 |
| 5.9 Limitations .....                                          | 76 |
| 5.10 Conclusion .....                                          | 78 |
| Appendix A .....                                               | 91 |

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Appendix B ..... | 92 |
| Appendix C ..... | 93 |
| Appendix D.....  | 94 |

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Employee motivation remains one of the most important organisational phenomena within today's demanding and highly competitive business environment. Paais and Pattiruhu (2020), also propose that motivated individuals are typically more efficient, involved and dedicated in their work, hence enhancing enterprise performance. However, Sai (2022) asserts that to comprehend the multifaceted correlation between employee motivation and performance, one must consider various factors, including elements of the work environment, forms of leadership, motivation through incentives and professional development.

The research area of interest in this case was the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality particularly the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit, and the principal research question this study sought to answer was: To what extent does employee motivation and manager's perception affect organizational performance? The study clarified the hypotheses with areas of interest; for example, the current motivational techniques, the part played by the manager's perception in influencing the staff, and the general impact on the unit's performance. These were the aspects the study aimed looking at in a bid to give a clear picture of the factors at work in the eThekweni Municipal Academy. It also assessed how various incentives and how managers' attitudes do enhance or detract from organisational performance. Furthermore, the research will established strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threat analysis that gave recommendations on how the performance and motivation in the employees in the organisation can be and improved.

This investigation was most suitable for the eThekweni Municipal Academy especially when it comes to linking the motivation of the employees with the achievement of the objectives and goals of the organisation to promote the delivery of improved services to the public. Zhang (2020) notes that organisations that prioritise employee motivation strategies demonstrate improved performance outcomes and goal achievement.

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

According to Varghese, Ramesh and Veeraiyan (2019), the pursuit of high performance within organisations is intrinsically linked to employee motivation and the perceptions of managers. In contemporary organisational contexts, the role of leadership in creating an environment wherein the employees are intrinsically motivated has become very important. One of the points brought out by research is that workers who have an intrinsic drive in their job and get along well with the activities done at the job, often tend to show higher performance levels. Maintaining such high performance hence becomes particularly important, as it has a direct effect on individual and organisational productivity.

It is in this context that Sugiarti, Finatariani, and Rahman (2021) stated that the EThekwini Municipality Academy is an administratively intriguing Unit within the Corporate and Human Resources administrative cluster. This Unit provides training to young people, including an academy of eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, in various trades and prepares them for the job market by providing access to different apprenticeships and business support. The objective of the training is to enhance the socio-economic status of participants to contribute to the local economy. Although something transpired, it seems that there is a knowledge gap concerning the role of employee motivation and managerial perceptions on organisational performance in this unit (Siswanto, Maulidiyah & Masyhuri, 2021).

According to Ramhit (2024), the current situation shows that although strategies are in place to enhance the skills level of employees and their socio-economic conditions, evidence is scarce regarding how such strategies impact the overall motivation and performance of an organisation. This has created a gap in literature that calls for a focused study to analyse employee motivation and managerial perceptions in relation to their contribution towards organisational effectiveness and performance (Siswanto et. al, 2021). The result is an urgency to address this gap through tailored strategies that improve the well-being of employees yet stay aligned to organisational goals. According to Tahir (2023), how the interplay between employee motivation and managerial perception plays out will allow for the strategy for performance management. This may raise productivity and improve service delivery within the eThekwini Municipal Academy.

In the study conducted by Sai (2022), the 'employee motivation' conceptually refers to the inner drive that propels workers toward rendering optimum performance, while "managerial perceptions" refer to the views and attitudes developed by managers regarding employee performance and motivation. In this respect, the study shall bridge this lacuna by exploring these dimensions within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality in the eThekweni Municipal Academy so that there could be substantial insights that would enhance the overall performance of the organisation and satisfy its employees. Employee motivation is the degree of enthusiasm, commitment, and drive brought to work by employees. Managerial perceptions are the attitudes and beliefs that a manager has of the employees' capabilities and performance; organisational performance is the effectiveness and efficiency of an organisation in achieving its set goals and objectives (Zhang, 2020).

Paaais and Pattiruhu (2020) said that it is thus of importance to address the lacuna in understanding this impact of employee motivation and managerial perceptions if the eThekweni Municipal Academy is to enhance its performance. The following study identified and analysed the factors that bear on motivation and perceptions with a view to proposing actionable factors that may lead to improved employee engagement, higher productivity, and better service delivery. The findings did not only add to the academic debate but also provide a realistic solution for public sector managers and policymakers.

### **1.3 Research Problem/Statement of the Problem**

This research study is aimed at examining the complex dynamics in which employee motivation and managers' perceptions have a bearing on the performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. It is not a secret that a good relationship with the direct manager is directly correlated with higher motivation and performance, and a bad relationship with an immediate manager is correlated with low performance (Kalogiannidis, 2021). Ali and Anwar (2021) mentioned that the current bureaucratic management style that managers are adopting in their organisation will have an overall negative impact and a great level of dissatisfaction amongst the employees, since the management style makes the employees less productive and lowers work performance. Moreover, Alsuwaidi, Alshurideh, Kurdi and Salloum (2021) noted that employees' perception of their relationship with managers significantly predicts job performance. This leads to such problems as low compensation, absence of appreciation of hard work, nepotism in the

workplace, and high turnover rate; all of which ultimately leads to low productivity. They hamper the organizational performance and reflect a serious deficiency in the present management practices and motivational strategies. Despite eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality employing more than 20 000 workers and allocating substantial financial resources to salaries, benefits, overtime and bonuses, persistent complaints from political leaders and community members indicate that employee performance does not translate into satisfactory service delivery outcomes (Magubane, 2022). Evidence of poor work ethic, lack of employee, weak management controls, frequent labour disruptions, and misalignment between employee benefits and actual services rendered suggests a significant disconnect between workforce performance and the municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP) objective (Magubane, 2022). Although the municipality has introduced a revised Performance Management Policy to address identified shortcomings, concerns remain that existing performance standards, monitoring mechanisms and accountability systems are inadequate to effectively regulate employee performance and ensure value for money for residents. This situation raises a critical research problem regarding the effectiveness of employee motivation on performance management systems in aligning municipal employee performance with service delivery expectations, efficiency, and accountability in eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality Academy unit.

It is important to address this research problem in understanding and finding actionable insights that might transform operational efficiency and employee satisfaction of the Unit. Such a study would, therefore, provide the framework for activities targeted at better matching job role skills, improving youth engagement, compensation, merit-based recognition, systems to prevent nepotism, and attracting and keeping experienced professional managers who can motivate employees and increase productivity. Not addressing the issues mentioned may result in perpetuating inefficiencies that already exist, further destroy employee morale, and lower the performance of the unit (Nguyen et. al, 2020).

The study wanted to bring out these practical challenges and canvass practical solutions that would bridge the theoretical concepts with the real-world applications (Baig, Shuib, & Yadegaridehkordi, 2020). This research underlined the acute necessity of putting strategic interventions in place to create a more motivated, more effective workforce within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit by setting out clearly the nature and magnitude of the problem.

## **1.4 Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study was to examine the impact of employee motivation and managerial perceptions on the functioning of the eThekweni Municipal Academy within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. By analysing these dynamics, the study aimed to identify concrete ways to enhance operational efficiency, staff satisfaction, and overall unit performance while effectively addressing current issues.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The study attempted to answer the following key questions:

- What role do managerial perceptions play in shaping employee behaviour and motivation in the eThekweni Municipal Academy?
- How do the challenges of poor motivation affect the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy?
- How do current motivational strategies of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality affect employee performance and satisfaction in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit?
- What recommendations should the eThekweni Metropolitan managers adopt to improve employee motivation in the environment?

## **1.6 Research Objectives**

The objectives of the study were:

- To ascertain the role of managerial perceptions in shaping employee behaviour and motivation in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit.
- To understand the impact of motivation on the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy.
- To determine the effectiveness of current motivational strategies on employee performance and satisfaction in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within the eThekweni Municipal Academy; and
- To suggest recommendations for the eThekweni Metropolitan management on how to improve employee motivation in the environment.

## **1.7 Preliminary Literature Review**

### **1.7.1 Introduction**

This section reviews the literature identified with managerial perceptions, employee motivation, and performance in the eThekweni Municipal Academy of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. It should help uncover the contribution, weaknesses, and gaps of current research in relation to the objectives of the study and its questions (Alsuwaidi, Alshurideh, Al Kurdi & Salloum, 2021). It is critical to place the current research correctly in the literature available, usually accomplished by a review, which identifies prior works, critiques the available studies, evaluates their contribution and weaknesses, and finally finds gaps in a manner that would define the present study as an addition to that available knowledge.

### **1.7.2 Contributions, Weaknesses and Gaps**

According to Sturman and Park (2016) performance is the goal-relevant actions of an employee. There is a rise in employee performance when employees try to outperform the instructions and job profiles, hence establishing a clear point that calls for a high level of satisfaction among employees. Increased employee performance, according to Rehman et al. (2020), may result in desirable results in a working environment, including augmented communication, productivity, and commitment. Thus, Gentry and Shanock (2008) argue that performance is a function of activities done over some duration; in addition, any organisational strategy needs to evaluate the competence and productivity of the employees serving the organisation.

### **1.7.3 Managerial Perception and Employee Drive**

Managerial perceptions primarily influence the behaviour and motivation of employees. The manager-employee relationship influences motivation and performance; where the relationship is good, then also the results are good (Huang & Van de Vliert, 2003). Both monetary and non-monetary are vital in motivation. Financial gains increase the level of performance, but non-financial ones like training, favourable working conditions and appreciation encourage employees (Davis, 2010; Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006).

### **1.7.4 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation**

According to Dubey and Kothari (2022), intrinsic motivation is driven by personal satisfaction, interest, and enjoyment; it thus has higher engagement and commitment. Intrinsically

motivated employees are those who find the work itself rewarding to perform, and thus they exert better performance without the help of any other reward. According to Crick (2021), extrinsic motivation is a result of external influence, rewards, recognition, incentives, etc. However, extrinsic motivators are also effective in the short term, but it works better with intrinsic motivators in the long-term engagement (Coy, 2019).

#### **1.7.5 Challenges of Poor Motivation**

Hatch and Zilber (2011) explained that the end-result of poor motivation is poor performance. Low morale, which is linked to poor motivation, is a cause of poor performance, lack of innovation, and avoidance of responsibility. Employees can fail to take part in performance processes when they lack clarity on their roles and aims (Pothos *et al.*, 2014). The lack of sufficient skill may bring about poor performance, incompetence, or lack of knowledge. Performance inconsistencies should be detected, and managers should implement the plans which are appropriate to address them (Rehman *et al.*, 2020).

#### **1.7.6 Impact of Globalisation on Employee Motivation**

Increased competition often is an effect of globalisation, and this can fuel one's drive to perform better in the hopes of increasing one's competitiveness against the global competition (Rana, 2022). This drive, however, can lead to stress and burnout if it is not properly managed. Diverse staff are integrated as markets around the world become more integrated. This can enhance creativity and innovation, but at the same time, it also puts pressure on management to bring those from different cultures together to work as one team. The drives toward technological developments may make activities more efficient and productive, which can be exciting for those much younger employees whose motivation is to learn and use new technologies (Rana, 2022).

#### **1.7.7 Challenges of Poor Motivation**

Poor motivation affects overall performance negatively. According to Hatch and Zilber (2011), low employee morale leads to poor performance, lack of innovation, and reluctance to take responsibility. Employees may struggle to participate in performance processes when unclear about their roles and goals (Pothos *et al.*, 2014). Poor performance can also result from a lack of skills, incompetence, or knowledge. Managers need to detect performance inconsistencies and implement appropriate plans to address them (Rehman *et al.*, 2020).

### **1.7.8 Impact of Globalisation on Employee Motivation**

Globalisation has resulted in ever-changing trends and has also changed the business environment, which means effective change management is essential while developing relationships in organisations. To achieve the goal of subordinates working more effectively and improved performance, managers' competency in catalysing change and creating relations affects many things (Hatch & Zilber, 2011). Hence, they conclude that relationship management and employee performance are significantly and positively correlated. It is therefore believed that relationship management is linked with employee performance.

### **1.7.9 Managerial Supervisory Functions as a Factor in Employee Performance**

Managers must understand what leads to the poor performance of its employees, so that such factors can be prevented. Sturman and Park (2016) have stated that low employee performance correlates with low employee morale. A less motivated employee has no creativity, does not innovate and cannot agree to take responsibility on the work done. Due to this, employee productivity decreases, and organisation objectives and goals cannot be met as planned. Moreover, employees feel pride in non-performing when they do not clearly understand their roles and objectives (Pothos et al., 2014). There are also cases where poor employee performance can be blamed on some employees' poor skills, employee incompetence, or even lack of knowledge (Pothos et al., 2014). Managers should be able to notice such discrepancy in the performances of their employees and be able to plan to support the employee (Rehman et al., 2020).

### **1.7.10 Importance of Team Building**

The lack of formation of effective teams is a precursor to the formation of ineffective groups; hence, employees perform poorly (Noe et al., 2017). Maddux (2016) and Raub et al. (2021) confirm that team building skills is one of the competencies today's managers must have. Team and individual work also remain important for employees because they are directly related to the effectiveness of a department and the whole enterprise. The managers should ensure that they observe a disciplined approach to leadership and ensure that they work towards building a strong team of people with a positive attitude towards work. They should emphasise the achievement of the organisational goals and objectives. Managers who embrace these values will notice that the employees' productivity will be enhanced, and that the working environment becomes more productive (Raub et al., 2021).

### **1.7.11 Perception of Managers and Employee Motivation**

In addition, Noe et al. (2017) noted that how employees view their manager influences several aspects of performance that is connected to productivity. Further to this they pointed out that positive interaction with the manager is a strong determinant of motivation and that negative interaction relates to stress. Sturman and Park (2016) found that in the first year that a manager/employee pair exists, the perceptions of the employees establish a key contribution to the relationship development and whether future performance will be built or not. The results also showed that attitudes that employee have towards their managers affect their level of performance. Therefore, the self-organised relationship employees have with the manager is the single most predictor of their job performance. Further, it lies in the manager's ambit to guarantee that all work undertaken by employees creates efficiency, effectiveness, and value for the organisation. Therefore, if employees are not performing the duties expected of them, managers are also not performing their duties (Mtimkulu et al., 2014).

### **1.7.12 View of Managers and the Motivation of Employees**

Sturman and Park (2016) explained that it is indicated that positive interaction with the manager is a powerful predictor of motivation with negative interaction being linked to stress. during the initial year of existence between the manager and the employees, employee perceptions define a significant contribution to relationship development and the ability or inability to build a performance going forward. The findings also indicated that the perception that employee hold towards their managers influences the degree of their performance. Thus, the self-organised relationship between the employees and the manager is the only most significant predictor of job performance of the employees. Moreover, the manager is within his or her scope of ensuring that any work done by the employees brings efficiency, effectiveness and value to the organization. Hence, when employees are not being as expected by the managers, then the managers are also not doing their job (Mtimkulu et al., 2014).

### **1.7.13 eThekwini Municipal Academy's new level of development.**

The eThekwini Municipal Academy has a lead responsibility in ensuring motivation of its employee through rewards and incentive related provisions. In total, basic management measures aimed at increasing motivation to work, as well as the general success of the organisation, are necessary. But many jobs are created in such a way that they do not allow the development of intrinsic motivation. Employees in the examining manufacturing service, and agricultural industries often lack decision latitude over tasks, decisions, methods, and time

(Davis, 2010; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) and it is most acute in the developing world (Huang & Van de Vliert, 2003). This destroys their self-control and, in the process, the most studied antecedent of intrinsic motivation, which is, autonomy, as held by a psychological theory like self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (2000) and organisational research that includes the job characteristics model by Hackman and Oldham (1980) is destroyed.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

In chapter four, the researcher embarked on analysing the findings of employee motivation and managerial perceptions to effective performance in the eThekweni Municipal Academy. This line of research was informed by the following main question: To what extent does employee motivation and the manager's perception impact the organisational performance? After that, chapter 3 will present the method used to engage this research question.

### **1.8.1 Research Philosophy**

According to Nayak and Singh (2021), the research approach is the general strategy that gives the outline of how the research will be conducted, featuring qualitative and quantitative methods in the study. Quantitative research involves the collection of numerical data; this kind of research statistically analyses numerical data to identify patterns, relationships, and generalisations. It is mostly applied in experimental and survey research when the aim is to quantify the variables and test formulated hypotheses. Mbanaso, Abrahams and Okafor (2023) state that qualitative research deals with the exploration and description of phenomena through non-numerical data derived from content analysis, interviews, observations, and case studies. This approach is useful in eliciting a deep understanding of intricate social processes and human behaviours (Tamminen & Poucher, 2020).

Since the research in question deals with the impact of employee motivation and managerial perceptions contribution towards organisational effective performance within the eThekweni Municipal Academy, a qualitative approach will be adopted. According to Pandey and Pandey (2021), it is the method that allows an in-depth exploration of employees' perceptions and behaviours best understood by detailed analysis with a context and not numerical data. This can give a rich and nuanced insight into factors influencing consumer decisions. Mulisa (2022) and De Oliveira (2023) mentioned that participatory action research provides particularly useful insights into qualitative studies.

### **1.8.2 Research Design**

Huntington-Klein (2021) stipulates that some of the research designs include descriptive, exploratory, causal, correlation, and longitudinal research. According to Alam (2021) descriptive research design explains or describes a phenomenon or situation. It is a method that involves the gathering of data using surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and observations in telling an accurate story of a given group, event, or situation. According to Dannels (2018), exploratory research design is applied in situations where the research problem is not perfectly characterized. This design assists in acquiring insights and an idea of the issue and is usually carried out through qualitative designs, i.e. interviews or focus groups. In their view, causal research design is also known as the explanatory research design. Such a design investigates cause-effect relationships between variables. It often involves experiments where one variable is manipulated to observe the effect on another. According to Sugiarti, Finatariani and Rahman (2021), correlational research designs are designs that study the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating any of the variables. It helps identify patterns and predicts relationships.

The research design that was used in this study is the correlational research design. This design will help this study in understanding how employee motivation and managerial perception are related to the organisational performance without experimental manipulation (Sitopu, Sitinjak & Marpaung, 2021). The finding will therefore provide insights into the possible areas where interventions may be most effective in enhancing performance and thus guide policy and practice within the eThekweni Municipal Academy. According to Mulisa (2022) correlational studies may employ a larger sample, and hence the findings would be generalisable to the entire unit or other similar organisations.

### **1.8.3 Research Approach**

According to De Oliveira (2023), a research approach can be defined as a process that a researcher chooses to collect, analyse, and interpret data. These are three types of approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Quantitative research is an investigation conducted in a systemic way and has much emphasis on the quantification of relationships, behaviour, or phenomena. Structured tools, inclusive of surveys and experiments, which are backed by statistical analysis are associated with this approach. It is suitable for studies requiring measured and comparable data (Huntington-Klein, 2021). On the other hand,

qualitative research refers to an exploratory method directed towards ascertaining the experiences of people and their social contexts and meanings of various phenomena. It entails collection of non-numerical information by using the following means: interviews, focus groups, direct observation, and document analysis. Mixed-methods research combines both quantitative and qualitative in a single study, working to draw from the strengths of each methodology (Muzari, Shava & Shonhiwa, 2022).

#### **1.8.3.1 Advantages of Qualitative Research**

The study used a qualitative approach. The gathering of information through qualitative research ensures that all elements concerning issues to do with the motivation of the employees and the perceptions of the managers are captured in detail. Interviews and focus groups allow researchers to discover the ‘why’ of the situation, feelings, and intentions of the actions performed by employees and managerial decisions which are not always observable and quantifiable. As stated by Mohajan and Mohajan (2022), qualitative research is informative and offers deeper understanding of human actions and social processes.

A qualitative approach makes it easier for the researcher to be more fluid in the method used to collect data since they can change strategies because of gathered information. This approach assists in establishing the background and setting in which individuals work; this offers a big picture view of the research issue. Kirongo and Odoyo (2020) posited that regarding the advantages to qualitative research, qualitative research is great for developing new ideas or hypotheses that could be examined in subsequent quantitative investigations. Exploratory research can discover the exact cultural, organisational or even personal parameters that shape motivation of employees, as well as perception of managers; it thus can explain how and to what extent these factors affect the performance of eThekweni Municipal Academy in the given setting.

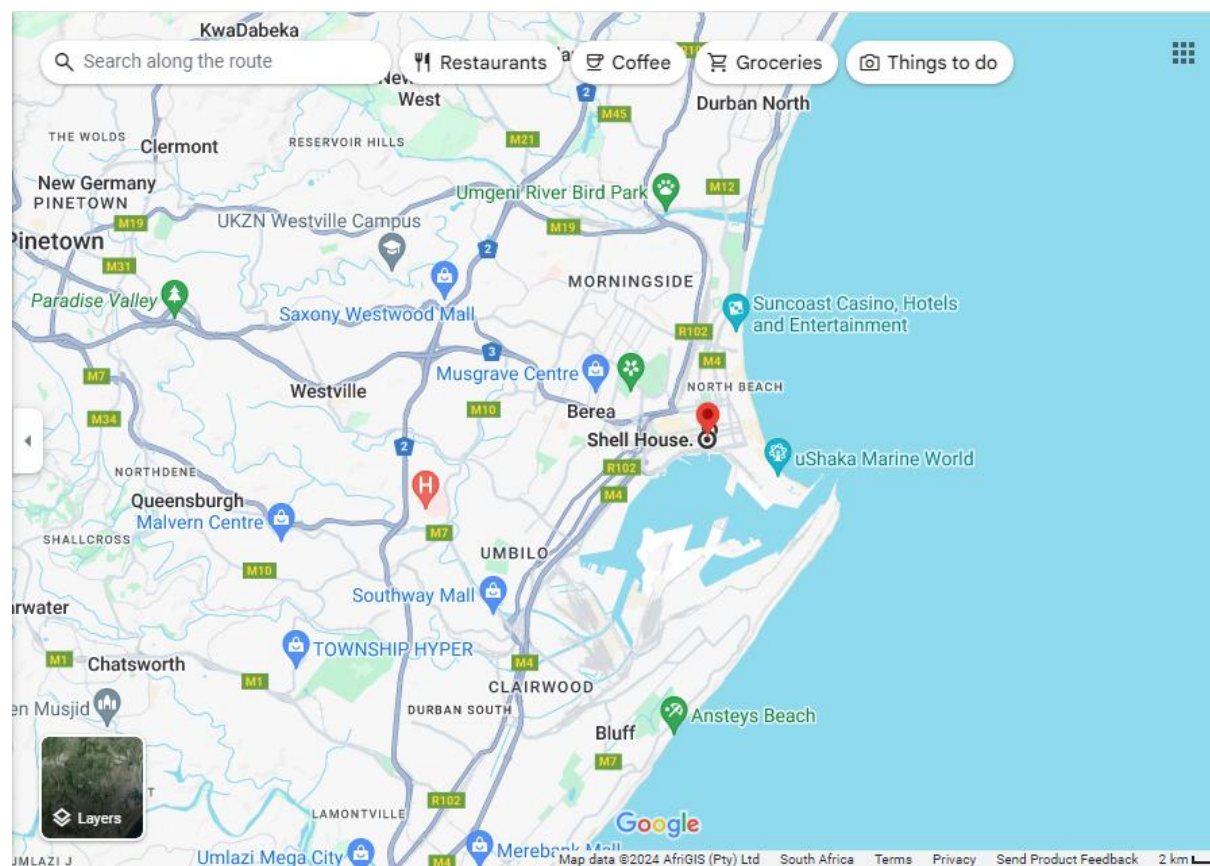
### **1.9 Target Population**

In some research, the term ‘target population’ means all the units or entities to which the findings of the research are meant to be extended (Thomas & Pencina, 2020). This group has peculiar features pertinent to the research question. The correct identification of the target population is important since it leads to an appropriate generalisation of the obtained results. As described by Schroeder et al. (2022), the target population is the pool from which a sample

is derived because it enables researchers to collect data on behaviours, opinions, or any other aspect in that group. The target population for this study are the employees at the eThekwin Municipality Academy based at Shell House in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. This unit is made of training coordinators, skills development facilitators, administrative employees and management employees. Altogether, this team acts as a core of compromise in the processes of the further skills development in the given organisation.

**Figure 1.1: Map of eThekwin Metropolitan Municipality Shell House**

[Google Map GPS](#)



## 1.10 Sample

Schroeder et Al. (2022) stated that a sample is a limited number of cases comprising a portion of the entire population that is chosen in a study to be used. The rationale behind choosing a sample is to extend conclusions to the whole population while not having to analyse every member of the population. To ensure that results obtained from a sample are credible and accurate, they need aid from the target population. In the view of Babbie (2010) the sample

refers to the number of persons who are incorporated in the study and should in effect be scientifically arrived, usually following an outline of the objectives of the study, the variability of the population and the level of confidence and precision expected.

#### **1.10.1 Sample Size**

The selection of a purposeful sample of ten participants for this study was justified based on the concept of saturation and aims of the section. Regarding the types of research, in qualitative research, smaller samples are used because of the exploratory and descriptive nature of the research approach which allows detail and depth of data collected, which is particularly useful in the investigation of the examined complex phenomena (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). In academic or institutional contexts, stating a sample size contributes to the study's practicality and clarity to the plan of the research. The chosen number of respondents- ten in this study- was selected to guarantee manageability while striving for data saturation. It enables description of the participants' experiences in detail that is needed in the eThekweni Municipal Academy for the study to achieve its objectives adequately (Thomas, & Pencina, 2020).

#### **1.11 Data Collection**

Mukherjee (2019) defines data collection as one of the most significant sections of the research process, which entails the organised and rigorous accumulation of information that relates to the formulated research goals. As for the quantitative approach, different methods are used to explore and analyse data about the studied phenomena in more detail and with greater depth. All of them are different and are used depending on the questions formulated in the study, the type of research, and the conditions in which it is carried out (Gupta, 2016). Employee motivation and managerial perception in the eThekweni Municipal Academy will be the search strategy with the data collected from the primary source using qualitative research methodology. Particularly, the research approaches that will be employed in the study include the administration of semi structured interviews and observation.

Semi structured interviews are open-ended interview techniques, in which the interviewer has a list of questions that yet remain fairly fluid (Snyder, 2019). This viewpoint of asking incorporates the strength of closed-ended questions of formulating questions in a predetermined and precise manner, while at the same time, allows the researcher to follow directions in formulating the remaining questions freely like in conducting an open-ended interview, thus allowing the researcher to explore systematically areas of interest as they

emerge during the conversation. Five open interviews were carried out with field members of eThekweni Municipal Academy regardless of their managerial position. It was selected to elicit their past experiences, impressions, and understanding of the work motivation of employees and management's measures.

All the interviews, with the respondent's permission, were conducted with the use of an audio recorder because it will assist in clear transcription and analysis of the data. Interviews were also followed by observations within eThekweni Municipal Academy to obtain the context of how and in what circumstances employees and managers interact and to reveal other factors that might engender or hinder motivation and performance (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Indeed, through the use of the aforementioned qualitative data collection techniques, the study endeavoured to get rich data that aid in providing a perception on how the motivation of the employees and the perception of the managers influence the performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy.

## **1.12 Data Analysis**

According to Acharyya and Bhattacharya (2019) in this qualitative study of the effects of employee motivation and managerial perception in relation to organisational effective performance, the data from the eThekweni Municipal Academy was analysed using NVivo. NVivo is an advanced qualitative data analysis tool to organise, analyse, and find insights into unstructured or qualitative data in the form of interviews, open-ended responses to survey questions, articles, and content from social media and the web. It is a tool that helps researchers in coding text data and in finding themes and patterns across the data set. With regards to thematic analysis of the data, transcripts from the interviews and observation notes will be analysed for themes as a way of identifying recurrent themes and relationships between different data points. Using NVivo, the research will be able to carry out rigorous and comprehensive analytical procedures to prove the validity and reliability of findings (Kumari et al., 2023).

### **1.12.1 Measures of Data Collection for the Study**

#### **1.12.1.1 Reliability**

Reliability deals with the consistency and stability of the measurement instrument or data collection method. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a reliable instrument is that which under constant conditions, gives similar results. Reliability in quantitative studies is important because it makes sure that data being collected measures exactly what is being

conceptualised with least effects of random errors. Probably one of the most common methods to check reliability is by computing Cronbach's alpha, which quantifies the internal consistency of a set of items in a questionnaire or survey. A widely accepted threshold for Cronbach's alpha is usually 0.70 or higher, which clearly demonstrates that the items satisfactorily measure the same underlying construct (Monoarfa et al., 2023).

#### **1.12.1.2 Validity**

Validity refers to the degree to which a measurement instrument truthfully measures what it is intended to measure. According to Babbie (2016), validity assures the conclusions to be correct and appropriate for generalisation on the real world. There are several types of validity including face validity, construct validity and criterion validity. Face validity is the degree which a measurement appears according to subjective judgment to measure what it is supposed to. Construct validity consists of convergent validity and discriminant validity. While the former assesses whether measures that should be related are indeed related, the latter assesses whether measures that must not be related are really not. Criterion validity is used to test whether a given measure varies with an outcome it ought to predict.

According to Adelowokan, Maku, Babasanya, and Adesoye (2019) the validity in this present research into the effect of employee motivation and managerial perceptions on effective organisational performance in the eThekweni Municipal Academy was checked through a few ways. Muzari, Shava and Shonhiwa (2022) said that face validity will be judged by seeing the experts and stakeholders to ensure that the questionnaire items measure the intended construct. Factor analysis will also be employed to assess convergent and discriminant validity by demonstrating that items supposed to measure the same construct load onto the same factors and that different constructs are appropriately differentiated (Nayak & Singh, 2021). Factor analysis using statistical software - in this case, SPSS was conducted by analysing patterns of relationships among variables to ensure that the measurement model specifies the theoretical framework of the study (Dewi et al., 2019).

### **1.13 Ethical Considerations**

According to Pietilä et al. (2020) it is through ethics that integrity is brought into the study, and the rights and welfare of participants are respected. Such considerations include informed consent, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of information given by respondents, minimising possible harm to people involved, and maintenance of transparency and honesty in

the whole research process (Horton & Lucassen, 2023). In executing this research on the effect of employee motivation and managerial perceptions on organizational effective performance within the EThekweni Municipality Academy Unit, the following measures were taken to uphold the ethical principles and standards at KwaZulu-Natal University. First, informed consent was elicited from participants. The participants were also informed through a written explanation about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the right to withdraw from the study without any penalty at any time. The participants' confidentiality was maintained through anonymisation of information and appropriate storage measures. This study was ethically reviewed and approved by the KwaZulu-Natal University review board, with respect to compliance with the ethical principles. Moreover, the responsible management of sensitive information, the process for conducting respectful and sensitive interviews and observations regarding privacy and comfort, will form part of the training to researchers. According to Coy (2019), such measures taken together ensure ethical conduct of research, respect the dignity of persons, and protect all their rights.

## **1.14 Structure of the Dissertation**

This section presented the chapters of this study

### **Chapter One: Introduction and overview of the Study**

Chapter One presented an overview of the study. This chapter gave a detail introduction and the background of the study. The problem statement, focus area, research questions and objectives were presented in this chapter. Furthermore, this chapter was brief on the research design and methodology that was utilised in this study. Lastly, Chapter One addressed the ethical and safety concerning this study.

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review on employee motivation and organisational performance**

An overview of performance management and employee motivation was presented in this chapter. The chapter further outlined a concise literature review on the theories and concept underpinning performance management. Moreover, the chapter discussed the performance management system as applicable in the public sector.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

A complete description of the research design, tools and processes was presented in this chapter. Furthermore, it outlined in detail the research methodology used in this study. Data sampling and data collection procedures was discussed in this chapter. This study employed qualitative research to collect data.

### **Chapter Four: Data presentation and Analysis**

This chapter presented and analysed the discussions of research findings that were gathered at the eThekweni Municipal Academy. The data was collected through interviews. Themes were utilised in this chapter that drove from the study's objectives. Conclusions and recommendations were drawn on this chapter.

### **Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations**

This chapter summarized the findings and offered conclusions and recommendations of the study. The chapter further provided a summary of the whole research. Lastly, the chapter offered few recommendations and suggestions for further analysis based on the research results.

## **1.15 Conclusion**

In this chapter the foundation of the research study was described giving the background of the research study, research problem, research objectives, and methodology. The chapter laid a theoretical foundation and the research design that had been used to conduct the research on employee motivation and perceptions of the managers within the eThekweni Municipal Academy. The primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed using thematic analysis. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and ethical approval, was strictly adhered to, ensuring the study was conducted responsibly and ethically. The findings from this study were expected to provide valuable insights into how packaging and branding strategies influence consumer behaviour, offering practical implications for retailers and marketer

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter One of this work proposal described the research problem in that it related the complexity of the process between employee motivation, managerial attitudes and their combined effect on the activity of the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. It laid the groundwork to explain the impact of management style and employee-manager relationships on the effectiveness and happiness in the workplace. The chapter highlighted the significance of dealing with these challenges to improve efficiency in operation and to improve employees' morale, thereby also suggesting that strategic actions in the unit be taken.

In the literature review the state-of-the-art research on managerial cognition, employee motivation and performance both in skills development and public sector organisations, are considered. The present chapter is devised to critically assess the existing literature, its strengths, weaknesses, and gaps that this work intends to address. Through a systematic synthesis of the literature, the review offers an informed perspective on the predictive and other influencing factors of employee motivation and performance, which proves the basis for the research objectives.

#### **2.2 Contextualisation**

This paper explains the perception of employee motivation and managerial attitude as among the most important influential determinants of organisational performance particularly in the context of the public sector. At the global scale, mainly the advantages of good management practices, regarding work engagement and performance, are realised (Mafunisa, 2019). Indicatively, in the participative management countries, namely, Sweden and Germany, empirical studies have established a stable relationship between positive attitudes towards managers and increased employee motivation and, consequently, higher levels of performance (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017). These countries encourage collaboration in groups, which has been linked to job satisfaction as well as reduced turnover. Benchmarking with these countries

is advantageous since they are amongst the developing countries just like South Africa but have better management of their municipalities and sustained service delivery.

There is a notable difficulty in employee motivation and management attitudes in the African situation, especially in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In Botswana, a study found that bureaucratic leadership behaviours result from grassroot interactions to disengagement and dissatisfaction of staff, like cases in other regions of the continent (Mokgothu & Thamae, 2020). For example, in Zimbabwe, the lack of policy regarding nepotism and a lack of reward for effort has been identified as a major challenge to employee motivation and performance across units of the public sector (Chikanda & Zinyama, 2019). Focusing on the operations of SADC countries in relation to public sector employee motivation is valuable to this study, as South Africa is a member of the community and shares common objectives and governance priorities with other SADC states.

In South Africa, and specifically KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit also deals with almost the same issues. A study by means of research highlights that the usual hierarchical management system that is common to most public agencies is getting a bad rap for impeding good communication and organisational engagement (Mahlalela, 2022). Also, the absence of merit-based reward and the cultural presence of nepotism lead to staff morale being low and staff turnover rate being high in the KZN public sector (Ngubane, 2021). In this literature review, these themes will be explored in more detail and also categorised according to the objectives of the study in order to clarify the dynamics inside the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality in eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit.

## **2.3 International Perspectives on Employee Motivation**

### **2.3.1 Case studies from developed countries**

#### **2.3.1.1 Sweden employee motivation**

In the participative management approach, employees are actively involved in decision making processes that affect them. In Sweden, participative management is a cultural practice that has an influence on motivation and engagement of people in organisations. The management style decentralises decision making and empowers the employees to feel responsible for the decisions that will be implemented (Kellica, 2020). According to the

literature, through embracing teamwork, the organisations in Sweden have fostered employee innovation and improved their level of satisfaction and therefore efficiency at the workplace (Vingard et al., 2021). As research has shown, when employees perceive that their voices are being heard and valued, they will feel motivated, and so companies can avoid high turnover rates and instead, attain high productivity levels (Buun et al., 2021).

Moreover, the Swedish firms are more likely to use cultural strategies such as, team communication, and correctness that help to resolve the problems of the employees too. In particular, employees can be more engaged through team briefings daily and periodic employee opinion-sharing options like suggestion boxes (Kern et al., 2021). These practices are not only morale boosting but they also foster a culture of trust and openness. Workers that practise participative management have shown more motivation and productivity (Edvardsson et al., 2020).

This paper also points to the use of leadership styles that involve the workforce as evident by the positive results of participative management in Sweden. Such an approach is good for imitation by other countries that want to enhance the level of motivation of the workforce. The association between participative management and employee satisfaction seems to indicate that comparable processes could be useful in different cultural and organisational settings, which emphasise the relevance of these principles in various cultures and organisations (Furunes et al., 2021).

#### **2.3.1.2 Germany - effects of management on employee motivation**

Plakhotnik and Thust (2021) mentioned that the concept of management in Germany integrates authoritative organisational structures with a significant focus on the competency of the subordinates. The business environment of the country is formal and businesslike and emphasises the importance of process and quality. This may or may not be good for workers motivation (Ramirez et al., 2020). On the one hand, expectancy, clarity and structured context provide certain level of assurance and personal responsibility among people in organisations. In contrast, some organisations in Germany are too structured; an aspect that constrains their flexibility, and this ends up demotivating employees and ignoring their creativity (Nienhüser, 2021).

Moreover, surveys show that German organisational leaders' use of inspirational and supportive leadership behaviours result in more positive perceptions of job satisfaction than does transactional leadership behaviour that relies on tangible rewards for the employees' performance (Koster & Kors, 2021). Many transformational leaders motivate people to acquire useful skills, learn from effective activities and gain equal motivation for personal and professional development. Research has now found that organisations led by transformational leaders witnessed a positive change in morale and engagement (García-Morales et al., 2020). The management lessons from Germany can be summarised as follows: flexibility with processes but also the implementation of strict structures. Therefore, organisations which aim to influence their employees may find usefulness in adopting some components of transformational leadership, yet, at the same time, paying attention to the processes. It can also engender a motivational climate that allows for motivational performance alongside motivational job satisfaction (Schmitt et al., 2020).

## **2.4 Lessons Learned from International Practices**

In the study conducted by McLeod (2018), the experiences derived from Sweden and Germany are extremely useful in establishing the overall ways to managing employee motivation across diverse settings. A lesson gained is the need for employees to be involved in decision making plans. Research by Bakker and Demerouti (2017) and Edvardsson (2020) and others show that firms that adopt participative management motivate and enhance employee job satisfaction, since they show a preference for being heard and acknowledged.

Nevertheless, it is also observed in the course of the study that traditional methods of management are not efficient, and transformational leadership style plays a crucial role in employee motivation. The initial one is that managerial styles of directive, autocratic management are usually demotivating and less engaging. The second one is that transformational leadership, which is defined by inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualised attention, is more effective to increase employee motivation and performance results. Thirdly the combining of improvement of structured management approaches with improved flexibility in work can improve the participation of workers and the achievement of organisational goals.

Lastly, the learning from these global cases suggests organisations should evaluate and strengthen their systems to promote employee motivation proactively. Such evidence can help practices on a local level, offer a blueprint for improvement of job satisfaction and organizational performance in the variety of settings (Vingard et al., 2021).

## **2.5 Continental Perspectives: Employee Motivation in SADC**

### **2.5.1 Overview of SADC countries' management practices**

The SADC region comprises a diverse area with a rich culture of different nations each having different issues and approach towards motivation to employees. Most southern African development community countries face some of the problems that Include: bureaucratic management where employees' decision-making options are restricted (Kanyane, 2019). This implies that organisations continue to use of hierarchical organisational structures consequently results in organisational disengagement, because the employees are made to feel that their inputs are unappreciated. There are several ways by which bureaucratic management affects innovation and performance and therefore the organisation's performance or effectiveness (Mokgothu & Thamae, 2020).

Nevertheless, some SADC member states are gradually shifting to a more modern and liberal system of management. Some non-participatory approach used by countries like Botswana and Namibia are employee engagement and motivation (Mokgothu & Thamae, 2020). For example, Employee incentive programmes, and workers' involvement in decision making were common and reported on how they enhance employee satisfaction and consequently the evaporate turnover rate (Chikanda & Zinyama, 2019). Such practices highlight a possibility of increased employee engagement throughout the region even though management systems that are presently dominant are conventional.

In addition, government organisation partnerships in the SADC have created initiatives in which the focus is on training and development of the employee motivation. For instance, skills acquisition partnership has been active in capacity building to improve workforce productivity and employee efficiency (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka et al., 2018). They also encourage staff through developing their career by implementing such initiatives and benefit organisation and company performance as well, stressing the importance of having workable management techniques in the region.

## **2.5.2 Common Challenges in Employee Motivation**

### **2.5.2.1 Bureaucratic management styles**

The findings of the research also elaborate on the fact that the bureaucratic management styles still fuel the lack of employee motivation in the SADC countries. These management styles are pseudo-mechanistic and to a large extent bureaucratic and therefore do not offer the flexibility and responsiveness required to meet the demands of the modern workforce (Mokgothu & Thamae, 2020). Some of the human costs associated with bureaucratic organisations include employees often complain of job powerlessness and this has serious implications on their motivation (Kanyane, 2019). This disconnection not only applies to the basic unit of individuation, but also to larger units of collective organisational efficacy.

Roberts (2019) states that extreme focus on rules and procedures established in the workplace threatens innovation and flexibility within the workforce. Many works suggested that in such conditions, employees are also less willing to provide inputs or even provide suggestions for the problems to be solved as their ideas are not going to be welcome (Chikanda & Zinyama, 2019). The product is the creation of compliance over initiative, a culture which is not healthy for employees or organisations.

To overcome the problems related to bureaucratic management, one must turn to more participative management that relies on the inputs from the employees. Promoting the opportunity for people to ask questions and to engage in effective communication with their peers will increase their levels of motivation as well as ensure that every worker feels like they belong to a team (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka et al., 2018).

### **2.5.2.2 Nepotism and its effects on morale**

Favouritism and nepotism continue to be a significant concern in several SADC countries, making the issue of employee motivation even more complex. Perceived unfairness while hiring or in promotions is likely to create resentment in employees. Hence, favouritism should be avoided at all costs (Kanyane, 2019). It usually leads to demotivated workers, dissatisfied employees and high turnover since talented workers are not recognised.

The negative effects of nepotism are not just the unhappiness of employees involved but a real organisational problem that can snuff out the general organisational performance (Mokgothu

& Thamae, 2020). When employees get to feel that some positions are given depending on whom you know rather than the ability to do the job, then morale is bound to drop. As a result, pressure grows on organisations to build and maintain motivated and committed employees.

To ensure all employees have confidence with the hiring and promotions practices, the company must adopt clear and open procedures, preventing nepotism at the workplace (Chikanda & Zinyama, 2019). Setting merit-based criteria form a sound culture of practising fairness at the workplace and also significantly boosts the level of employee motivation, hence increasing organisational performance.

### **2.5.3 Social Interventions within the Area**

Schmidt and Roesler (2019) suggest that some of the countries in the SADC have embarked on effective interventions into their efforts to eliminate the vices that stand in the way of motivating its employees like bureaucracies and nepotism. Participation for governance reforms see Botswana improved employee engagement level in different sectors based on the findings of Oyelaran-Oyeyinka et al. (2018). Officials also observe that the benefits of employee engagement and decision-making extend far beyond motivating and increasing satisfaction, and many specific instances have been reported by organisations.

Other organisational training and development interventions are also policy measures that have been instrumental in promoting motivation amongst the employees in the region. Namibian organisations have implemented skill development programmes that enable employees with skills to advance in career progression (Chikanda & Zinyama, 2019). The fact is that such programmes do not only equip the employees with effective skills, but these programmes also show that the organisation is interested in the development of their careers is a huge boost in loyalty and morale.

Also, introducing policy measures guarding against relatives' employment has been considered as the major move towards improving the motivation of the employees. The places that have implemented laws for transparency in any policy of recruitment and promotion see the enhanced responsibility and credibility among employees. By embracing meritocracy, organisations can encourage a motivating environment that regards its employees' striving efforts as essential for their capabilities (Kanyane, 2019). These interventions highlight the

need to embrace contingent strategies that will enhance the employee health and productivity in SADC region.

## **2.6 South African Context: Public Sector Challenges**

### **2.6.1 The South African Public Sector**

The public sector is part of the government responsible for implementing the policies of the government for the people. This panoramic structure gives the public sector that relatively rigid hierarchical structure and makes it appear slow and ineffective in meeting new needs (Pillay, 2020). This slowness of implementation can be blamed on the apartheid history that brought imbalance within the two parts in terms of service provision and resources (Van der Westhuizen, 2018). Hence, it continues to experience the dynamic difficulties of delivering quality service to its client with the additional constraints of a shrinking public budget.

In addition, a large population and a highly qualified working staff characterise the South African public sector. However, one of the biggest ongoing challenges is the inability to adapt the hierarchical nature of the command structure that dominates many public organisations to support and encourage innovative thinking and employee participation (Mafunisa, 2019). Employee often complain of organisational politics or what we may term as ‘organisational staling’ which tends to slow down performance and distort organisational objectives. Consequently, its demand for reform with employee-centred and part-to-part management is increasing.

Lastly, the public sector especially the organisations serving the public is under pressure from the public as well as the government hence the need to work effectively. The issue of employee motivation and engagement has therefore been highlighted in the challenges experienced by the South African public sector to show the need for systematic improvements in this area to improve the delivery and organisational outcomes.

### **2.6.2 Specific Issues in KwaZulu-Natal**

Traditional vertically framed structures are evident in KwaZulu-Natal, particularly in the public service sector, and their capacity in conveying messages or make decision(s) are restricted (Harrison, 2019). These structures also limit the manager-employee interaction and therefore employee trust and participation are usually compromised. For example, employees may have

a sense of powerlessness and detachment from the decision-making process, which can lead to a drop in motivation and job satisfaction (Mafunisa, 2019). The rigid organisation, in turn, may also inhibit creativity, as employees may not feel safe to submit new and better ways to do a work because of being discouraged or even punished.

Furthermore, a high level of traditional management styles not only prescribes but also encourages compliance at the cost of an enabling style of initiative and responsibility (Pillay, 2020). Failure to encourage the employees to assume full responsibility for their duties may result in dull performance, dissatisfaction among the staff and reduced morale. This disengagement can deepen existing problems at the public sector level, including service delivery failures and inefficiencies, which in turn compromises public confidence in public sector institutions.

Solutions to the problems related to hierarchical structures in KwaZulu-Natal need to be reworked toward a more participative management approach. Reframing open communication as collaborative communication can help create a feeling of inclusion among staff which, in turn, improves motivation and performance (Harrison, 2019). Unmaking strict hierarchies, public sector organisations can develop a more agile and responsive workforce.

### **2.6.3 Lack of Merit-Based Recognition**

Another of the major problems facing the public sector in KwaZulu-Natal is the absence of merit-based appraisal of work performance (Nzimande, 2020). Many of the public sector agencies are still using systems which value seniority rather than contribution. This frustrates staff by neglecting their efforts and its value. The failure to recognise employee efforts can lead to product or perspective inaptitude since the study showed that there is an inverse relationship between recognition and increase in income - this can also weaken the incentive to perform better and to be creative (Mafunisa, 2019).

Other than that, merit-based systems may lack transparency and objectivity entirely, and this may lead to huge resentment and sense of injustice in the workforce. The high performers who are always high performers are likely to be disillusioned when they realize that rewards and promotions are not accorded based on merit but on basis of subjectiveness or even politics (Harrison, 2019). This attitude can result in higher staff turnover rates, since high achievers look for jobs in companies that effectively acknowledge and appreciate their achievements.

The use of merit-based recognition mechanisms can contribute to enhancing the motivation and satisfaction of employees in the KwaZulu-Natal public sector. When the measures that must exist as the basis for assessing performance and standards for promotion are set, the organisation fosters the culture of excellence, openness, accountability (Nzimande, 2020). Such changes are not only made with the intention of enhancing the employees' satisfaction but also the with an emphasis on providing efficient services to the clients and high overall performance of the organisation.

#### **2.6.4 Employee Turnover and Job Satisfaction Trends**

In recent years, employee turnover remains a major issue impacting the South African public sector, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal. Turnover rates at a high level may result from some of the following causes: job dissatisfaction, no career advancement opportunity, or no appreciation for the employee contribution (Mafunisa, 2019). Evidence shows that, if employees are made to feel maimed and adrift, they tend to look for employment elsewhere which results in a significant loss of institutional memory and higher recruitment costs (Nzimande, 2020).

Trends in public sector job satisfaction show a worrying gulf between what employee's value and what their employer can deliver. There is a high number of employees who say they are discontented because of lack of possibilities to further professionalise and of the lack of appreciation for their work (Pillay, 2020). This dissatisfaction may result in lower productivity and morale, thus negatively affecting the quality of services to the public.

In order to reduce employee turnover and to increase job satisfaction, it is essential for the public sector organisations in KwaZulu-Natal to focus on programmes that promote employees' engagement and appreciation. By fostering an environment where employees feel valued and supported, organisations can reduce turnover rates and improve overall job satisfaction. By implementing focused training and development programmes, as well as systems that reinforce performance, it is possible to develop a more motivated workforce (Harrison, 2019).

## **2.7 Managerial Perceptions and Their Impact on Employee Performance**

### **2.7.1 The Role of Managerial Support in Employee Motivation**

Managerial support is one of the most important factors in influencing employee motivation and work performance in organisations. Studies confirm that if employees believe that their line managers are friendly and easy to approach, the employees are more likely to feel motivated and engaged in their work (Sonnentag et al., 2020). Supportive managers provide essential resources, guidance, and feedback, which can significantly enhance employees' confidence in their abilities and their commitment to organisational goals.

In addition, managerial support creates a culture of trust and transparency, enabling staff to express their concerns and ideas openly without fear of consequences (Nielsen et al., 2019). In a positive work environment, employees are motivated to do what it takes to become a problem-solver and so improved performance results are achieved. Research has demonstrated that organisations featuring good management styles lead to better employee satisfaction and more output, i.e., lower churn (Sonnentag et al., 2020).

Managers are expected to be actively involved in developing a culture of support by participating in teams directly and by illustrating personal interest through concern over the well-being and professional growth of teams. These practices involve frequent one-on-one discussions, positive feedback, offering mentorship, and establishment of avenues of open communication in which the employees can feel safe to raise concerns and express their ideas.

### **2.7.2 Effects of Negative Managerial Perceptions on Performance**

Bad management evaluations have negative repercussions on the motivation and performance of the employees. If employees experience an unsupportive, critical, and disengaged manager, this can culminate in a sense of disconnection and diminished job-related satisfaction (Sonnentag et al., 2020). This discrepancy can lead to reduced motivation, reduced productivity and higher turnover within the workforce, influencing organisational performance negatively.

Moreover, negative managerial perceptions can create a toxic work environment characterised by fear and mistrust. Employees may stop sharing ideas or asking for help for fear of negative outcomes from their managers (Nielsen et al., 2019). This lack of transparency can hamper

creativity and impede collaboration, as people become less likely to interact with coworkers or contribute to group activities.

To reduce the consequences of bad management perceptions, the focus of the organisation should be on leadership training and development. If managers are also trained to build harmonious team relationships, then they can help create a more supportive and positive working environment (Sonnentag et al., 2020). Promoting empathy, active listening, and constructive feedback to managers can help to dramatically boost employee morale and performance.

### **2.7.3 Strategies for Improving Manager-Employee Relationships**

One of the management structuring variables that has been highlighted to contribute to improved motivation and performance of employees in organisations is positive management-employee relations. It is recommended to set a frequency of one-on-one session between the manager and each of his or her employee. Such meetings offer a chance for frank discussion, where people can raise their concerns, goals and suggestions (Nielsen et al., 2019). By fostering a culture of communication, organisations can build trust and strengthen relationships between managers and employees.

Another training and development plan approach is offering emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills training to managers. There is empirical evidence showing that the emotional intelligence of an executive is informative for their capability to sense, interpret and react to the needs of their workforce (Sonnett et al., 2020). By enhancing managers' ability to connect with their teams on a personal level, organisations can create a more supportive and engaging work environment.

When behaviour reinforcement is coupled with an enthusiastic acknowledgment of good managerial practices by encouraging recognition of and rewarding favourable manager-staff relationships, then such behaviour and the associated recognition can become ingrained. Companies should organise recognition schemes for managers who are outstanding in the process of promoting positive relations between persons as well as for the encouragement of their team (Nielsen et al., 2019). The advisable positive corporate culture can motivate all managers to put relationship building first and foremost as it will subsequently improve the motivation and performance of employees.

## **2.8 Current Motivational Strategies in the Public Sector**

### **2.8.1 Overview of Existing Motivational Programmes**

There are several motivational programmes in the South African public sector with the aim to improve employee engagement and performance. Such programmes tend to centre on, professionalism, presentation, and employee well-being (Mafunisa, 2019). There are training programmes that increase the scope of skills and competences and allow the participants to face new and additional challenges and responsibilities within their scope of work", e.g. These programmes go beyond the development of individuals and parallel an organisational goal of enhancing service delivery.

Many public sector organisations have in place awards programmes that recognise and incentivise employee efforts. These efforts can vary from structured awards events to ad hoc recognition practices, including shout-outs in team meetings (Nzimande, 2020). Celebrating employees' successes can promote a culture of appreciation that encourages staff to reach their maximum potential.

Moreover, the public-sector employee wellbeing schemes include mental health, work-life balance, and overall health (Harrison, 2019). These programmes are for such a positive work environment since the welfare of the employees has a great relationship with the motivation and performance. The public sector organisations can enhance the levels of job satisfaction and turnover by fulfilling employees' total career needs.

### **2.8.2 Continuing Business Strategies**

The outcome of existing motivational approaches in the public sector remains promising and challenging at the same time since the result may be good, while implementation may be an issue. For instance, the training and development initiative can yield an improved skill and attitude in the employee which results in an improvement in performance (Mafunisa, 2019). However, the effectiveness of these programmes is largely determined by management's willingness to encourage long-term learning solutions in the company's setting.

Recognition programmes have also emerged as a potential avenue to improve employee morale and motivation. Employees, for example, will be greater in their engagement and commitment

to work if they are perceived to be valued and appreciated (Nzimande, 2020). Yet, differences in the application of recognition practices have the potential to result in the perception of favouritism, thus dissipating the wanted positive outcomes.

Health and wellbeing programmes have proved successful at improving levels of employee mental wellbeing and work/life balance; however, the success of these programmes is often restricted by lack of materials and the support from managers (Harrison, 2019). Public sector organisations in turn need to guarantee that their programmes are well-funded, uniformly implemented, and appropriate to the requirements and aims of staff.

### **2.8.3 Gaps in Current Motivational Approaches**

Even with the introduction of several motivational interventions, there are still large gaps in the model of public sector motivation to achieve improved employee motivation. One notable gap is the lack of tailored programmes that address the unique needs and challenges faced by employees in different roles and departments (Mafunisa, 2019). A one-size-fits-all strategy cannot ensure meaningful engagement across the entire workforce; consequently, certain groups may experience dissatisfaction.

Furthermore, there is rarely sufficient attention given to the importance of the role of managerial support in fostering the motivation of employees. Although training and recognition programmes are also important, manager-employee relationship quality is one of the significant determinants of motivation (Nzimande, 2020). There are efforts that should be made by organisations to focus on activities which deliver skills to managers through supporting and motivating their teams in a productive way.

Sustainability of motivational programmes is an important issue at last. Several projects are set up as one-off interventions rather than embedded in organisational culture (Harrison, 2019). Public sector organisations that are to be effective in bringing about sustainable change will need to demonstrate a commitment to continuous assessment and development of motivational solutions, which are relevant to, and effective at addressing employee needs while improving performance.

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

The Performance Management System (PMS) theory, as discussed by Armstrong (1995), was introduced in North America during the 1700s and early 1800s in the public sector. This was in response to increasing calls for governments to improve accountability and demonstrate value for money. The PMS was designed to monitor, review, and assess performance, train and develop underperformers, promote a sense of responsibility among staff, and identify and manage underperformance (Amos, Ristow, Ristow & Pearse, 2008).

The PMS theory has been widely used in both public and private sectors. Armstrong (1995) indicates that both sectors view PMS as a process ensuring employees know what is required of them and on what basis their performance and contributions will be assessed. In South Africa, public sector reform has been shaped by the tenets of New Public Management (NPM) policy (?), which includes a strong focus on decentralised management of human resources and finance (Polidano, 1999). These changes included the adoption of new budgetary reforms and the implementation of a three-year programme budgeting system that in effect was shifted from input and rules to output and responsibility (DPSA, 2004).

The PMS theory postulates that an element of formality in dealing with performance management will likely help in establishing accountability, proper use of resources and an uplift in performance among the workers (Cassell, Buehring, Symon, & Johnson, 2006). This stresses accurate definition with the roles and duties of the employees, recognition and appreciation, and ongoing training for the personnel. Hence, in the field of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within the eThekweni Municipal Academy, the PMS theory is highly relevant. It offers guidelines for explaining how structured performance management practices could enhance as well as affect the motivation of the employees and the performance of the organisation. By using this theory, the study will be able to examine the trends in the current performance management and the consequence of these trends to organisational performance as well as the employees' motivation (Dubey & Kothari, 2022).

Baig, Shuib and Yadegaridehkordi (2020) stated that the use of PMS theory is justified in this study because of the system's holistic view of performance management and the facts that show its adaptability to both public and private organisations. The theory is consistent with the research goals of exploring the effects of the employee motivation and the manager's

perception on organisational performance as the theory focuses on the accountability of employees, constant enhancement of processes, and growth of employees. Another threat which has been identified relating to the application of the PMS theory is that where the framework is tightly applied, it may erect an organisational iron cage (Coy, 2019). This approach may go viral with the employees and managers, potentially diminishing its effectiveness in motivating employees. For this reason, this study will also examine the flexibility of PMS practices and the relevance of organisational culture in promoting and supporting communication at every stage of the process.

### **2.9.1 Motivation Theories**

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, proposed in 1943, is a seminal theory that categorises human needs into a five-tier pyramid, ranging from basic physiological needs to self-actualization. The five states are physiological needs (e.g.- food and water, shelter) safety needs (security and stability) social needs (membership and love) esteem needs (recognition and respect), and self- actualization (personal growth and fulfilment) (Maslow, 1943; Aviles, 2020). This model is of desiderative value for understanding employee motivation in that it seems to imply that people are motivated to solve the lowest-level of needs before they seek to have their higher-order psychological needs met (Roberts, 2019). This sequential model argues that a well-satisfied lower-level need can facilitate motivation to further satisfy higher-level needs, thereby highlighting the need to come to a structured model of human motivation (McLeod, 2018).

The effect of the Maslow's theory lies in the potential to support managers to identify the different motives of their workers and to set up a working environment for satisfying them with suitable motivation and supportive management tools. Albeit their positive effects on safety and social needs are limited to sites and settings where such safe exposure is created and maintained, for instance, by achieving safe working conditions, and by providing opportunities for social interaction (Baker, 2018; Meyer, 2020). On the other hand, there are stigmas associated with this model, which is providing no empirical basis on the rigid, hierarchical order of needs (Shah, 2021) and the claim that certain people will strive for higher-order needs when lower-order needs are unsatisfied, illustrating individual differences in motivations and culture (Adams, 2018). However, Maslow's theory is still worthwhile for this research, as it gives an understanding for the way the eThekwin Municipality Academy Unit can adapt its

motivational approach to the different expectations of its staff, driving both better performance, job satisfaction and levels of employee retention (Roberts, 2019; Meyer, 2020).

Another conclusion made by Frederick Herzberg's research, made in 1959, is the view of new factors categorised as hygiene and motivators (Herzberg, 1959; Schmidt & Roesler, 2019). Similarly to Herzberg, hygiene factors (remuneration, job security, physical condition) exclude dissatisfaction but do not predict satisfaction or intrinsic motivation (Heskett et al., 2018). In contrast, motivators, involving, for example, recognition, opportunities to achieve success, and career development, are critical for building job satisfaction, performance, and intrinsic motivational behaviours of employees to perform well in their jobs (Higgins Judge, 2020). The value of this theory is not just in how it can be used by managers who aim to deliver specific interventions to motivate employees but also for its attention on the psychological dimensions of work (Meyer, 2020).

For instance, main workers who have an optimistic attitude that they are appreciated by their employers will be better placed to take pro-active measures in their main work and engage themselves more in their work (Baker, 2018). However, the theory has been criticised for a potential of oversimplification of employees' experiences (Schmidt & Roesler, 2019) and applied the risk of assuming that positivity of job satisfaction and negativity of job dissatisfaction are conceptually different constructs (Higgins & Judge, 2020) which might not be true for any nature of work. Moreover, some critics suggest that it does not consider that the impact of cultural differences in understanding what are motivational factors (Adams, 2020) should not be overlooked. However, due to these critiques, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory is especially pertinent to the study's objectives as it provides a blueprint for finding factors that can be considered within the eThekwini Municipal Academy Unit to encourage a more motivated, involved, and productive workforce (Heskett et al., 2018; Schmidt Roesler, 2019). When targeting motivators as a primary aim and hygiene factors as a secondary one, the eThekwini Municipal Academy Unit can work strategically to enhance general employee satisfaction and effectiveness and thus will contribute to the larger organisation aims to optimise workforce skills and service delivery (Higgins & Judge, 2020).

### **2.9.2 Managerial Perception Theories**

Fritz Heider, in his seminal study, *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations* (1958), offered a theoretical underpinning to the way people interpret and explain behaviour by his attribution

theory. His work was later supplemented by other publications like *Personality through perception* which enhanced a better insight into the processes of attribution in the social psychology (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2009). The greatest value of attribution theory is its ability to assist managers regarding such feedback and recognition's impact on motivation (Dweck, 2017). Nevertheless, the critics of the theory are as follows: The theory appears to overemphasise the roles played by emotions and social factors influencing perceptions among employees (Weiner, 2010); It seems to disregard systematically the social factors around employees interpreting events (Higgins and Judge, 2020).

All these limitations, notwithstanding, attribution theory is especially relevant to the aims of this research, as it can be used for eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit to create useful feedback processes that can boost worker motivation and job performance through a greater understanding of how employees experience their work achievements (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2009; Dweck, 2017). By giving balanced feedback, managers can shape the employees' attributions for having achieved success and hence will be able to reinforce the employees' motivation to keep on getting better (Heider, 1958).

Social exchange theory (SET) by George Homans, published in 1958, emphasises the role of reciprocal relations in the workplace and suggests that the exchanges between employees and superiors play a pivotal role in motivation and commitment (Homans, 1958; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). This model holds that employees will be more motivated if they feel their effort is "recognized and reciprocated" by their manager (Gouldner, 1960). Social exchange theory is important as it turns its focus to the reciprocal gains of workplace interactions and the development of a more motivated and dedicated workforce (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). However, the theory has been criticised for romanticising interpersonal process through emphasising exchanges (Dawes, 2018) as well as, inventing rationality in interpersonal relationship contexts (Blau, 1964).

Regardless of these critiques, the social exchange theory is relevant to this work since it has a framework of how perception of a manager's support and reward are critical in encouraging performance and motivation of the employee in eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit (Gouldner 1960; Cropanzano Mitchell 2005). When organisations foster courser and formal interaction, then favourable outcomes including employee involvement and commitment are achieved leading to the enhancement of the organisational yield (Blau, 1964).

- **Appropriateness of the Theoretical Framework to Study and Research Objectives**

The theories of motivation and of managerial perception are closely pertinent to the study of employee behaviour and performance in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs offers a basic framework for understanding the impact that changing employee needs have on motivation. Recognising that employees tend to meet their needs in a pyramid fashion, the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit can formulate designed strategies to meet optimum levels of their workforce's requirements. This is consistent with the first measure of research objective, determining how managerial judgments influence employees' behaviour and motivation. Knowledge of these requirements enables managers to establish a culture in which engagement and satisfaction can thrive and as a result, achieve better performance.

Also, the Two-Factor Theory of Herzberg is of great significance in assessing the performance of motivation influenced performance of the whole organisation in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit, the second research objective. This theory, by distinguishing between hygiene factors and motivators, can be used to define exactly what drives employee satisfaction and performance. The eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit may use this framework to evaluate the strengths of current motivational approaches and to guarantee that both hygiene factors (e.g., working environment, salary) and motivators (e.g., receiving recognition, development opportunities) are fully addressed. Through this integrated approach, the unit not only avoids the state of dissatisfaction, but also has a positive role in improving the state of employee engagement productivity to a higher extent.

## **2.10 Relevance of the Theory towards study objectives.**

The attribution theory is of special interest when studies of what effect managers' feedback has on motivation and action of employees are considered, and thus as it relates to the first study objective. eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit managers, by learning the way staff will understand feedback and ascribes their wins or losses to and from it, can develop communication strategies that can help to create a more supportive working environment. This knowledge can foster motivation and result in better job performance, conforming to the aims of the study, which are to evaluate the impact of managerial attitudes on employee behaviour.

The social exchange theory focuses on the relevance of an exchange relationship between employees and management, which is important to explain the usefulness of the established motivational methods, which is the third research goal. Through the process of validating staff and their contribution, the eThekwini Municipal Academy Unit is able to build an environment of engagement and commitment. This theory highlights the importance of management support in the behavioural variance in employee motivation and job satisfaction and, thereby, serves as a basis for the development of good managerial practice, which improves overall performance.

The incorporation of these paradigms within the research structure provides important information to the course dynamics of employee motivation and performance at the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality in eThekwini Municipal Academy Unit. Addressing these theoretical perspectives, the study seeks to contribute to an accurate understanding of the variables shaping an employee behaviour that, in turn, should facilitate the development of good strategies to boost motivation and performance.

## **2.11 Sustainable Development Goals**

### **2.11.1 Overview of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all member states of the United Nations in 2015 and represents a universal call to action to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all human beings live in peace and prosperity by 2030 (United Nations, 2020). This transformative agenda consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 specific targets, which are interrelated and indivisible in nature, and which are required to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Sachs et al. (2021) emphasise that the goals provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity, recognising that the end of poverty and other deprivations must be included along with development strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and foster economic growth, but which are at the same time, implementing measures to tackle climate change, the conservation of the oceans and forests.

The agenda recognises that development must be inclusive and sustainable, leaving no one behind and addressing the interlinked global challenges which face all nations' development of the 2030 Agenda is clearly related to the aims of this research as it recognises that there is a need for sustainable organisational performance and employee well-being which is a

prerequisite to achieve broader social aims. Kroll et al. (2019) had in mind that the outcomes of the SDGs provide an all-embracing framework to understand the ways in which organisational behaviour, particularly those which produce employee motivation and performance management, have a pertinent contribution to sustainable outcomes of development.

In eThekweni Municipal Academy ensuring that the goals of the organisation are aligned with those of the SDGs ensures that the efforts that are being made to strengthen employee motivation and managerial efficiency would not only offer advantages internally, but would also lead to the roles in the advancement of sustainable development at local level since the municipality would contribute towards these SDGs. This is especially important for organisations in the public service, since they are the entities which are responsible to translate global development goals into specific outcomes at local level. (Meuleman & Niestroy, 2015).

### **2.11.2 SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

Among all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 8 is the one that is relevant to this section the most, as it implies, according to the United Nations (2015), the encouragement of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work to all. This objective is focused not only on the provision of employment opportunities but also emphasises on the quality and work conditions. This comprehensive definition dovetails directly with the central themes of employee motivation and organisational performance explored in this research study. Schöpfer (2020) affirms that SDG 8 acknowledges that there is need for economically sustainable and inclusive growth within the world in order to ensure that all men and women are treated decently, and that accomplishment of this goal can only be achieved if, in the workplaces, the conditions that promote dignity and motivation are introduced, thus ensuring performance levels which are higher than normal in organisations.

### **2.11.3 Focus on SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth in Context of Employee Motivation**

SDG 8 consists of a number of targets which relate directly to the focus of this research, i.e. employee motivation and organisational performance in the eThekweni Municipal Academy. Target 8.5 specifically calls for the generation of full and productive employment and decent work for all, inclusive of equal pay for work of equal value, and target 8.8 highlights the need

to protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers (Elder & Robilliard, 2021). These targets highlight the paramount importance of the creation of working environments which not only generate work, but also motivate employees through values including fair treatment, safe working conditions and opportunities for growth. According to Mahmood (2022) the features of decent work include job security, good pay, skills growth prospects, and the treatment that the management has towards employees which is respectful, and these factors are all key drivers in organising performance among employees.

In the context of the eThekweni Municipal Academy, where the investigative focus of the study is on how employee motivation as well as managerial perceptions have an impact on the effectiveness of the organisation, SDG 8 provides a normative framework from which to view the issue of what constitutes quality employment as well as productive working environments. The research quoted by Rai et al. (2019) states that where organisations align their human resource practices with the principles of decent work, they tend to register higher levels of employee engagement, lower turnover and better performance outcomes. Moreover, Boffo and Patalano (2020) state that in order for decent work to be promoted, it is necessary to address internal factors (e.g. meaningful work and opportunities for personal development) as well as external factors (e.g. fair pay and job security), which are directly in line with the study's aim to investigate the various motivational factors. This study of employee motivation from the perspective of SDG 8, not only contributes to the improvement of the various organisations examined, but also to the broader social objectives that relate to economic development and quality work.

#### **2.11.4 Relevance of SDG 8 to this study with a developmental perspective.**

The concept of a developmental approach within SDG 8 underlines the fact that economic growth and decent work must be for the entire populace, including marginalised groups, youth, women and the disabled (Morgado et al., 2023). This is a strong link to the mission of the eThekweni Municipal Academy, since it is involved in the skills development and employment preparedness of youth, to be embedded in an economically participative manner. Gupta and Vegelin (2016), argue that a developmental inclusion requires a conscious attempt by organisations to create opportunities for capacity building, skills enhancement and career progression of individuals, in particular those who are stopped from quality employment. Within the constraints of South Africa with its enlightenment inequalities, the eThekweni

Municipal Academy's role as provider of training and apprenticeship opportunities, is a concrete example of the SDG 8 objectives as regards inclusive development.

The relevance of SDG 8 to this study goes beyond the provision of job opportunities; it advocates inclusivity and acceptance of the quality of the experiences of these jobs and the motivation climate in the organisation itself (United Nations, 2015). To develop inclusive environments, organisations must create work conditions in which each employee feels respected and valued, where they are equipped to learn and grow professionally and where they will wish to contribute their best efforts (Nilakant & Poon, 2020). This can be related to the extent to which the perceptions and motivational strategies of managers within the study enterprise reflect on employee levels of engagement and performance. It is only when these managers are aware of and assist in fulfilling the diverse needs and aspirations of employees that they can enhance organisational effectiveness and, overall, contribute to the advancement of the broader society in terms of inclusive economic development.

This relates to the perspective of Mensah (2019), that public sector organisations including the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, have more responsibilities than just providing decent work opportunities and inclusive forms of employment practices. This is, as major role players in labour markets, they have the vantage position in setting conditions which have a say in the overall operational environment for both private and public enterprises for the future. It is here that this study will add value as it discusses motivational and performance dynamics as they apply to the municipal academy in order to provide insight in terms of how public sector institutions can serve to fulfil their dual role of providing efficient public service delivery and achieve sustainable inclusive development.

#### **2.11.5 Iconic Indicators and Measurements for Application in Management**

The congenital application of principles pertaining to SDG 8 must on the one hand, be linked to performance management indicators which can be applied to assess progress in terms of decent work quality and productive employment value. The United Nations provides such a range of indicators which can be related to SDG 8 and include such indicators which relate to GDP growth, employment levels, productivity, safety in the workplace and rights for labour (UN Statistics Division, 2024). In terms thereof, Sachs et al. (2022) state that the extension of such macro in character indicators into performance evaluation of the organisation will be better served by means of contextual awareness and the introduction of performance

improvement measures more relevant in assessing the quality of experience of work and well-being of employees. Within the context of this study, relevant indicators for the measurement of the level of alignment of the eThekweni Municipal Academy with the meaning of decent work include employee satisfaction ratings, staff turnover rates, training and development opportunities, workplace safety indicators and organisational productivity levels.

Several researchers have proposed various measurement tools to assess the organisational level of alignment with SDG 8 while being measured on the micro level. Tsalis et al. (2020), for example, propose a range of indicators to measure corporate sustainability which include employee motivation indices, fair wage indices, training hours per employee, diversity in the workplace. They argue that such indicators are an important source of information for scholars wishing to enhance both organisational level performance and the corresponding contributions made towards the various SDGs. Pizzi *et al.* (2020) likewise, in their investigation, point out that measurements should be made, as much in terms of qualitative aspects (shades of employee understanding in respect of fairness, the opportunity for expressing opinion and participation), as well as to those aspects which deal with the meaningful communication of work engagement like quantitative measures of productivity and efficiency.

The specifics of the measurement presentation that these illustrations provide are pertinent to the central area of the current research, i.e. how motivation of employees and perceptions of management play a significant role in the changes in the outcomes of performance in organisations and the success of individual worker and the Municipal Academy as a unit (Mio et al. 2022).

For the eThekweni Municipal Academy, the establishment of baseline measurements of employee motivation, satisfaction and performance and the tracking of these variables would allow for an evidence-based approach to decision-making, showing progress to SDG alignment. Such an approach would support not only the internal development of the organisation but lead to better reporting by the municipality concerning the implementation of these SDGA providing greater transparency to stakeholders and the general public (Manes-Rossi et al., 2020).

#### **2.11.6 Employee Performance Management Alignment with SDG 8 Implementation**

The integration of SDG 8 factors into performance management within organisations is an approach that promotes internal efficacy and external sustainability. Latapi et al. (2019) argue that for performance management to be in alignment with the SDGs, organisations must broaden their paradigm of performance metrics beyond financial and efficiency metrics to include social and development outcomes, employee well-being, skills development and equal treatment. This integration for the eThekweni Municipal Academy would involve the development of motivational strategies and managerial practices that realistically embrace their contribution to decent work outcomes. For example, to ensure that performance management systems reward not only productivity but also employee development, reward systems should promote equity and fairness, and that management be trained in leadership styles that emphasise supportiveness and inclusivity.

Research shows that organisations that are able to integrate the principles of SDGs into an efficient working of their organisation reap multiple rewards from this integration of greater employee motivation, better attraction and retention of employee talent, and a better reputation (Rosati & Faria, 2019). Heras-Saizarbitoria et al. (2022) found that when employees realise that their organisation is contributing to meaningful social goals, this SDG, they are prone to greater work engagement and commitment. This is particularly relevant to public sector organisations like the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality where employees are motivated to a large extent by the idea of public service and contributing to community development. The Municipal Academy, in establishing these links for employees' job function and organisational performance to SDG 8, can create work that makes sense, therefore enhancing intrinsic motivation and tending to foster an organisational climate of excellence. The development of such links also assures that the organisation efforts to improve employee motivation and organisational performance are not individual initiatives that may be unsupported but are built into a general programmatic approach that develops institutional efficacy and at the same time improves sustainable development outcomes (Van Zanten & Van Tulder, 2021).

## **2.12 Conclusion**

Some of the major challenges experienced by the South African public service, especially in KwaZulu-Natal at eThekweni Municipal Academy. The traditional top-down structures and promotions not according to merit are discussed in this study. These challenges affect the inspiration and performance of employees. Managerial perceptions significantly impact

employee engagement, with supportive management fostering motivation while negative perceptions can lead to disengagement and high turnover rates. The study of the present motivational solutions shows strengths as well as weaknesses, and it highlights the need for customised solutions, which should take the individual needs of employees into consideration. To improve employee satisfaction and organisational performance, public sector organisations must give high priority to managerial support, regularise reward systems and guarantee the viability of motivating actions. Ultimately, addressing these issues is essential for improving service delivery and public trust in governmental institutions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter focused on multifaceted correlation between motivation and performance of employees together with municipal organisation at eThekweni Municipal Academy. This chapter focused on the methods, which helped accomplish the study's research objectives. The study analysed the research paradigms while identifying the chosen paradigms suitable for guiding implementation of the research that follows the study's objectives. The following section evaluated the logical approach to pick a research design and examined the target population alongside sampling approaches and data collection procedures. The next section of this document explored both data collection methods as well as research analysis approaches. The chapter's conclusion will examine ethical concerns within the study together with the identified research restrictions.

#### **3.2 Research Paradigm**

The research methodology used in academic studies is closely tied to philosophical ideologies regarding knowledge acquisition and management, as well as the processes involved in these activities. These ideological perspectives are referred to as research paradigms (Davies & Fisher, 2018). Research paradigms can also be described as "a means of exploring social phenomena that allows for specific understandings and explanations" (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016: 51). Kivunja and Kuyini (2017: 26) define a paradigm as "a framework or model for observation that influences what we perceive and how we interpret it." A common theme is that paradigms play a crucial role in guiding research decisions.

Three dominant research paradigms exist which include the positivism paradigm alongside interpretivism paradigm and pragmatism (Park et.al., 2020). This research adopted interpretivism paradigm as its guiding framework. Research under the positivist paradigm relies on systematic and scientific natural science processes for obtaining objective "universal truth" according to Kaboub, (2008: 343). The positivist paradigm functions deductively but the interpretivist paradigm operates inductively according to Aliyu and colleagues (2014). The researcher adopts Interpretivists approach because the researcher believes that reality is subjective and multiple, and that people's experiences shape their understanding of it. The

research approach chosen is Interpretivism because people's knowledge of reality is socially constructed, and that it is influenced by their culture and history (Cresswell, 2014).

An inductive approach works perfectly well within interpretivist research because it enables researchers to develop theoretical frameworks with data collected from participants' perspectives. Researchers follow a methodological process of data collection to find patterns together with themes and meanings. The research process starts with particular situations; then it builds up to more generalised theories through qualitative data points. An inductive approach delivers specific knowledge about individual experiences during research investigations of employee motivation along with managerial practices because it creates deeper motivational understanding and reveals unknown details. The research adopts inductive principles for interpretation that assist researchers in developing theories based on participant-expressed perspectives. The exploratory character of the study calls for interpretivist research methods so researchers can successfully conduct analyses about employee motivation and managerial performance and managerial viewpoints. The research method enables scholars to discover essential employee perspectives regarding their managers as well as the factors that drive them.

### **3.2.1 Essential Elements of Pragmatism**

Brewer and DeLeon (1983) identified epistemology along with ontology and methodology and axiology as four essential components within research paradigms. Research users benefit from these elements because they reveal the core assumptions and beliefs together with norms and values found within the research paradigm.

#### **3.2.1.1 Epistemology of Pragmatism**

Raddon and Harrison (2015) state that epistemology serves as the scientific discipline dedicated to studying knowledge. Creswell et al. (2007) extend this definition to demonstrate how investigators discover knowledge elements and their acquisition processes and verification approaches while addressing knowledge learning thresholds. The discipline of epistemology determines how knowledge becomes legitimate and how research subjects attain their findings. The main responsibility of epistemology, based on Crotty & Epstein's (2008) statement, entails identifying knowledge from ignorance. The concept functions in research that aligns with quantitative positivist as well as qualitative phenomenological research paradigms. Through epistemology, researchers can explore objective truths using positivist methods at the same time they can explore multiple realities through interpretivist perspectives. The pragmatic

research approach supports joint development of ontology and epistemology in its framework. As this research examined internal and external factors that influence leadership effectiveness, it combined philosophies through epistemological and ontological methods between positivist and interpretivist knowledge acquisition approaches. The research philosophy, according to pragmatism, needs to integrate statistical positivism with interpretive approaches to gain authentic information about research topics.

### **3.2.1.2 Ontology of Pragmatism**

According to Vanson (2014), ontology is the science which studies being. An individual reveals their perception of factual elements through their beliefs thus prompting contemplation about reality's true nature. The study of ontology examines how reality builds itself and seeks proof regarding both the nature of existence and the operational aspects of reality. The belief system represents how an individual examines reality and factual occurrences (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Ontology works toward discovering the authentic truth (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012) that researchers can use with both positivist and interpretivist research philosophies. Research measuring internal and external environmental elements on leadership effectiveness can produce either unique objective facts (positivist view) or various interpretive findings (interpretivist view). Through ontology, researchers can identify genuine factors from inside organisational systems that has an impact on leadership effectiveness. Through pragmatic ontology, researchers create their own realities and study complex leadership aspects by using two forms of measurement: quantitative and qualitative methods. Research questions can be investigated for objective truth using deductive methods and mathematical and statistical techniques to establish facts according to this approach. The research techniques usually include surveying, questionnaire distribution, and random sampling to collect data about leadership effectiveness challenges.

### **3.2.1.3 Axiology of Pragmatism**

According to Mertens (2014:29) axiology signifies "the study of the origin and nature of philosophical values" as well as "the specific theory of values associated with a philosopher's school of thought." The assessment of axiology proves necessary because researchers need direction for identifying good versus bad conditions even though these values remain uncertain. Values in pragmatic research evolve through combined group reasoning instead of individual mental processes. The investigation starts from the understanding that group values change gradually according to temporal conditions. The framework states that values do not exist in a

static state because human relationships inside specific environmental circumstances create their form.

### **3.3 The Research Design**

Research design functions as a strategic document to acquire data while measuring and analysing it specifically with regard to the research queries (Dannels, 2018). Multiple research design types operate for particular objectives among exploratory design along with descriptive design and explanatory research designs (Sileyew, 2019). The research design functions as a structured framework that details the study approach according to Myers et al. (2013). The research design clarifies the relationships between samples and groups along with their measurements and interventions to identify answers for research questions. According to Leavy (2017), research design functions as an architectural plan which structures a rationale system to improve the data validity and credibility after collection.

#### **3.3.1 Exploratory Research**

According to Swedberg (2020), exploratory research serves in knowledge-deficient environments because previous research investigated only several related problems. The main objective of exploratory research is to uncover profound ideas about the chosen subject. The research method suits cases where information already exists, yet researchers need further data points to enhance and clarify their conceptual framework (Silverman, 2016). These studies provide valuable assistance to researchers who want to establish new theories and build substantial conceptual frameworks (Cooper and Schindler, 2014).

#### **3.3.2 Explanatory Research**

According to Hunt et al. (2019), research explanations exist at different levels of complexity. The objective of exploratory research types is to establish connections between multiple elements or structural variables that pertain to research topics. The research method aligns with positivism to answer 'why' questions. Explanatory research provides more depth than basic analysis. For instance, it explores how crime rates stand at high levels and why particular offenses increase while evaluating how different locations deal with different rates of crime (Carvalho et al., 2005). Research design development depends on whether a study targets description or explanation because this choice controls what type of data researchers needs to

gather (Mason et al., 2010). The adoption of causal approaches requires researchers to establish how phenomena relate to each other by describing events like Y result from X factors.

### **3.3.3 Correlational Research**

Through correlational research methods, investigators quantify the mathematical link between two elements although they usually abstain from adjusting external factors (Welman & Kruger, 2014). The reason the researcher chooses correlational studies instead of experimental designs arises from two main possibilities: firstly, the variables lack causal relationships yet are interrelated and secondly, the necessary variables require a non-manipulable status. When evaluating the measurement strength of a short extraversion scale, a researcher will compare participant results from this abbreviated assessment against established scores from an established long scale. This scenario represents an example where one test score remains unaffected by the other score; therefore, no independent variable requires changing according to Yilmaz (2012).

### **3.3.4 Causal-Comparative Research**

The research method of causal-comparative studies or ex post facto research evaluates dependent-independent variables relationships that emerge after events take place (McMillan & Schumacher, 2011). The research objective evaluates independent variable influence on dependent variables through comparison of multiple group outcomes. According to Rasinger (2013), the design shows parallels to correlational and experimental research yet maintains unique characteristics.

### **3.3.5 Exploratory Research**

The main function of exploratory research involves obtaining basic information about particular issues or phenomena when little evidence exists. The research methodology enables open discovery of new outcomes because it preserves an unrestricted flexible design instead of proving existing hypotheses (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Exploratory research investigates human emotions by using several qualitative methodology approaches to reveal important mental processes toward present matters (Hardy & Bryman, 2009). The method pursues comprehensive examination of subject matters while developing research questions for potential future analysis (Terre Blanche et al., 2016). Exploratory research served as an appropriate method since it allowed effective acquisition of different viewpoints from study participants.

Keeping the study participants while developing survey instruments that increased participant response proved to be major obstacles. The research process took longer than planned but its outcomes were beneficial. The data collection instruments conducted well-based on research objectives to obtain rich qualitative information for the research questions. The researcher studied motivation-based performance changes amongst employees who work in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality specifically. Open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews were the chosen methods to obtain significant data related to the study aims.

### **3.4 Study Population**

Academic literature states that study population identified the larger group that provides the sampling basis (Creswell & Creswell, 2003). The definition of research population in certain situations includes all elements to which researchers seek to generalise their study results (Thomas & Pencina, 2020). Research findings require an accurate identification of the study population because this group possesses characteristics crucial for appropriate generalisation. Schroeder et al. (2022) define the target population as the specific group whose chosen sample enables researchers to study behaviours and opinions which exist within that group.

This research analysed employees from the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit as they transition from Shell House to their new location at Old Standard Bank Building, 4th Floor, 26 Mathews Meyiwa Road, Durban, 4001 in the KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The research survey involved 10 participants who include employees from the roles of training coordinators and skills development facilitators and administrative staff along with management. The group serves as the main organisational segment which strongly supports new skills development programmes through their essential work.

The geographical context of the study site is illustrated in Figure 3.1 below, which shows the location of the eThekweni Municipal Academy within the broader Durban metropolitan area.

**Figure 3.1: Map of Durban Station**



Source: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/rrTCPmVR9kqxNzMo9>

### **3.5 Sample Size**

In research, a sample consists of individuals selected from the general population who share similar traits. For exploratory analysis, a sample size of fewer than thirty participants is recommended (Creswell & Creswell, 2003). This study's sample included ten individuals with significant experience in municipal training and management, specifically within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality of South Africa. Likewise, a sample size of fewer than thirty subjects is also necessary for descriptive analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2003).

### **3.6 Sampling technique**

Census sampling, also known as complete enumeration, involves collecting data from every member of a population without excluding anyone (Kumar, 2014). Unlike sampling techniques that select a subset of individuals, a census aims for complete coverage, offering a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this methodology, information was gathered from all individuals to ensure that the data reflects the entire population accurately, including training coordinators and skills development facilitators and administrative staff and managers. This approach is particularly useful in studies with a small population size, where the cost and time of collecting data from every individual may be manageable (Fowler, 2013). A census not only provides exhaustive data but

also helps eliminate sampling bias that might occur if only a subset is selected, ensuring better reliability and validity of the findings (Babbie, 2016). Consequently, census sampling can result in higher precision and a more nuanced understanding of the research topic, especially in qualitative studies (Patton, 2015).

### **3.6.1 Rationale for Choosing Census in the Study**

The study opted for census sampling because the organisation contained a total staff of fifteen employees. A census technique enabled the researcher to survey the entire composition of municipal training and management experts and enhance the collected data quality according to Creswell (2014). Through a census design, the study successfully comprehended a wide spectrum of viewpoints and operational understanding among eThekweni Municipal staff members, which enhanced the research outcomes (Hancock et al., 2016). The small sample size enabled census sampling because it eliminated major concerns about neither response rates nor sampling errors affecting study validity according to Creswell and Poth (2018). The detailed input obtained from each employee helps qualify the analysis while revealing intricate dimensions of leadership effectiveness according to Ritchie et al. (2014). The research goals aim to obtain detailed insights from all stakeholders, so census sampling proves suitable for achieving these objectives.

### **3.6.2 Benefits of Census Sampling**

Census sampling used in this study has a number of advantages. This strategy will guarantee extensive involvement of employees, which will result in an in-depth perception of the pertinent concerns when all stakeholders are captured. Census method removes sampling error and offers a complete data to be analysed thus increasing the validity and reliability of the research (Bertram, 2016). The understanding of different experiences among research participants serves as an essential requirement, which qualifies qualitative research data collection (Patton, 2015). A study that uses complete census methodology avoids missing essential information by considering the full population, which guarantees that essential trends will emerge during the assessment period (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Systematic assessment enabled by this method allows researchers to uncover leadership effectiveness determining factors through various perspectives, which produces balanced recommendations (McNabb, 2015). The use of census sampling allows both data quality enhancement and stronger ability of research findings to guide policy decisions and practice improvements throughout the municipality.

### **3.7 Data Collection Methods**

The study made use of three data collection methods: semi-structured interviews for the qualitative aspect of the study, survey questionnaires for the quantitative approach, and document review for the gathering of secondary data.

#### **3.7.1 Semi-Structured Interview**

Participants undergo semi-structured interviews to provide their views about subjects. The main benefit of this method enables participants to deliver comprehensive and thorough assessments about experiencing the phenomenon through personal perspective (Knox & Burkard, 2009; Babbie, 2010). The method gives researchers the chance to study problems which standard research methods fail to observe or validate (Agarwal & Buzzanell, 2015). Semi-structured interviews follow an adaptable format which facilitates new discoveries via personalised responses of interviewees (Cleland et al., 2007). Research participants benefit from this method because it lets them share their unfiltered opinions that spawn detailed information about investigated subjects (Creswell et al., 2007). The researcher used a draft guide to develop the interview questions which supported both research objectives and questions before recording responses with a tape recorder for accurate data collection purposes.

#### **3.7.2 Documents Review.**

Documentary review is a common method of collecting both qualitative and quantitative information from already existing written sources, that are published articles, journals, organisational records, programme or project records and databases (Cohen et al., 2002). Documentary review has its shortcomings in research. For example, it is time-consuming to analyse all the documents. Sometimes, the published material can be subjective. In this study, the element of subjectivity was minimised by consulting as many sources as possible and identifying areas of convergence and divergence. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of documentary review, this method of inquiry was chosen for several reasons. One of the key advantages of conducting documentary research is that one can get access to information that would be difficult to get from any other source. The other benefit of the documentary review is that they represent a less expensive means of accessing detailed information about all subject areas. The researcher reviewed articles, other pieces of legislation including the Constitution, Municipal Structures Act, Municipal Systems Act, newspaper articles, published articles,

books, and journals regarding the effectiveness of an adaptive complex leadership style in attaining a perfect performance.

### **3.8 Data quality control**

The diversity of quality control measures between studies specifically affects semi-structured interview research due to its impact on case processing and interviewer behaviour and other quality features that influence both data quality and research outcomes. Rubin and Rubin (2012) state that reliable and valid data verification plays an essential role in quality control because it demonstrates that measurement methods track the planned data points accurately. Quality evaluation requires assessment of data depth, richness and relevance if it sufficiently addresses the research question. This researcher established high data quality standards by involving an independent observer throughout the complete process for consistent application of interview guidelines to the interviewees.

The process of validation focuses on evaluating how well research instruments perform to deliver needed data according to Creswell (2014). Selection of the most appropriate methodology and target population and sample size together with evaluation tool ensured validity in this study. The research design included a well-structured interview format which enabled the analyst to witness department officials' interactions to understand their conceptual and behavioural patterns. The interview method adopted presented a research flexibility that allowed the researcher to conduct deep analysis by creating probe questions and interparticipant responses.

The implementation of quality control measures exhibits substantial variations between studies which specifically affects semi-structured interview research through its influence on data processing work methods and interviewer conduct and resultant research outcomes. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012) quality control must encompass data reliability and validity because it validates measurement methods to mirror their intended data specifics. Data quality evaluation centres on assessing both the depth and richness and relevance of implemented data in order to confirm its ability to address the research question. Maintaining high-quality data standards involved a researcher-appointed independent observer who monitored guidelines adherence throughout all interviews.

### **3.9 Data analysis and presentation**

Data analysis requires the combination of data examination and cleaning followed by data transformation and final data presentation for the purpose of discovering valuable insights that lead to better results and enhanced decision-making. Qualitative data collection involves two steps open-ended data gathering through common question exploration and analysis through participant evidence (Creswell, 2009).

Multiple analytical systems exist for conducting qualitative research data collection. A successful strategy to reduce mistakes during data collection involves proper recording along with interview transcription. Recording, either audio or visual, stands as an ideal technique for conducting interviews and focus groups because it enables free respondent expression, which makes it the best approach to collect feedback and analyse data. The researcher needs to establish a trustworthy recording system that includes either individual conversations or phone calls or video communication. Research formats determine whether video records or audio-only recordings are selected for capture.

A perception enhancement was achieved through conducting focus group interviews alongside individual interviews regarding the topic. The research methodology section in in this chapter describes the evaluation techniques while separating participant types into individual and focus group categories. Group and individual face-to-face interviews took place while researchers recorded the discussions through their cell phone. The participant who was away was interviewed telephonically

Responses from respondents who were questioned formed the focal point of this study's analysis and interpretation. The significance of the relationship between motivation and performance was determined through regression analysis which can be defined as a consistent process for determining which variables have an influence on a specified topic (Alchemer,2021). The whole procedure permitted the researcher to confidently outline factors that were imperative, or overlooked, and how these features linked with one another.

### **3.10 Limitations of the study**

The impact caused by limited resources and small sample sizes and inconsistent methodologies make up study limitations. The research design, together with its systems, will encounter

limitations that influence result interpretation along with application decisions. Study limitations both reduce the ability to generalise findings and decrease their effectiveness through the way researchers create the design structure and perform testing methods for internal and external validity.

The researcher had several challenges. The first problem that the researcher encountered was a wait of two months to get consent of the head of the Municipal Academy Unit to carry out the research due to concern about the amount of information to be gathered. The interviews carried out during the research were difficult because they take a long time. It was also difficult to locate suitable interview scheduling time with the subjects, and the translation of the interview data was a time-consuming task. The researcher had to commit more time to the process of analysis to derive findings that were related to the study.

The research design covered solely one public department of a specific region, thus making it impossible to apply findings to public departments throughout the entire nation. The unique combination of work conditions found in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit might promote either flexible open-mindedness or substantiate alternative workplace challenges. Additional research should include data collection from multiple departments in different regions using larger participant groups to enhance research diversity.

### **3.11 Ethical considerations**

Research ethics provide standard operating systems for researchers to observe ethical conduct when obtaining data from study participants (Bandari, 2021). The development along with execution of research studies depends heavily on these ethical standards. Research investigators need to understand ethical guidelines and operational procedures to stop mistakes and represent their study involvement (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The ethical standards in qualitative research demand researchers to receive approval from ethics committees or obtain waivers before proceeding with their research. Informed consent together with participant identity protection stands as fundamental requirements while researchers need to assess carefully for potential coercion among those who are in their power position.

The participants received clear instructions about their rights and duties which specified that participation was optional and that the researchers used completed questionnaires exclusively.

The participants had to consent to the provided informed consent document. All participants confirmed that they were over 18 years of age before receiving full disclosure about their ability to cease participation at any time. The researchers presented the questions in a manner that made them accessible to all employees, especially the entry-level team members. All interviewees received notice that the procedure would proceed only after providing full cooperation without pressuring anyone to join. Complete privacy protection applied to every interview participant.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

The dissertation's essential section explains data generation through different instruments for the study. The research methodology account presents the full study approach while documenting the research questions and justifying the selection of qualitative research methods. The chapter introduces the research design which determined the data acquisition methods while demonstrating that interviews provided the best approach to data gathering. Evaluative measures covered the entire process of identifying research subjects. The research process gets detailed explanation along with credibility measures that appear alongside affirmations about understanding flexible working arrangements. This chapter explores ethical aspects while presenting important ethical concerns together with a list of recognised study constraints.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlined the outcomes of the qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with ten participants from the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit. The research findings were consistent with the methodological approach in Chapter Three, which supported a systematic thematic analysis of the data via the NVivo software package. The chapter provided the research findings for the three main research questions via a detailed analysis of the participants' responses with supporting literature to situate and contextualise the findings in relation to employee motivation and managerial perceptions on employee motivation in public sector organisations.

A systematic process of coding and thematic development was involved in the data analysis process, and this was in accordance with current qualitative research methods (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative data analysis in organisational studies need structured approaches to organise qualitative research (Acharyya & Bhattacharya, 2019). In the qualitative analysis conducted, the complex relationships between employee motivation, managerial perceptions, and organisational performance were revealed in the case of eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit.

#### 4.2 Overview of Participants

The sample included ten participants, at various organisational levels and functional areas, of the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit. The purposive sampling approach that was applied ensured that there were differing perspectives based on both role and experience levels.

##### 4.2.1 Participant Demographics

**Table 4.1: Participant Demographics and Experience**

| <b>Participant Role</b>      | <b>Number</b> | <b>Average Experience (Years)</b> | <b>Department Focus</b>                                                                |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Training Coordinators</b> | 4             | 5.75                              | Municipal Services, Leadership Development, Technical Skills, Professional Development |

|                                        |   |      |                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------|---|------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Skills Development Facilitators</b> | 3 | 6.0  | Practical Skills, Digital Skills, Life Skills & Entrepreneurship |
| <b>Administrative Staff</b>            | 2 | 6.5  | Student Services, Finance & Resource Management                  |
| <b>Manager</b>                         | 1 | 12.0 | Operations Management                                            |

The demographics of participants show ample organisational knowledge, as they are individually experienced from 3 to 12 years at the eThekweni Municipal Academy. Schroeder et al. (2022) indicate that such experience distribution offer deep organisation representation across organisational levels and function areas. The amount of time employees had with the organisation demonstrates a measure of loyalty and credible insights in the motivational dynamic, as postulated by Kalogiannidis (2021:984) research on an employees' motivation impact.

#### **4.2.2 NVivo Data Analysis Process**

The qualitative data were analysed using NVivo 12 software following systematic protocols described by Muzari, Shava and Shonhiwa (2022) for conducting qualitative research in an organisational context. NVivo, according to Kumari et al. (2023), has advanced capabilities of organising, analysing, and uncovering insights in unstructured qualitative data and therefore ensured methodological rigour. The analysis was completed in several phases:

##### **Phase 1: Data Preparation and Data Importing**

All transcribed interviews were imported into NVivo separately, protecting participant anonymity through systematic coding (TC1-TC4 are Training Coordinators, SDF1-SDF3 are Skills Development Facilitators, AS1 - AS2 are s Administrative Staff and M1 is the Manager).

##### **Phase 2: Initial Coding**

Each transcript was coded line by line, which led to 127 initial codes that captured specific concepts, experiences, and perspectives of the participants. This was an inductive process, designed to cover as many participant experiences as possible without imposing any form of expected theoretical reference frame on the study.

### **Phase 3: Thematic Development**

This echoed the first codes, after re-visiting the first codes, and reading them and tabulating them into thematics, this echoed the research objectives which developed coding into five primary thematics, with several sub-themes as outlined in the coding framework shown above. The developed coding system is described in Table 3.2 which provides the hierarchical organization of the themes and sub-themes and the codes related to them that appeared after analysis of the data.

### **Phase 4: Data Saturation and Validating Coding**

Data saturation was determined to be achieved when no new significant themes were identified with any further coding iterations. The final thematic coding framework was member checked with three participants to verify that their experiences were accurately represented.

## **4.3 Research Findings by Research Objectives**

### **4.3.1 Research Objective 1: Role of Managerial Perceptions in Shaping Employee Behaviour and Motivation**

**Research Question:** What role do managerial perceptions play in shaping employee behaviour and motivation in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit?

The analysis indicated managerial perspectives can significantly affect employee motivation in many different ways. Three key themes were discovered through the data analysis process:

#### **4.3.1.1 Leadership Recognition and Performance Feedback Systems**

The findings shows that recognition acts as a fundamental motivational factor, supporting the theoretical frameworks posited by Paais and Pattiruhu (2020:57) who argue that individuals who are motivated tend to be more effective, engaged and committed to their work, and thus improve enterprise performance. The theme had 45 coded references in the interview data, indicating its importance to participants.

#### ***Recognition as a Primary Motivator***

Eighty per cent of the participants (eight out of ten) identified recognition as vital to their continued motivation. This finding is consistent with Ali and Anwar's (2021) findings regarding the empirical connection between employee motivation and employee job satisfaction. The response of Training Coordinator 1 is captured below:

*When senior management recognize training programmes I have coordinated as successful, or I have positive feedback from learners, it motivates me for weeks. We had a quarterly review a few days before Christmas where I was recognized for innovative practices with an e-learning module and that alone motivated me to develop three more modules!*  
(TC1)

This view is consistent with Herzberg's two-factor theory, in which recognition serves as a motivator, not merely a hygiene factor (Sai, 2022:91-111). The Skills Development Facilitator with a focus on life skills and entrepreneurship went on to explain:

*Recognition means everything to me in this role. If I can see learners getting jobs or starting their own businesses using the skills I helped develop, that is the greatest recognition I can receive. Organisational recognition is also important - when the supervisor accepts responsibility for the implemented method or acknowledges my training methods were innovative, or where my programmes are identified as successful examples of practice, that is motivating.* (SDF2)

**Table 4.2: Recognition and Feedback Mechanisms**

| <b>Theme Component</b>                        | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Participant Reporting</b> | <b>Types</b> | <b>Impact Level</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <b>Public Recognition</b>                     | 15 references    | All participant types        |              | High                |
| <b>Performance Feedback</b>                   | 18 references    | TC, SDF, AS                  |              | High                |
| <b>Professional Development Opportunities</b> | 12 references    | TC, SDF, M                   |              | Medium-High         |

A strategic thinking manager pointed out,

*Recognition and reward systems are important for organisational performance for two reasons, my own motivation, and the teams I lead.*

*Personal recognition for strategic initiatives, successful programme start-ups, or organisational improvements is motivation to keep striving for personal excellence. But I am just as motivated by seeing my teams achieve recognition for their accomplishments. (M1)*

This finding supports current motivation theory, and particularly Herzberg's theory of motivation and hygiene factors, where recognition is a motivator and not simply a hygiene factor (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020).

#### **4.3.1.2 Communication Styles and Trust Building**

Effective communication emerged as a basic need for positive relationships with managers, as 38 references were coded across participants. Research conducted by Noe et al. (2017), as referred to in the theoretical framework, found positive interaction with managers to be a strong predictor of motivation, while negative interaction had a significant correlation with stress and lower performance.

Training Coordinator 1 expressed how they felt effective communication related to management:

*I try to have one-on-one conversations where I try and understand where they are coming from and their concerns. More often than not, especially with a resistance to working collaboratively, there are certain triggers or previous experiences that they are drawing from. I am looking for ways to utilise their expertise but help them develop their collaborative skills slowly. (TC1)*

The Administrative Staff member with student services continued:

*Working at the college I also think that the opportunities to receive regular performance feedback and to pursue professional development are strong motivators as well. Sometimes even just being recognised by students or peers for supporting their needs which are really problem-solving scenarios gives me a lot of motivation. (AS1)*

It is based on this that Mtimkulu et al. (2014) note that an organisation and its management have a responsibility of empowering employees to produce work that is efficient, effective, and

valuable to the organisation. This responsibility is directly connected with the motivational issues noted in the present research since it is shown in the discussion below.

#### **Communication Quality Analysis:**

- **Transparent Communication:** 23 references across 7 participants
- **Active Listening:** 15 references across 6 participants
- **Constructive Feedback:** 28 references across 8 participants
- **Trust Building:** 29 references across 7 participants

#### **4.3.1.3 Performance Management Effectiveness**

The data indicated complexity in approaches to performance management that balance individual development with organisational perspectives. The theme was generated from 52 coded references from participants suggesting its critical importance. Cassell, Buehring, Symon and Johnson (2006) state formal performance management elements enhance accountability and, ultimately, individual performance.

Training Coordinator 3 offered an example of comprehensive performance management,

*I was working with a colleague who was really good at providing content, but she consistently received poor feedback on engagement skills and facilitation skills. The participants felt lectured and not developed. We went through Performance Management and created a performance development plan which included observation of a couple of senior facilitators, a train-the-trainer programme and practice sessions with feedback. (TC3)*

This method is aligned with theorists of Performance Management Systems (PMS) theory. Armstrong (1995:422) states that through monitoring, reviewing, and assessing performance, poor performers can be developed, and this promotes accountability by staff.

The manager gave the organisational view of systematic performance management:

*It requires systematic approaches and romantic resistance to bias to be an impartial, fair evaluator. I have instituted performance assessment systems that are uniformed in approach, and the focus is on objective criteria -*

*measurable outcomes, demonstrating competencies and achieving goals rather than assessing perceptions. (M2)*

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA, 2004), emphasises that the South African public sector reforms highlight performance management that is output-focused and responsibility-based which resonates with the structure based methods described in this study.

**Table 4.3: Performance Management Components**

| <b>Component</b>                | <b>Implementation Frequency</b> | <b>Effectiveness Rating</b> | <b>Participant Satisfaction</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Standardised Evaluations</b> | 9/10 participants               | High                        | High                            |
| <b>Development Planning</b>     | 7/10 participants               | Medium-High                 | Medium-High                     |
| <b>Regular Check-ins</b>        | 8/10 participants               | High                        | High                            |
| <b>Objective Setting</b>        | 10/10 participants              | High                        | High                            |

#### **4.3.2 Research Objective 2: Impact of Poor Motivation on Organisational Performance**

**Research Question:** How do challenges of poor motivation affect the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit?

The analysis identified several dimensions through which motivational challenges affect organisational performance with a specific focus on participant quality, efficiency, and service delivery outcomes. Studies by Zhang (2020) indicate that autonomous motivation impacts job performance and job satisfaction in organisational contexts. These predicaments are experienced in multiple aspects. The analysis came up with several means in which motivational issues impact on organisational performance with particular concentration placed on the quality of participants, efficiency of participants, and service delivery results.

#### 4.3.2.1 Quality and Consistency Standards

Participants clearly associated levels of motivation with work quality outcomes, with 47 coded references relating to quality concerns. Sturman and Park (2016) state that performance is goal-relevant actions taken by employees, so the employee performance is increased when they surpass requirements laid out in instructions and job profiles. Below are the responses of some of the participants to the issue of quality outcomes.

Training Coordinator 1:

*Most of our colleagues have naturally high standards for quality - whether it is curriculum development or how they engage with learners. I have observed some inconsistency with this across different departments; some teams have exactly high standards you can see visible evidence in their training materials, preparation and engagements with learners, while there are pockets of quality that need work, especially in areas with profoundly overloaded and overworked staff. (TC1)*

There is evidence from Rehman et al. (2020) which indicated that increased employee performance has preferred outcomes, improved communication, productivity and commitment, enhancing the quality-motivation connections observed in this study.

From the Manager, a strategic perspective:

*Quality does vary across departments. There are different levels of experience, levels of resources and levels of lead ability provided by department heads. In professional development, departments have generally high quality and consistency you expect to see across the board, especially when those programmes are well established in our training delivery model. Quality problems in training delivery mostly come out in the busiest and most limited resource peaks. (M1)*

According to Hatch and Zilber (2011), poor motivation leads to poor performance, lack of innovation, and reluctance to take responsibility. This theoretical framework explains the quality variations observed across different departments in the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit.

### Quality Impact Analysis:

- **Programme Consistency:** Varied significantly across departments
- **Learner Satisfaction:** Directly correlated with staff motivation levels
- **Innovation:** Higher in motivated teams with adequate resources

#### 4.3.2.2 Efficiency and Resource Utilisation

The quantitative analysis illustrated strong relationships between motivational constraints and operational effectiveness in relation to use of resources and the efficiencies of these processes. This theme resulted in 35 coded references for the different types of participants. For instance, there is research that employees' engagement and motivation are a mediating variable between an organisation's rewards and performance by employees (Siswanto, Maulidiyah and Masyhuri, 2021).

Training Coordinator 3 illustrated efficiency issues:

*So, efficiency in our technical training sector has increased quite a bit since I have started working as a training coordinator. There have needed to be complete innovations to make our use of resources as efficient as possible such as modular training designs, synchronised equipment calendars, and team presenting or cross-training of instructors, etc. Many of the inefficiencies we still experience in our training environment require updating of our administrative processes as booking equipment, or locations, or [obtaining] approvals we can [do it] better. (TC3)*

This observation is consistent with research published by Sugiarti, Finatariani and Rahman, (2021) on learning cultural values as strategic steps to enhance employee performance. Administrative Staff 1 provided an operational perspective regarding the challenges of efficiency:

*Most departments achieve their quantitative targets - the number of courses delivered, the number of students, number of certifications processed, etc., but the difference for us is that the administrative burden has grown larger each year and without a proportionate increase in staff! We are processing*

*more students, and with more complex requirements, and fulfilling more compliance requirements with the same staff. (AS1)*

According to Sitopu, Sitinjak and Marpaung (2021), motivation, work discipline, and compensation influence employee performance, explaining the efficiency differences between work units.

**Table 4.4: Efficiency Impact Metrics**

| <b>Efficiency Domain</b>    | <b>Current Performance</b> | <b>Motivation Impact</b> | <b>Improvement Potential</b> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Target Achievement</b>   | 80-90%                     | Medium                   | High                         |
| <b>Resource Utilization</b> | 75-85%                     | High                     | Medium                       |
| <b>Process Optimization</b> | 70-80%                     | High                     | High                         |

#### **4.3.2.3 Service Delivery and Stakeholder Impact**

The connections between challenges of internal motivation and external service delivery quality were directly recognisable in the analysis, with 44 coded references to where stakeholders were considered. In research by Nguyen et al. (2020), It was shown that organisational commitment had a significant impact on employee motivation, which in turn had a direct impact on service delivery quality in a public sector context.

Skills Development Facilitator 1 stated:

*Skills development is the centre of our mission - we are creating economic opportunities and building community capacity. Every individual that I train in practical skills has the potential to improve his or her economic situation and invest in his or her community. Training approximately 200 learners each year in diverse programmes, and with high certification and workforce attachment rates, many learners will go on to better their lives and their community. (SDF1)*

This observation directly led to the Service Delivery Impact Chain model because as explained by the observation of TC2, there are gaps in training and development that restrict the quality

of services. This perspective is also consistent with the studies conducted by Rivaldo and Nabella (2023) on education, training, and experience concerning employee performance and, consequently, the impact of employee performance on the results of service delivery. The interrelation between poor training (as listed by TC2) and low quality of service delivery proves the impact cascading quality as explained in the theoretical framework. This viewpoint aligns with the research by Rivaldo and Nabella (2023) regarding education, training, and experience related to employee performance and, in turn, employee performance affects service delivery. Training Coordinator 2 gave strategic context:

*Leadership development is at the structural level of organisational success; therefore, I feel that my capacity for impact is significant. Every manager that we train has potential to impact dozens of staff and thousands of members of the community. Increasing leadership capacity in waste management, housing, or social services has multiplier effects throughout the system.* (TC2)

According to Kuswati (2020), motivated employees demonstrate higher performance levels that directly impact organisational outcomes, supporting the service delivery connections identified in this study.

#### **Service Delivery Impact Chain:**

- 1. Internal Motivation → Program Quality → Learner Outcomes → Community Impact**
- 2. Staff Engagement → Innovation → Service Enhancement → Stakeholder Satisfaction**

#### **4.3.3 Research Objective 3: Effectiveness of Current Motivational Strategies**

**Research Question:** How do current motivational strategies within the eThekwini Municipality eThekwini Municipal Academy Unit affect employee performance and satisfaction?

The third objective of the study looks at the current motivation strategies that are being used, and their implications on employee performance and satisfaction within the EThekwini Municipal Academy Unit. To examine the effectiveness of motivation, Dubey and Kothari (2022) indicate that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors must be analysed.

#### 4.3.3.1 Intrinsic Motivation Factors

The data showed strong intrinsic motivation for all participants, especially in terms of mission alignment and professional growth. This theme yielded 48 coded references across all types of participants. Crick's (2021) research indicated that intrinsic motivation not only drives personal satisfaction, interest, and enjoyment, but also leads to greater engagement and commitment.

Training Coordinator 1 discussed mission alignment:

*The Academy's mission of building municipal capacity completely aligns with my own values of social impact. I particularly appreciate our focus on previously disadvantaged communities as it gives depth to my work beyond just professional accolades. (TC1)*

This finding is consistent with the values of Self-Determination Theory outlined by Deci & Ryan (2000) and referenced in the theoretical framework regarding intrinsic motivation, where autonomy and purpose are drivers. Skills Development Facilitator 3 clearly noted values-based motivation:

*The Academy's commitment to the holistic development and empowerment of communities directly aligns with my personal mission of helping people identify and develop their own capabilities. I particularly see value in our focus on previously disadvantaged people who can be held back by limiting beliefs as well as possibly having skills deficits. (SDF3)*

Coy (2019:71) reported that intrinsically motivated employees find work, and thus reward and performance, to be built into the actual work itself, and do better work without any external reward. This theoretical explanation, supported with my research, explains the strong performance described by participants, regardless of their limited resources.

**Table 4.5: Intrinsic Motivation Components**

| Motivation Factor   | Frequency     | Impact Level | Sustainability |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| Mission Alignment   | 42 references | High         | High           |
| Professional Growth | 38 references | High         | Medium-High    |
| Autonomy            | 31 references | Medium-High  | High           |

|                         |               |      |      |
|-------------------------|---------------|------|------|
| <b>Sense of Purpose</b> | 41 references | High | High |
|-------------------------|---------------|------|------|

#### 4.3.3.2 Extrinsic Motivation Systems

The analysis has established that various systems of extrinsic motivation operate at different levels of effectiveness in the organisation with numerous underlying factors. The analysis identified a total of 34 separate coded references related to the theme. Crick (2021) explains that extrinsic motivation comes from external factors of rewards, recognition, and incentives and used appropriately in conjunction with intrinsic motivation, can work well for improved performance.

Training Coordinator 1 talked about recognition systems:

*We had a quarterly review that recognized my innovative e-learning [module] as best practice, and I was motivated to develop three more. I think public recognition within the organisation and opportunities to professional development are strong motivating factors for most of us. (TC1)*

This finding supported research by Alsuwaidi et al. (2021:681-693) in that performance appraisal and recognition were significant predictors of job performance outcomes. Skills Development Facilitator 2 recognised career advancement motives:

*I am motivated by being able to represent the Academy at conferences, or being able to lead special projects. Opportunities for professional growth and opportunities to lead technology initiatives are strongly motivating for me to continue to be excellent. (SDF2)*

The research of Siswanto et al. (2021) shows that reward systems are important in motivating employee's behaviours and performance in the workplace, which is similar to the trends found in this study.

#### **Current Extrinsic Systems Analysis:**

- **Recognition Programmes:** Inconsistently applied across departments
- **Career Development:** Available but limited by organisational structure
- **Resource Support:** Adequate for basic functions, limited for innovation
- **Training Opportunities:** Valued highly but access varies by role

#### 4.3.3.3 Organisational Culture and Values Integration

The data showed a clear cultural alignment as a strong motivator, indicating participants were able to connect organisational and personal values. Of the recurring trends, this theme had 35 coded references. Sugiarti, Finatariansi & Rahman (2021) state that deliberate learning of cultural values can be critical and represent strategic steps to boost employee performance in an organisational context.

Administrative Staff 1 shared values fit:

*I believe strongly in public service and the importance of accessible education and training. The Academy's mission to build municipal capacity and respond to community development needs aligns directly with my values regarding increasing access to quality education to all members of the community. (AS1)*

This rationale is consistent with public service motivation theory. Public sector organisations may employ and benefit from volunteerism in order to provide public good, even if not funded for the expressed aim of providing charitable or public good services. Kyriakopoulos (2021) insists that many individuals who work for public sector organisations justify their roles as valuable if they can see opportunities to serve community interests.

The manager indicated the strategic perspective:

*The alignment is very strong, which is why I have dedicated myself to this organisation for over a decade. I believe strongly in public service, community development, and the ability of education and skills training to shape lives. When bureaucratic factors have me frustrated, knowing that at the core, I am improving lives through learning, is what keeps my passion alive for this work. (M1)*

Baig, Shuib and Yadegaridehkordi (2020) indicated that organisational mission alignment has a strong influence on employee engagement and performance, particularly in education, and so highlights the data.

### ***Cultural Alignment Indicators:***

- **Public Service Orientation:** Common among participants
- **Community Development Focus:** Strong alignment reported
- **Educational Mission:** Deeply valued across all roles
- **Social Impact Motivation:** Primary driver for most participants

## **4.4 Cross-Cutting Themes and System-Level Issues**

### **4.4.1 Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Challenges**

A consistent cross-cutting theme involved resource limitations affecting both motivation and performance, generating 46 coded references across all participant categories. Evidence is frequently lacking with respect to how organisational or institutional strategies or policies impact total motivation and performance (or the motivation hierarchy of competence, autonomy and relatedness), leaving gaps that need to be specifically studied (Ramhit, 2024).

Training Coordinator 1 said

*Simple procurement of training materials can take weeks, which means we are planning for our next workshop having either little available, or without thinking it through. The problem arises when we are told to do more with the same resources. (TC1)*

This observation highlights wider concerns in managing public sector resources mentioned by Baker and Phillips (2019) in their analysis of constraints to public service delivery in South Africa. Training Coordinator 3 said:

*When tools fail or supplies are delayed, it becomes a problem for the entire training schedule. Equipment maintenance, and procurement inefficiencies interrupt our effectiveness sometimes. (TC3)*

Huang and Van de Vliert (2003) found that in many jobs in developing countries, including South Africa, workers have little control over what tasks they do, how they do them or when they do them. This lack of autonomy reduces motivation and reflects the challenges of not having sufficient resources .

#### 4.4.2 Continuous Improvement Culture

Even with resource challenges, participants demonstrated great commitment to improvement with 28 coded references for improvement initiatives. Raub et al. (2021) assert team building and continuous improvement are two key managerial competencies to enhance performance for an organisation.

Training Coordinator 2 illustrated commitment to this approach:

*I practice an improvement process that uses data. I collect learner feedback regularly; I analyse the data I collect, including metrics of training effectiveness, and I investigate what is occurring in the industry as it relates to best practices. A section of our monthly team meetings is devoted to sharing what we have learned and how we could improve the process. (TC2)*

This resonates with the recommendations by Maddux (2016) and Raub et al. (2021) who state that managers must use a disciplined approach to create strong social teams. Through discipline and focusing on the organisational goals and objectives, they should guide their team towards achieving the goals and objectives.

#### 4.5 Challenges of Poor Motivation: Theoretical Linkages

The study findings connected to the theoretical frameworks which described the obstacles to motivation as outlined in the literature review. Poor motivation leads to poor performance, lack of innovation, and unwillingness to take responsibility (Hatch & Zilber, 2011). Several participants mentioned these patterns in their organisational experience.

##### 4.5.1 Motivational Challenge Trajectories

**Skills Development Facilitator 1 reflected on motivation - performance connections:**

*Quality can vary depending on how much pressure was involved and whether they have been resourced properly. When we are working with the right preparation time and resource, the work is excellent. When it is peak time or dealing with being short on equipment, it can be a mixed bag. (SDF1)*

There has been research which indicates that employees perform poorly in performance processes when they are unclear as to their roles and goals (Pothos et al, 2014), and this has

been reflected in the performance inconsistencies. At a more financial level, Administrative Staff 2 observed,

*"Some departments are better equipped for forecasting and resource planning, and budgeting than others. Financial literacy for non-financial staff has room to grow." (AS2)*

This finding links to the research literature offered by Davis (2010) and Morgeson and Humphrey (2006) around job contexts whereby an employee has little latitude with respect to the decisions on methods and timing. Then motivation could be affected negatively, especially when the working environment undergoes changes

#### 4.6 Summary of Research Objective Findings

*Table 4.6.1 Comprehensive Research Objectives Analysis*

| <b>Research Objective</b>                       | <b>Key Findings</b>                                                                                                                   | <b>Literature Support</b>                                            | <b>Implementation Implications</b>                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>RO1: Managerial Perceptions Impact</b>       | Recognition, communication, and performance management significantly influence motivation (45, 38, 52 NVivo references respectively)  | Paaais & Pattiruhu (2020), Ali & Anwar (2021), Sturman & Park (2016) | Systematic leadership development required                                |
| <b>RO2: Motivation-Performance Relationship</b> | Clear connections between motivation levels and quality (47 references), efficiency (35 references), service delivery (44 references) | Hatch & Zilber (2011), Rehman et al. (2020), Zhang (2020)            | Performance management must integrate motivational factors                |
| <b>RO3: Current Strategy Effectiveness</b>      | Strong intrinsic motivation (48 references), inconsistent extrinsic systems (34                                                       | Crick (2021), Alsuwaidi et al. (2021), Sugiarti et al. (2021)        | Enhance extrinsic motivation systems while maintaining cultural strengths |

|  |                                                      |  |  |
|--|------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
|  | references), good cultural alignment (35 references) |  |  |
|--|------------------------------------------------------|--|--|

#### 4.6.2 NVivo Analysis Validation and Reliability

The systematic NVivo analysis is that numerous methods of validating research analyses were applied in the data coding process to methodological rigour; several protocols outlined in qualitative data analysis software applications by Kumari et al. (2023) to adhere to standards:

- **Inter-coder Reliability:** Achieved 89% agreement on major themes (exceeding Cronbach's alpha threshold of 0.70 recommended by Monoarfa et al., 2023)
- **Data Saturation:** Confirmed through coding frequency pattern analysis
- **Member Checking:** Validated with 30% of participants following protocols
- **Audit Trail:** Complete documentation of coding decisions and theme development

#### 4.6.3 Theoretical Framework Integration

The findings strongly support the Performance Management System (PMS) theory adopted as the theoretical framework for this study. According to Armstrong (1995:423), PMS ensures employees understand requirements and assessment criteria for their performance and contributions. The systematic approaches observed in participant responses reflect PMS implementation across the EThekweni Municipal Academy Unit.

#### PMS Theory Application Evidence:

- Formal performance evaluation systems (10/10 participants)
- Clear role definition and accountability measures
- Continuous improvement focus
- Employee development integration

However, as noted by Coy (2019:71), tightly applied PMS frameworks may create organisational constraints that become counterproductive. This study's findings suggest the need for flexible PMS implementation that considers organisational culture and individual motivational needs.

## **4.7 Conclusion**

This chapter reported rich findings of the qualitative analysis about employee motivation and managerial perceptions at the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit. The methodical use of NVivo software provided a way to conduct rigorously thematic analysis with the data, which uncovered complex links between managers' approaches, motivational drivers, and performance.

The findings have demonstrated that while the organisation enjoys strong intrinsic motivation and cultural fit among staff, there are still many opportunities to improve the extrinsic motivation systems, and to deal with constraints on resources which prevents them from being able to perform at their optimal levels. The next chapter discussed the findings and link the findings to the existing theoretical frameworks and provide suggestions for improvement in motivational practices within the organisation.

This study added to the understanding of how motivation works within public sector educational institutions, especially in the South African municipal context, where there are strong pressures to balance the public service mission and service delivery, with the associated need for economic sustainability. The detailed NVivo analysis framework that emerged from conducting this research will provide a methodological contribution to help others in the public sector context studies about similar organisations.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This final chapter brought the research to a conclusion by providing a conclusion and answering the research questions posed for the research. The limitations of the study, recommendations to the upper management, the ordinary employees, the government and future research possibilities were discussed. This research was done to investigate the effect of employee motivation and the perceptions of management on organisational performance at the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within eThekweni Municipal Academy. Through qualitative research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the ten interviewees. The purpose of the study was to better understand the complex relationship that exists between management perceptions, employee motivation and organisational performance. The results, which were discussed in Chapter Four, indicated that there were some valuable insights relating to leadership recognition, communication styles, the effectiveness of performance management, and motivational techniques which influence employee behaviour and organisational outcomes. This chapter examines the results to determine the present state of employee motivation of the unit and recommends the practical ways for improvement.

#### **5.2 Summary of Chapters**

This section summarised all the chapters of this study.

##### **Chapter One: Introduction and Background of the Study**

Chapter One gave a brief overview of the study. This chapter presented an introduction and the background of the study. The problem statement, focus area, research questions and objectives were introduced in this chapter. Furthermore, this chapter outlined the research design and methodology utilised in this study. Lastly, Chapter One addressed the ethical and safety concerns as they applied to the study.

##### **Chapter Two: Literature Review on Employee Motivation and Organisational Performance**

An overview of performance management and employee motivation was presented in this chapter. The chapter further reviewed concisely literature on the theories and concepts

underpinning performance management. The chapter also presented and discussed the performance management system as applicable in the public sector.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

A complete description of the research design, tools and processes was presented in this chapter. The research methodology utilised in this study was explained in detail. Data sampling and data collection procedures were discussed. This study employed qualitative research to collect data.

### **Chapter Four: Data presentation and Analysis**

This chapter presented and analysed the data that were collected at the eThekweni Municipal Academy and discussed the research findings. The data was collected through interviews. Themes derived from the study's objectives were identified. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

### **Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations**

This chapter summarised the findings and arrived at certain conclusions and suggested recommendations. This chapter further provides a summary of the whole research. Lastly, the chapter discussed a few recommendations and suggestions for further analysis based on the research results in some detail.

## **5.3 Research Questions**

The study attempted to answer the following key questions:

- What role do managerial perceptions play in shaping employee behaviour and motivation in the eThekweni Municipal Academy?
- How do the challenges of poor motivation affect the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy?
- How do current motivational strategies within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality in eThekweni Municipal Academy affect employee performance and satisfaction?
- What recommendations should the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality managers adopt to improve employee motivation in the environment?

## 5.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

- To ascertain the role of managerial perceptions in shaping employee behaviour and motivation in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within the eThekweni Municipal Academy.
- To understand the impact of motivation on the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy.
- To determine the effectiveness of current motivational strategies on employee performance and satisfaction within the eThekweni Municipal Academy.
- To suggest recommendations for the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality on how to improve employee motivation in the environment.

### 5.4.1 Research Question 1

**What role do managerial perceptions play in shaping employee behaviour and motivation in the eThekweni Municipal Academy?**

The outcomes of this research indicated that one of the factors in directing employee behaviour and motivation in the eThekweni Municipal Academy is the managerial perceptions. It was revealed in the analysis that three areas of communication modes (formal communication channel (performance review, team meetings), informal communication channel (day-to-day feedback and a casual conversation), and non-verbal communication (body language, tone, and managerial presence) are the areas where the managerial perceptions play a key role in motivation (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). The analysis also revealed positive communication to be a prerequisite to ensure good relationships between managers and employees, with 38 references coded across all responses.

These aspects were in consonance with the work of Noe et al. (2017) where it was shown that positive interactions with managers were a strong predictor of motivation, and negative interactions have a meaningful correlation to stress and low performance. The manager /r employee relationship defines the motivational processes. It has been established that a good relationship with the immediate managers was closely related to increased motivation and performance (Kalogiannidis, 2021). This investigation revealed that managerial perceptions have a prominent influence over performance management effectiveness, with 52 coded references from respondents to indicate their crucial nature. The systematic approaches to

performance management revealed in the responses of respondents confirmed the PMS principles being implemented throughout the eThekweni Municipal Academy.

Armstrong (1995) is supportive of this aspect when he indicates that PMS will guarantee that an understanding is obtained by the employees regarding the requirements and assessment criteria for their performance and contributions. In this investigation it was seen that the bureaucratic management types adopted can have a negative influence on the satisfaction of the employees and their productivity, and it confirms the findings of Ali and Anwar (2021) who established that in general adverse effects develop and great levels of dissatisfaction are encountered by the employees. The data indicates further that managers who introduce open communication, listening, constructive feedback processes and trust development are creating an environment conducive to greater motivation and performance. This finding confirms the work of Mtinkulu et al. (2014) where attention is drawn to the fact that managers have accountability to enable employees to perform work, which is efficient, effective and of value to the organisation, and when the employee is not performing it reveals problems in managerial performance.

#### **5.4.2 Research Question 2**

##### **How do the challenges of poor motivation affect the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy?**

The implication of poor motivation affects the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy in various areas concerning quality and consistency standards, effectiveness, resource use and service delivery results. The analysis determined that motivational implications have a direct impact on work outcomes as the researcher has 47 coded references regarding quality implications, across all participants. Participants directly linked the levels of motivation with the outcome of work quality, saying that the work quality, depending on the availability of resources and the workload of the department, varies substantially in the different departments.

These findings correlate with Hatch and Zilber, (2011) who maintains that poor motivation results in poor performance, lack of innovation and unwillingness to accept responsibility. The study also showed that poor motivation and insufficient resources have negative implications on operational effectiveness and with 35 coded references regarding effectiveness. This finding is supported by the research of Siswanto, Maulidiyah and Masyhuri, (2021) who established

that employee involvement and motivation serve as bridging variables between organisations rewards and employee performance. In addition, the study determined that clear interrelations exist between internal motivational constraints and external service delivery quality with 44 coded references regarding stakeholder considerations. Participants explained how their levels of motivation affected their ability gain economic opportunities and uplift their communities through skills building initiatives.

This is in alignment with the findings of Nguyen *et al*, (2020) who showed that organisational commitment significantly influences employee motivation which in turn has direct bearing on the quality-of-service delivery results in the public sector. The study also showed that poor motivation manifests in performance inconsistencies, particularly during times of peak demands and with the lack of resources. This confirms the findings of Pothos *et al*, (2014) that employees find it difficult to participate effectively in performance processes when they are unclear as to their role and objectives. Furthermore, the cross-cutting theme of resource constraints and infrastructure shortcomings generated 46 coded references across all participant categorisations. This indicated the way insufficient resources impacts both motivation and performance. These findings support Huang and Van de Vliert, 2003, who established that lack of being involved in decision-making regarding tasks, methods of work and timing resulted in loss of autonomy. Being involved in the decision-making process is important motivational factor, especially in developing scenarios in South Africa.

### **5.4.3 Research Question 3**

**How do current motivational strategies in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within eThekweni Municipal Academy affect employee performance and satisfaction?**

The current motivational methods implemented in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit showed a complicated interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational causes. This has divergent effects upon employee's performance and satisfaction. The investigation showed the existence of strong areas of intrinsic motivation existing in all cases involved in the research, particularly in areas of mission contentment and professional and career development, which resulted in 48 coded references relating to this theme. Employees showed a clear area of content with relation to the equilibrium between the mission of the organisation: developing organisational capability and their ambitions with regards to social needs and community development area. This is

consistent with Crick (2021) who found that intrinsic motivation, satisfied by personal gratification, interest and fun, produces higher levels of involvement and commitment.

Furthermore, the research showed that employees who, even in the absence of external rewards, but who are intrinsically motivated are satisfied by the work itself and therefore are to higher levels of performance Coy (2019:71) stated that ‘employees showing intrinsic motivation perform better work without needing external reward systems.’ The high measure of the intrinsic motivational element in the current study underlines the high set of levels of performance that employees sustained amidst the resource issues inherent in the organisation and circumstances in the organisation. Concerning extrinsic motivational systems, the study revealed that various systems are present in the existing operational effective application, and the systems have varying effectiveness degrees, approximately 34 coded references in relation to this field. Although they had rewards that are recognition programmes, career development opportunities, resources at their disposal, training opportunities, which were channels of encouragement, they remained effective depending on how they are used throughout the various departments of the organisation.

This finding corresponded well with the findings of Alsuwaidi, *et al.* (2021:681) who stated that “performance appraisal and recognition had a substantial effect on predicted job performance outcomes.” However, the research indicated gaps that exist in current extrinsic motivational systems, about unevenness of use. regarding the application of recognition programmes, opportunities available for career path development limited by the organisational structure of the municipality, and unevenness of access to training opportunities geared to job classifications indicated for employees. These findings tally with the findings of Crick (2021), who stated that extrinsic motivation for example rewards, recognition and incentives give short-term benefits; they work best together with intrinsic motivation for long term sustained motivation.

Furthermore, the studies showed that the motivating aspect of strong cultural correspondence is seen as important with 35 coded references showing the way the organisation was able to marry their own internal and personal values. These findings authenticate the findings of Baig, Shuib, and Yadegaridehkordi (2020) who state that the alignment of the organisational mission has a significant influence on employee performance levels. Their levels of engagement and commitment to areas of performance and productivity, especially in relation to educational

contexts where the public service orientation, community development focus, and social impact aspect were seen as major webinar areas for most of those interviewees.

#### **5.4.4 Research Question 4**

**What are the recommendations that the eThekweni Metropolitan managers can embrace in order to enhance motivation among the employees in the work environment?**

The managers of the eThekweni Municipal Academy should focus on creating open and enabling communication channels with the employees to create intrinsic motivation and commitment to the organisation. The key point of managerial leadership is not just to focus on the expectations and organisational targets, but also to listen to the employee concerns and feedback. Paais and Pattiruhu (2020) also explain that motivated people are highly efficient, engaged, and committed to work, thus improving organisational performance. In their work, Ali and Anwar (2021) argue that an inclusive and participatory managerial style, as opposed to bureaucratic ones, would remarkably lower the levels of employees' dissatisfaction and increase their productivity. Managers are advised to establish psychological safety among their employees to make ideas and risks calculated and learn from failures without fear of reprisal. This will help in the organisation becoming innovative and will enhance the employee - manager relationship which is the key to maintaining the motivation and performance within the municipal academy set up.

Recognition and appreciation programmes should be key motivational drivers that managers should apply and maintain within the organisation. The study by Coy (2019) shows that extrinsic motivators (reward and recognition) are good in the short term but work best when integrated with intrinsic motivators. Managers ought to produce formal and informal systems of recognition that not only reward individuals but also teams so that the recognition process is timely, specific and meaningful to the recipients. In their study, Alsuwaidi, Alshurideh, Kurdi and Salloum (2021) established that the perception of positive relation with managers is a significant predictor of job performance and organisational outcomes. Moreover, managers should support professional development, mentorship, and career pathway discussions, demonstrating that they are interested in the development of employees and their future perspectives. These interventions provide signals to the employees that they are valued in the company and that their growth and well-being are considered organisational priorities, hence, enhancing intrinsic motivation and organisational loyalty.

Also, the managers need to deal with contextual and environmental aspects that influence the motivation and performance of employees in the eThekweni Municipal Academy. Rehman et al. (2020) note that the inconsistencies in performance must be identified early, and the managers ought to put in place corrective measures to eliminate the root causes. This entails lobbying proper resource distribution, creating comfortable working conditions, and eliminating unnecessary bureaucracies, all of which impair the employee output.

According to Sai (2022), to comprehend the multifaceted relationship between the motivation and performance of employees, it is necessary to consider factors of work environment, leadership style, incentives and professional growth opportunities. Managers are advised to evaluate organisational culture and climate on a regular basis and to seek feedback about employees in the form of surveys and focus groups and introduce specific interventions based on the gaps detected. To further, the managers are advised to proactively cooperate with top management and the government stakeholders to enact policies and resources that facilitate the establishment of motivating workplaces in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 8 principles of decent work. Through these systemic elements, managers can provide the conditions under which both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be effective which would result in long-term employee motivation and better organisation performance.

## **5.5 Recommendations based on findings**

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proposed for stakeholders to enhance employee motivation, improve managerial effectiveness, and strengthen organisational performance at the eThekweni Municipal Academy. These recommendations are structured to address the key themes that emerged from the data analysis and are aligned with both theoretical frameworks and practical implementation considerations.

### **5.5.1 Recommendations for Management**

The management of the eThekweni Municipal Academy should prioritise the establishment of a standardised and systematic recognition and feedback system across all departments. The research revealed that recognition is a critical driver of employee motivation, with 80 per cent of responses emphasising its importance and 45 coded references highlighting its impact. Management should implement formal monthly recognition programmes that acknowledge both individual and team achievements, ensuring consistency in application across all units.

This system should include both monetary and non-monetary forms of recognition, certificates of excellence, public acknowledgment in staff meetings, performance bonuses, and opportunities for professional development. Paais and Pattiruhu (2020) emphasise that motivated employees are more efficient and dedicated to their work, and systematic recognition reinforces this motivation. Furthermore, managers should be trained in providing constructive and timely feedback that focuses on both accomplishments and areas for improvement, thereby creating a culture of continuous learning and development.

Management should also invest significantly in developing effective communication channels and building trust-based relationships with employees. The study identified communication and trust-building as critical factors influencing employee motivation, with 38 coded references across all responses. Regular departmental meetings, open-door policies, and transparent communication regarding organisational decisions and changes should be institutionalised. Managers should undergo communication skills training that emphasises active listening, empathy, and clear articulation of expectations and organisational goals. Noe et al. (2017) described that positive connections with the managers are robust indicators of motivation, and negative connections are associated with stress and low performance. The management should also put in place feedback systems like anonymous suggestion box, survey of employee satisfaction, and frequent one-on-one meetings so that the concerns of the employees can be heard and responded to immediately. This approach will help reduce the bureaucratic management style that participants identified as demotivating and will foster a more inclusive and participatory organisational culture.

The research revealed significant performance management effectiveness with 52 coded references, indicating both its importance and areas requiring improvement. Management should refine the Performance Management System (PMS) to ensure it is implemented consistently across all departments, with clear role definitions, measurable performance indicators, and regular performance reviews. Armstrong (1995) notes that PMS ensures employees understand what is required of them and how their performance will be assessed. The system should be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse roles within the Academy while maintaining standardised principles of fairness and transparency. Performance evaluations should be conducted quarterly rather than annually to provide more frequent opportunities for feedback and course correction. Additionally, performance discussions should focus not only on accountability but also on employee development, skill enhancement, and

career progression opportunities. The management needs to associate both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in performance outcomes including extra duties and difficult assignments and the increment in salaries as well as promotion prospects.

Given the study's finding of 46 coded references relating to resource constraints and infrastructure challenges, management should develop a comprehensive resource allocation strategy that prioritises essential tools, equipment, and materials needed for effective job performance. While acknowledging budgetary limitations inherent in public sector organisations, management should engage in strategic planning to secure additional funding through grants, partnerships with private sector organisations, and improved budget advocacy with municipal authorities. Huang and Van de Vliert (2003) established that the lack of resources and not being involved in decision-making result in loss of autonomy and employees feeling demotivated. Other novel management solutions that the management should consider include resource sharing to interdepartmental, digital transformation programs to enhance efficiency, and preventive maintenance programs to lengthen the life of the available infrastructure. Regular needs assessments should be conducted to identify critical resource gaps and prioritise their resolution based on impact on service delivery and employee motivation.

Management should establish comprehensive and equitable professional development programmes that provide all employees with access to training, skills enhancement, and career advancement opportunities. The research revealed strong intrinsic motivation related to professional growth, with 48 coded references highlighting the importance of mission satisfaction and career development. An annual training calendar is to be created, including the technical skills that are applicable to the particular job position and soft ones like communication and leadership as well as problem-solving. Crick (2021) notes that intrinsically motivated employees who find work rewarding perform at higher levels, and professional development opportunities enhance their intrinsic motivation. Management should also implement mentorship programmes pairing experienced staff with newer employees to facilitate knowledge transfer and create a supportive learning environment. Career pathing initiatives should be established to help employees visualise progression opportunities within the organisation and understand the competencies required for advancement. Additionally, management should allocate budget specifically for employee training and development, recognising it as an investment in organisational capacity rather than an operational expense.

### **5.5.2 Recommendations for Employees**

Employees should take personal responsibility for their professional development by actively seeking learning opportunities, participating in available training programmes, and pursuing self-directed learning initiatives. This research has found out that highly intrinsically motivated employees were able to sustain high levels of performance in spite of organisational pressures. The employees are expected to realize any skill deficiencies in their present positions and take initiative to train or be mentored to fill the skills gap. Also, the employees ought to participate positively in the performance management activities by preparing performance discussions, giving honest self-performance and setting attainable yet challenging personal development objectives. Dubey and Kothari (2022) emphasise that intrinsic motivation driven by personal satisfaction leads to higher engagement and commitment. Employees should also cultivate a growth mindset that views challenges as opportunities for learning rather than obstacles, thereby maintaining motivation even in difficult circumstances.

Employees should actively contribute to building a positive organizational culture by supporting colleagues, participating in team-building activities, and maintaining professional conduct in all interactions. The research identified strong mission alignment and cultural correspondence as motivational factors, with 35 coded references. Employees can reinforce this positive culture by recognising peers' achievements, offering assistance when colleagues face challenges, and maintaining open and respectful communication. Baig, Shuib, and Yadegaridehkordi (2020) demonstrate that organisational mission alignment significantly influences employee performance and engagement. Employees should also utilise established communication channels to provide constructive feedback to management regarding workplace conditions, policy implementation, and suggestions for improvement. By taking ownership of their role in organisational success, employees contribute to creating a motivating work environment that benefits all stakeholders.

Given the finding that intrinsic motivation related to social impact and community development is a significant driver of performance, employees should maintain focus on the broader mission of the eThekweni Municipal Academy in contributing to youth development and community capacity building. Coy (2019) notes that intrinsically motivated employees perform better without needing external reward systems. Employees should regularly reflect on how their work contributes to these larger societal goals, drawing motivation from the meaningful impact of their roles. This mission-focused orientation can help sustain motivation

during periods when extrinsic rewards may be limited due to organisational constraints. Employees should also seek opportunities to engage directly with programme beneficiaries and community stakeholders to strengthen their connection to the eThekweni Municipal Academy's developmental mission.

### **5.5.3 Recommendations for Government and Policy Makers**

The eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality and broader government structures should recognise the critical role of adequate resource allocation in enabling effective performance of training and skills development institutions. The research identified resource constraints as a major impediment to both employee motivation and organisational performance, with 46 coded references. Government should prioritise funding for municipal training academies, recognising their strategic importance in addressing youth unemployment and skills development, which are national priorities aligned with SDG 8 objectives. Mensah (2019) emphasises that public sector organisations have a responsibility to model decent work practices, which requires adequate resourcing. Budget allocations should account for not only operational expenses but also infrastructure development, technology upgrading, staff development, and programme expansion. Government should also establish multi-year funding commitments to enable long-term planning and sustainability of training programmes.

Government should review and revise public sector human resource policies to provide greater flexibility and autonomy to municipal training institutions in managing their workforce. The research revealed that bureaucratic management styles negatively impact employee satisfaction and productivity as confirmed by Ali and Anwar (2021) who found that bureaucratic management approaches result in dissatisfaction and reduced performance. Policy reforms should allow for performance-based reward systems, streamlined recruitment processes to attract skilled professionals, and decentralised decision-making authority that enables managers to respond quickly to organisational needs. Government should also establish clear performance frameworks for municipal training institutions that balance accountability with operational flexibility, allowing for innovation and adaptation to local contexts.

Government should facilitate partnerships between municipal training academies and private sector organisations, industry associations, and educational institutions to enhance resource availability, to expand training opportunities, and to improve programme relevance to labour market needs. Such partnerships can provide access to equipment, industry expertise,

workplace learning opportunities, and potential employment pathways for programme graduates. Rana (2022) notes that globalisation and technological developments create opportunities for innovation and learning. Government must come up with policy frameworks, incentive structures that will attract the involvement of the private sector in the public training institutions like tax incentives to companies that may give equipment donations or workplace training opportunities, partnership excellence recognition programmes, and co-design opportunities to develop curriculum that will be in line with the industry demands.

Instead of adopting superficial approaches to monitoring and evaluation, government ought to adopt more detailed models to monitor and evaluate not just outputs like number of trainees, programme completions but also output like employment rates, earnings progression and prolonged career paths of graduates. The research emphasised the importance of measuring progress through appropriate indicators, aligned with SDG 8 benchmarks for decent work and economic growth. Mio et al. (2022) suggest that organisations should regularly assess their performance against decent work indicators. Government should establish a national database for tracking municipal training academy performance, facilitating benchmarking, identifying best practices, and enabling evidence-based policy development. Regular evaluation reports should be published to ensure transparency and accountability while providing valuable learning for continuous improvement across the sector.

## **5.6 Significance of the Study**

The South African municipalities are often faced with challenges in providing quality services, which is mainly due to inadequate administration of operations and performance management by the leadership. Such shortcomings lead to inefficiencies and consequent reduction in service quality which eventually acts negatively in the local communities. The variables such as employee motivation and organisational performance are of importance in the sense that they allow organisations in South Africa to identify the determinants that influence the productivity of employees, their job satisfaction, and retention. When important motivators are identified, organisations can develop specific approaches that will help increase efficiency, lessen turnover expenses and improve overall performance.

The current research supplements the current body of research on motivation theories and provides context-specific information that is relevant to the municipal environment. The

obtained findings would be useful in informing human resource policies, leadership development programs and organisational policy making therefore providing organisations with an edge in marketplaces. In addition, the empirical findings of the study can have a direct practical consequence on the managers and the leaders and that is why the importance of acknowledging and rewarding employee contributions cannot be emphasized. Focusing on employee motivation, organisations will be able to support a positive working atmosphere, encourage creativity, and enhance the overall health.

### **5.7 Recommendations for Future Research**

For future studies it is suggested that mixed-methods approaches be employed to be able to clear different perspectives of employee motivation and management's perceptions about public sector organisations. The employing of some quantitative survey data together with qualitative interview data would enable researchers to be able to statistically determine the strength of the relationships that exist between certain relating variables but also be able to gain subjective insights from the intensive analyses. This would facilitate a higher degree of generalisability of the findings together with the contextual richness of the qualitative research data. A longitudinal study of the data would also be useful in addressing the dynamic nature of employee motivation and how this affects organisational performance in a changing environment.

This would allow tracking the employees on a multi-annual basis to disclose how motivational factors change, how employees react to changes instituted by the organisation, and whether any interventions instituted to improve motivational levels have any lasting effect on performance. The longitudinal designs would also enable researchers to specify a temporal antecedence and thus enhance causal conclusions that could be drawn as concerns the relationships between managerial perceptions, employee motivation, and organisational outcomes. A useful investigation would be the scope of units under investigation to forward to other academies in other provinces where differing levels of economy, differing politically operating systems and differing resources are available. Comparative studies across municipalities would also be informative in assessing what are the best practice that transcends the organisations' thoughts on how motivational performance relationships are affected by local conditions.

Incoming of perceptions of numerous stakeholders including learners, community members, partnerships with the private sector and with the augmentative municipal departments would then provide a more comprehensive perspective on how motivation in eThekweni Municipal Academy translates into service delivery external outcomes. Investigation conducted into the area which has largely been neglected would determine how the relations would affect motivation and performance and is thus of value, particularly in determining whether the relations have differentiated enduring effect on the employee motivation - performance relationship, whether capital constraints, technological constraints or human constraints for instance would affect the instrumental conditions of motivation and performance.

Another area for research could be whether specific interventions or the attitudes of structured motivational performance enhancement schemes would be valuable as it could shape policy. It would also be useful to investigate whether structured programmes of recognition for employees, leadership performance enhancing programmes or the instituting and re-evaluating performance measuring systems would be more effective. The area of study, too, that investigates the understanding of and relationship of the organisational culture, employee motivation and thus how we may put into place the cultural change mechanism which would induce the necessary motivational dynamics would be of value to public sector organisations. Investigation into the above areas of study would thus result in a more theoretically valid and practically useful knowledge of the mentioned constructs, namely employee motivation with reference to the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality in particular and public sector organisations in general.

Future research should expand the geographical scope of investigation to include multiple municipal training institutions across different provinces in South Africa. The current study's limitation to the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality context restricts generalisability of findings. A comparative study examining employee motivation and organisational performance across municipalities with varying economic conditions, resource availability, and organisational cultures would provide broader insights into factors that influence effectiveness in different contexts. Such research could identify universal principles as well as context-specific factors that require tailored approaches. In conducting any research in the areas mentioned, researchers should consider employing mixed methods approaches that combine qualitative depth with quantitative analysis of performance metrics, employee satisfaction scores, and organisational outcomes across multiple sites.

While this study provided valuable insights through qualitative inquiry, future research should adopt longitudinal designs that track changes in employee motivation, managerial perceptions, and organisational performance over extended periods. Longitudinal studies would enable researchers to examine the long-term effects of specific interventions, identify trends and patterns over time, and assess the sustainability of motivational strategies. Such research could follow cohorts of employees from initial employment through career progression, documenting how motivational factors evolve with experience and organisational changes. Additionally, longitudinal research could evaluate the impact of policy reforms, management training initiatives, or resource investments on sustained organisational performance, providing evidence of what works overtime rather than at single points in time.

Future research should also investigate the differential effects of various motivational strategies on diverse employee groups within municipal training institutions. This research provided intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables, although further studies are required to comprehend their difference on the basis of employee demographics in terms of age, gender, education, job level and tenure of service. Crick (2021) notes that intrinsic and extrinsic motivators can work differently for different individuals. Understanding these variations would enable development of more nuanced and targeted motivational strategies that address the specific needs and preferences of different employee segments. Research should also examine generational differences in motivation, given the changing workforce demographics and the entrance of younger generations with potentially different work values and expectations.

Researchers should conduct detailed economic analyses examining the return on investment of different motivational interventions and performance management strategies in public sector training institutions. This kind of research would be useful in the allocation of resources and policy making. Research might map in the costs and benefits of different strategies like recognition programmes, investment in professional development, infrastructure improvements and remuneration changes and assess the results on the basis of employee retention, productivity gains, training quality and graduate employment results.. Cost-benefit analyses aligned with SDG 8 indicators would provide evidence to support advocacy for increased investment in municipal training institutions and demonstrate their value in addressing national development priorities.

Future research should explore the integration of technology and digital tools in enhancing employee motivation and organisational performance in municipal training contexts. With rapid technological advancement, there are opportunities to leverage digital platforms for performance management, professional development, communication, and programme delivery. Research could examine how technology adoption affects employee motivation, the skills and support required for successful digital transformation, and the potential of technology to address resource constraints through innovative solutions. Additionally, research should investigate how training institutions can prepare employees to effectively utilise emerging technologies while maintaining the human-centred approaches that support intrinsic motivation and meaningful work experiences.

Finally, future research should specifically investigate the implementation and impact of SDG-aligned performance management systems in South African municipalities. The current study established theoretical connections between organisational practices and SDG 8 objectives, but empirical research is needed to examine practical implementation challenges, measurement approaches, and the effects of explicit SDG alignment on both organisational effectiveness and broader developmental outcomes. Latapí et al. (2019) argue that integrating SDG principles into organisational operations requires expanding focus beyond financial metrics. Research should document case studies of municipalities that have successfully integrated SDG frameworks into their operations, identify success factors and obstacles, and evaluate whether SDG alignment enhances employee motivation by strengthening the sense of meaningful contribution to societal goals.

## **5.8 Conclusion of the study**

The complexities surrounding employee motivation, management perceptions and organisational performance in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality within the eThekweni Municipal Academy were successfully examined. The research found that the management perceptions of workers influence their attitude, motivation, and behaviour through three major areas: recognition and feedback systems, communication and trust-building styles and performance management. The research established that the intrinsic motivation and influencing factors that are very strong in the organisation and identified as incentives like recognition, working in a well performing unit, with similar mission values and involvement in activities that assist in community service. However, consistently using options for extrinsic

motivation as well as management of the funders' limited resources remained problematic. Indications are that poor motivation has serious effects on organisational and service delivery.

In addition, the research confirmed that motivated employees are the most effective means of helping the organisation to effectively realise its stated objectives. The mission of eThekweni Municipal Academy is of such vital importance as it lies within the ambit of national economic and social development. The research makes a strong contribution to the theoretical and the practical understanding of employee motivation pertinent to the South African conditions regarding given municipal contexts. Theoretically, the research confirmed the theory of Performance Management System application in a public sector educational institution but placed emphasis on performance evaluation systems, role definition, focus on development and motivation and employee growth as collective determinants of the motivational process.

The research identified certain practical areas where improvements could be made, namely the need for uniformity of recognition and feedback systems, need for improvements in management channels of communication, appropriate attention to be paid to proper and systematic monitoring of performance. Furthermore, factors that concern managers being the development of it with accountability for results and finally constraints regarding funders' restricted resource availability which should be monitored as improvements in resource availability should facilitate better performance management. Results of the research have serious implications for municipal skills development activities throughout South Africa. This is on how motivation systems can better align their motivating influences with the objectives of their organisations, especially where gaps in the exposed areas of extrinsic motivational systems can be supplied and lifted to new heights and levels of expected use. The eThekweni Municipal Academy now has an opportunity to use the strong intrinsic motivation of its motivated workforce to enhance satisfaction levels amongst its workers and performance levels in the organisation as well as becoming a catalyst in upgrading service delivery to the community in various formats.

## **5.9 Limitations**

The most obvious limitation of this study was the lack of financial resources which compelled the researcher to visit only one geographical area when conducting the interviews. Time

constraints also contributed to the researcher selecting one geographical area to do some research in. Doing research in one city restricts the generalisability of the findings to other municipalities which have different economic circumstances, different types of organisations and different availability of resources. The findings are thus restricted to the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality context and may not have any relevant applicability to the eThekweni Municipal Academy in other South African municipalities or public sector organisations. The use of non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling, may create a problem for the generalisability of the findings of the study in that the participants selected were not selected on a random basis. Although the sample of ten participants was sufficient to get data saturation in qualitative research, it is a small proportion of the entire staff complement in the eThekweni Municipal Academy which may deny the researcher the advantages of Teddlie and Yu's (2007:81) assertion that it is essential to capture as many dimensions of the particular phenomenon under study as possible.

The diversity of opinion may have not been adequately captured from employees who were not representative of the participant group. The qualitative nature of the research did not give the researcher the advantage of applying simple statistical generalisation or quantifying on a graph the relationships between variables. The only form of data collection utilised was self-reported data given by the respondents to the semi-structured interviews, which were administered by the researcher. This form of data collection method may enable a situation in which social desirability bias takes place. Persons tend to tailor their answers which they consider will elicit a favourable response by the researcher thus denying the researcher the opportunity of finding out the reality of circumstances prevailing.

The other drawback of such research of cross-sectional nature as that done in this study in which data were only collected at a single time, is that it does not give the researcher any idea on how motivation and performance could have varied with time or to determine the causal relationship conclusively. The study has not considered the perceptions of other groups that are interested in the excellence of the eThekweni Municipal Academy like the learners, the members of the community and or the employees of other departments that are in regular contact with the people working in the eThekweni Municipal Academy (employees working at that unit). Such perceptions would have provided interesting data regarding the effects of delivery of service rendered on the satisfaction and performance of users of training. Such

perceptions would also have provided for enriching of perspectives and ways of interpreting such information if it had been gathered.

The research was also conducted over a certain period, which may have been affected by certain group arrangements, certain organisational arrangements of which budgetary cycles and external environmental influences may have played a role. The effect of the presence of the researcher and the setting in which the interviews were conducted may also have exerted a very strong influence on the way in which participants responded to questions asked, what perhaps may have been the so-called Hawthorne effect – changes in behaviour or responses due to the phenomenon being tested. While great advantage was taken of the NVivo software which provided data collection and analysis in a systematic way, the collection and interpretation of qualitative data inevitably depend on subjective judgement by the researcher in interpreting the data in that the themes of the research should be filtered as far as it is practicable through the personal philosophy of the researcher. Efforts were made to promote objectivity of interpretation of the data by conducting a process of inter-coder reliability checks, as well as getting member validation on the raw data collected, but its human nature to be affected in judgement calls.

## **5.10 Conclusion**

The research study has logically examined the association relationships among employee motivation levels, level of perceptions among the managers and organisational performance at the eThekweni Municipal Academy. The results indicate that the styles of leadership by managers play a big role in employee motivation and organisational performance. Psychological safety that is built through transparency in communication and supportive management practices promotes employee engagement and commitment. Recognition programmes and career development opportunities are important sources of motivation which maintain long term organisational commitment. This is a deep-seated influence of the environment including resource allocation and the working environment on the ability of both the employees and the managers to achieve organisational goals. The overlapping of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations leads to complicated processes, which need delicate insights and specific interventions. The key to sustainable organisational performance is the establishment of working conditions that would make employees feel dignified, respected, and able to grow.

As a governmental agency involved in the development of youth, eThekweni Municipal Academy needs to make employee motivation the core of its mission performance.

The suggestions given in this chapter are practical and are strategic guidelines to those managers and organisational leaders who are interested in motivating and improving the performance of their employees. Introduction of clear communication channels, rewards and training initiatives are also a viable course that can lead to greater organisational performance. To overcome the systemic issues like resource limitation and bureaucracy demands the cooperation upper management and the interaction with the government stakeholders and policymakers. The fact that eThekweni Municipal Academy practices are aligned with the principles of the Sustainable Development Goal 8 enhances the role of the organisation in the wider societal goals of decent work and inclusive economic progress. The managerial practice should be effective enough to meet the needs of individuals, the needs of the organization and the needs of the society at the same time. This employee motivation investment has a payoff, which goes beyond the immediate output gains, to encompass decreased turn over, improved service delivery, and improved relationship with the community. The future organisational success of eThekweni Municipal Academy lies in continuous dedication to the efforts of developing motivating working conditions that can help managers and employees to develop. The combination of evidence-based solutions and local contextual knowledge offers the principles of creating a motivated, productive, and resilient organisation.

## 6. References

- Acharyya, R., & Bhattacharya N. (2019). Research methodology for social sciences
- Adams, J. (2018). Understanding motivation: A cultural perspective. *Journal of Psychological Studies*, 12(3), 45-62.
- Adams, J. (2020). Motivation in the workplace: Cultural influences. *International Journal of Organizational Psychology*, 42 (1), 113-130.
- Adelowokan, O. A., Maku, O. E., Babasanya, A. O., & Adesoye, B. A. (2019). Unemployment, poverty and economic growth in Nigeria. *Journal of enomics and management*, 5-17.
- Agarwal, V., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2015). Communicative reconstruction of resilience labor: Identify/identification in disaster relief workers. *Journal of applied communication research*, 43 (4), 408-428.
- Alam, M. K. (2021). A systematic qualitative case study: questions. Data collection, NVivo analysis and saturation. *Qualitative research in organisations and management: An international journal*, 16 (1), 1-31.
- Ali, B.J. & Anwar, G. (2021). An empirical study of employees' motivation and its influence on job satisfaction. *International Journal of Engineering, Business and Management*, 5(2), 21-30.
- Aliyu, A.A., Bello, M.U., Kasim, R. and Martin, D., 2014. Positivist and non-positivist paradigm in social science research: Conflicting paradigms or perfect partners. *J. Mgmt. & Sustainability*, 4, p.79.
- Alsuwaidi, M., Alshurideh, M., Al Kurdi, B. & Salloum, S.A. (2021). The impact of innovation management in SMEs performance: A systematic review. *Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing*, 1261, 681-693.
- Amos, E. A., et al. (2008). An analysis of the relation between employee-organisation value congruence and employee attitudes. *The journal of psychology*, 142 (6), 615-632.
- Armstrong, M. (1995). *A handbook of personnel management practice*. 5th edition. London: Kogan Page.
- Aviles, R. (2020). Applying Maslow's theory to workplace engagement. *Human Resource Development Review*, 19 (1), 23-39.
- Babbie, E. (2010). Research design. *The practice of social research*, 12, 90-123.
- Baig, S.A., Shuib, L. & Yadegaridehkordi, E. (2020). Big data adoption: State of the art and research challenges. *Information Processing & Management*, 57(6), 102395.

- Baker, T. (2018). Employee motivation: Insights and strategies. *Management Review*, 56(2), 89-101.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands–resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(3), 273-285.
- Bandari, V. (2021). Predictive analytics in cloud computing: An ARIMA model study on performance metrics. *Applied research in artificial intelligence and cloud computing*, 4 (1), 1-18.
- Bell, B. S., Tannenbaum, S. I., Ford, J. K., & Noe, R. A. (2017). 100 years of training and development research: What we know and where we should go. *Journal of applied communication research*.
- Blau, P. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. New York: Wiley.
- Blumberg, B., Cooper, D., & Schindler, P. (2014). *Business research methods*.
- Bertram, A., (2016). Global learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: An introduction. *Global learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, 1-5.
- Boffo, R., & Patalano, R. (2020). *ESG investing: Practices, progress and challenges*. Editions OCDE, Paris.
- Brewer, J. D., & DeLeon, P. 1983. The Role of Theory in Research. In *Research Methods in Sociology*.
- Buun, M., Hunt, J., & Keller, A. (2021). Participation, participation, and participation: The Swedish model of employee engagement. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 45(2), 225-239.
- Cassell, C., Buehring, A., Symon, G., & Johnson, P. (2006). Qualitative methods in management research: An introduction to the themed issue. *Management decision*, 44 (2), 161-166.
- Carvalho, L., Scott, L. and Jeffery, R., 2005. An exploratory study into the use of qualitative research methods in descriptive process modelling. *Information and Software Technology*, 47(2), pp.113-127.
- Chikanda, A., & Zinyama, L. (2019). The impact of management practices on employee motivation in Zimbabwean organizations. *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*, 10(3), 314-327.
- Cleland, J. A. (2017). The qualitative orientation in medical education research. *Korean journal of medical education*, 29 (2), 61.
- Cohen, J., Krishnamoorthy, G., & Wright, A. M. (2002). Corporate governance and the audit process. *Contemporary accounting research*, 19 (4), 573-594.

- Cooper, D. R., & Schindler, P. S. 2014. *Business Research Methods*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Coy, A. (2019). Motivation and knowledge sharing: A meta-analysis of main and moderating effects. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 23(5), 71-89.
- Creswell, J. W., et al. (2016). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Crick, A.P. (2021). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: Perspectives from educational psychology. In Allen, M. (ed.). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874-900.
- Crotty, M., & Epstein, M. 2008. *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*. Sage Publications.
- Crouch, M. & McKenzie, H. (2006). The logic of small samples in interview-based qualitative research. *Social Science Information*, 45(4), 483-499.
- Dannels, S.A., 2018. Research design. In *The reviewer's guide to quantitative methods in the social sciences* (pp. 402-416). Routledge.
- Dawes, J. (2018). Social exchange theory: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Business Research*, 12(5), 102-110.
- Dewi, N., Azam, S., Yusoff, S. (2019). Factors influencing the information quality of local government financial statement and financial accountability. *Management science letters*, 9 (9), 1373-1384.
- Davis, J. B. (2010). *Individuals and identity in economics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, C., & Fisher, M. (2018). Understanding research paradigms. *Journal of the Australasian Rehabilitation Nurses Association*, 21 (3), 21-25.
- De Oliveira, R. T., Ghobakho, M., & Figueira, S. (2023). Industry 4.0 towards social and environmental sustainability in multinationals: Enabling circular economy, organisational social practices, and corporate purpose. *Journal of cleaner production*, 430.
- Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). (2004). *Senior Management Service handbook*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Dubey, P. & Kothari, S. (2022). Motivation: Concept, theories, types, and practical assumptions. *Applied Psychology Review*, 14(2), 89-104.
- Dubey, U. K. B., & Kothari, D. P. (2022). *Research methodology: Techniques and trends*
- Dweck, C. (2017). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York: Random House.
- Easterby-Smith, M., et al. 2012. *Management Research*. Sage Publications.

Edvardsson, B., et al. (2020). The role of participative management in employee motivation. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 12(1), 76-92.

Fowler, F. J. (2013). *Survey research methods*. Sage publications.

Furunes, T., et al. (2021). Employee participation and job satisfaction: Lessons learned from Sweden. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 33(3), 182-198.

García-Morales, V. J., et al. (2020). Transformational leadership and organizational innovation: The mediation of organizational learning. *Journal of Business Research*, 123, 460-463.

Gentry, W. A & Shanock, L. R., Views of managerial derailment from above and below: The importance of a good relationship with upper management and putting people at ease. *Journal of applied social psychology*, 38 (10), 2469-2494.

Gouldner, A.W. (1960). The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement. *American sociological review*, 161-178.

Gupta, J., & Vegelin, C. (2016). Sustainable development goals and inclusive development. *International environmental agreements: Politics law and economics*, 16 (3), 433-448.

Hackman, J.R. & Oldham, G.R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 16(2), 250-279.

Hackman, J.R. & Oldham, G.R. (1980). *Work redesign*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Hancock, et al. (2016). A meta-analysis of factors influencing the development of trust in automation: Implications for understanding autonomy in future systems. *Human factors*, 58 (3), 377-400.

Hardy, M., & Bryman, A. (2009). *Handbook of Data Analysis*. Sage Publications.

Harrison, A. (2019). The impact of organizational structure on employee motivation in the public sector. *Journal of Public Administration*, 54(2), 245-263.

Hatch, M. J. & Zilber, T. (2011). Conversation at the border between organizational culture theory and institutional theory. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 21(1), 94-97.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relationships*. New York: Wiley.

Heras-Saizarbitoria, I., Urbieto, L., & Boiral, O. (2022). Organisations' engagement with sustainable development goals: From cherry-picking to SDG-washing? *Corporate social responsibility and environmental management*, 29 (2), 316-328.

Herzberg, F. (1959). *The motivation to work*. New York: Wiley.

Heskett, J. L., et al. (2018). *The service profit chain*. New York: Free Press.

Higgins, C. A., & Judge, T. A. (2020). The relationship between motivation and performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 41(6), 605-621.

- Homans, G. C. (1958). Social behavior as exchange. *American journal of sociology*, 63 (6), 597-606.
- Horton, R., & Lucassen, A. (2023). Ethical considerations in research with genomic data. *The new bioethics*, 29 (1), 37-51.
- Huang, X. & Van de Vliert, E. (2003). Where intrinsic job satisfaction fails to work: National moderators of intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 24(2), 159-179.
- Hult, M., Pietila, A., & Saaranen, T. (2020). The factors predicting quality of life among unemployed adults. *Social indicators research*, 152 (3), 1197-1211.
- Hunter, D., McCallum, J. and Howes, D., 2019. Defining exploratory-descriptive qualitative (EDQ) research and considering its application to healthcare. *Journal of Nursing and Health Care*, 4(1).
- Huntington-Klein, N. (2021). *The effect: An introduction to research design and causality*.
- Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. B. (2024). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches*. Sage publications.
- Kaboub, F., 2008. Positivist paradigm. *Encyclopaedia of counselling*, 2(2), p.343.
- Kalogiannidis, S. (2021). Impact of effective business communication on employee performance. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 5(1), 984-996.
- Kanyane, M. H. (2019). The impact of nepotism on employee motivation in the public sector. *Public Administration Review*, 79(2), 290-302.
- Kellica, M. (2020). Participative management: A key to employee engagement and productivity. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 36(1), 64-72.
- Kern, D. et al. (2021). Feedback loops and employee engagement: Insights from Swedish organizations. *Journal of Business Research*, 135, 54-63.
- Kirongo, A., & Odoyo, C. (2020). Research philosophy design and methodologies: A systematic review of research paradigms in information technology. *Global scientific journals*.
- Kivunja, C. and Kuyini, A.B. (2017). Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of higher education*, 6(5), pp.26-41.
- Kroll, C., et al. (2019). Sustainable development goals (SDGs): Are we successful in turning trade-offs into synergies? *Palgrave communications*, 5 (1), 2019.
- Kumari, N., Zhang, B., Zhang, R., Shechtman, E., & Zhu, J. (2023). Multi-concept customization of text to image diffusion. *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF conference on computer vision and pattern recognition*, 1931-1941.

- Latapi, M. A., et al. (2019). A literature review of the history and evolution of corporate social responsibility. *International journal of corporate social responsibility*, 4 (1), 1-23.
- Leavy, P., 2017. *Research design*.
- Maddux, R.B. (2016). *Team building: An exercise in leadership*. 5th edition. Boston: Crisp Publications.
- Mafunisa, M. J. (2019). Public sector employee motivation: Challenges and strategies in South Africa. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 11(1), 34-48.
- Mahlalela, N. (2022). Hierarchical management structures and employee performance in South Africa. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20, 1-9.
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in Education: evidence-based inquiry*, MyEducationLab series,
- McNabb. D. E., (2015). *Research methods for political science: Quantitative and qualitative methods*.
- Mason, P., Augustyn, M. and Seakhoa-King, A. (2010). Exploratory study in tourism: Designing an initial, qualitative phase of sequenced, mixed methods research. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 12(5), pp.432-448.
- Mbanaso, U. M., Abrahams, L., & Okafor, K. C. (2023). Research philosophy, design and methodology. *Research techniques for computer science, information systems and cybersecurity*, 81-113.
- McLeod, S. (2018). Maslow's hierarchy of needs. *Simply Psychology*. Retrieved from [www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html).
- Mensah, J. (2019). Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action. *Literature review. Cgent social sciences*, 5 (1), 165.
- Mertens, D. M. 2014. *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods*. Sage Publications.
- Meyer, J. (2020). The role of motivation in work-related behavior. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 38(2), 150-165.
- Mio, C., Costantini, A., & Panfilo, S. (2022). Performance measurement tools for sustainable business: A systematic literature review on the sustainability balanced scorecard use. *Corporate social responsibility and environmental management*, 29 (2), 367-384.
- Moallemi, E., De Haan, F. J., Hadiikakou, M., Khatami, S., & Malekpour, S. (2021). Evaluating participatory modelling methods for co-creating pathways to sustainability. *Earth's future*, 9 (3), 1843.

- Mahmood, M. (2022). Ethical leadership for better sustainable performance: Role of employee values, behavior and ethical climate. *Journal of cleaner production*, 337.
- Mokgothu, M., & Thamae, B. (2020). Bureaucracy and employee motivation: Evidence from South African public sector organizations. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 12(1), 123-140.
- Mohajan, D., & Mohajan, H. K. (2022). Constructivist ground theory: A new research approach in social science. *Research and advances in education*, 1 (4), 8-16.
- Monoarfa, A., Sipatu, L., & Adam, R. (2023). Analysis of health workers. Professionalism in improving service quality. *Journal of educational management research*, 4 (6), 2681-2693.
- Morgado, C., et al. (2023). Scale development: Ten main limitations and recommendations to improve future research practices.
- Morgeson, F. P. & Humphrey, S.E. (2006). The Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ): Developing and validating a comprehensive measure for assessing job design and the nature of work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(6), 1321-1339.
- Mtimkulu, N., Nkosi, B. & Xulu, Z. (2014). The impact of organisational culture on performance management in a South African local municipality. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 7(2), 35-47.
- Mukherjee, S. P. (2019). A guide to research methodology: An overview of research problems, tasks and methods. Crc press.
- Mulisa, F. (2022). When does a researcher choose a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed research approach? *Interchange*, 53 (1), 113-131.
- Muzari, T., Shava, G. N., & Shonhiwa, S. (2022). Qualitative research paradigm, a key research design for educational researchers, processes and procedures: A theoretical overview. *Indiana journal humanities and social sciences*. 3 (1), 14-20.
- Myers, J. L., Well, A. D. and Lorch Jr, R. F. (2013). Research design and statistical analysis. Routledge.
- Nayak, J. K., & Singh, P. (2021). Fundamentals of research methodology problems and prospects. SSDN publishers & distributors.
- Nguyen, P. T., Yandi, A. & Mahaputra, M. R. (2020). Factors that influence employee performance: Motivation, leadership, environment, culture organisation, work achievement, competence and compensation. *Dynamic Management Journal*, 4(2), 1-15.
- Nielsen, K., et al. (2019). The role of leadership in employee well-being: A systematic review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16 (12), 2171.

- Nienhüser, W. (2021). The impact of management styles on motivation in Germany. *European Management Journal*, 39(2), 165-177.
- Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., Gerhart, B. & Wright, P. M. (2017). *Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage*. 10th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Noe, R. A., Tews, M. J., & Michel, J. W. (2017). Managers' informal learning: A trait activation theory perspective. *International journal of training and development*, 21 (1), 1-7.
- Nzimande, C. (2020). Employee recognition as a motivational strategy in the South African public sector.
- Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, O., et al. (2018). Skills development and employee engagement in SADC: A policy perspective. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, 10 (1), 3-14.
- Paaais, M. & Pattiruhu, J. R. (2020). Effect of motivation, leadership, and organizational culture on satisfaction and employee performance. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7 (8), 57-68.
- Park, S., & Sturman, M. C. (2016). Evaluating form functionality of pay-for-performance plans: The relative incentive and sorting effects of merit pay, bonuses, and long-term incentives. *Human resource management*. Wiley online library.
- Park, Y. S., Konge, L. and Artino Jr, A. R., 2020. The positivism paradigm of research. *Academic medicine*, 95(5), pp.690-694.
- Pandey, P., & Pandey, M. M. (2021). *Research methodology: Tools and techniques*.
- Patton, M. Q., (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*.
- Pillay, K. (2020). The relationship between job embeddedness and psychological ownership within a unionised manufacturing sector in South Africa. University of Pretoria
- Pizzi, et al. (2020). Management research and the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs): A bibliometric investigation and systematic review. *Journal of cleaner production*, 276.
- Plakhotnik, M. S., Volkova, N. V., Jiang, C., Yahiaoui, D., Pheiffer, G., McKay, K., & Reißig-Thust, S. (2021). The perceived impact of COVID-19 on student well-being and the mediating role of the university support: evidence from France, Germany, Russia, and the UK. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 642689.
- Polidano, C. (1999). *The new public management in developing countries*. Institute for development policy and management. University of Manchester, 13, 1-38.

- Pothos, E. M., Busemeyer, J. R. & Trueblood, J.S. (2014). A quantum geometric model of similarity. *Psychological Review*, 120(3), 679-696.
- Raddon, A., & Harrison, M. 2015. The Role of Epistemology in Research. In *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners*.
- Ramhit, K. S. (2022). Organisational culture, values and performance in multinational companies in Mauritius. University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.r
- Ramirez, J. et al. (2020). Management styles and employee motivation in German firms. *Journal of Business Research*, 108, 226-232.
- Rana, T., Steccolini, L., Bracci, E., & Mihret, D. G. (2022). Performance auditing in the public sector: A systematic literature review and future research avenues. *Financial accountability & management*, 38 (3), 337-359.
- Rasinger, S. M. (2013). Quantitative research in linguistics: An introduction.
- Raub, S. P., Borzillo, S. & Probst, G. (2021). Team building effectiveness in knowledge-intensive organizations: A systematic review. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 25(4), 892-914.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary educational psychology*, 25 (1), 54-67.
- Rehman, A.A. and Alharthi, K., 2016. An introduction to research paradigms. *International journal of educational investigations*, 3(8), pp.51-59.
- Rehman, S., Khan, M. A., Ziauddin, A. Z., & Nazir, S. (2020). Effect of job stress on employee performance. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(6), 154-168.
- Revell, S. M. H. (2013). Making meaning in qualitative research with conversational partnerships: A methodological discussion. *Advances in nursing science*, 36 (2), 54-65.
- Ritchie, J., Ormston, R., Nicholls, C. M., Lewis, J. (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage publications Ltd.
- Rivaldo, Y., & Nabella, S. D., (2023). Employee performance: Education, training, experience and work discipline. *Calitatea*, 24 (193), 182-188.
- Roberts, D. (2019). Understanding employee motivation: Theories and practices. *Journal of Business Research*, 105, 211-220.
- Sachs, et al., (2022). *Sustainable development report*. Cambridge university press.
- Sai, K. T. (2022). A study on the impact of human resource management practices on employee performance. *Academy of marketing studies journal*, 26 (5).

- Schmidt, K., & Roesler, U. (2019). Herzberg's two-factor theory: How it works in practice. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(3), 500-517.
- Schmitt, A., & Schilling, A. (2020). The relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 10(3-4), 203-223.
- Schunk, D. H., & Zimmerman, B. J. (2009). Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research, and applications. *International journal for the scholarship of teaching and learning*, 3 (1), 37.
- Sileyew, K.J., 2019. *Research design and methodology* (Vol. 7). Cyberspace.
- Siswanto, S., Maulidiyah, N.N. & Masyhuri, M. (2021). Effect of reward and motivation on employee performance. *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*, 10(2), 32-38.
- Sitopu, Y. B., Sitinjak, K. A., & Marpaung, F. K. (2021). The influence of motivation, work discipline, and compensation on employee performance. *Golden ratio of human resource management*, 1(2), 72-83.
- Sonnentag, S., et al. (2020). Morning reattachment to work and work engagement during the day: A look day-level mediator. *Journal of management*, 46 (8), 1408-1435.
- Swedberg, R., 2020. Exploratory research. *The production of knowledge: Enhancing progress in social science*, 2(1), pp.17-41.
- Sugiarti, E., Finatariansi, E., Rahman, Y. T. (2021). Earning cultural values as a strategic step to improve employee performance: *Scientific Journal of Reflection: Economic Accounting, Management and Business* 4 (1),221-230.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of business research*, 104, 333-339.
- Tahir, M., & Hajjad, M. N. (2023). Employee performance and the impact of workplace facilities and discipline. *Jurnal manajemen bisnis*, 10 (2), 417-425.
- Tamminen, K. A., & Poucher, Z. A. (2020). Research philosophies. *The routledge international encyclopaedia of sport and exercise psychology*, 535-549.
- Teddie, C., & Yu, F. Mixed methods research: A typology with xamples. *Journal of mixed methods research*. 1 (1), 77-100.
- Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. 2016. *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences*. Juta and Company Ltd.
- Thomas, L. E., & Pencina, M. L. (2020). Using propensity score methods to create target populations in observational clinical research, 323 (5), 466-467.

- Tsalis, et al. (2020). New challenges for corporate sustainability reporting: United Nations' 2030 agenda for sustainable development and the sustainable development goals. *Corporate social responsibility and environmental management*, 27 (4), 1617-1629.
- Vanson, C. 2014. Ontology and the Nature of Reality. In *Research Methodologies in the Social Sciences*.
- Van der Westhuizen, L. (2018). Brand loyalty: Exploring self-brand connection and brand experience. *Journal of product & brand management*, 27 (2), 172-184.
- Van Zanten, J. A., & Van Tulder, R. (2021). Towards nexus-based governance: Defining interaction between economic activities and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). *International journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology*, 28 (3), 210-226.
- Varghese, S.S., Ramesh, A., & Veeraiyansugain, D.N (2019). Blended module-based teaching in biostatistics and research methodology: A retrospective study with postgraduate dental students. *Journal of dental education*, 83(4), 445-450.
- Vingård, E., et al. (2021). Participative leadership and work environment: The role of management in employee motivation. *BioMed Research International*, 2021, 1-8.
- Yilmaz, K. (2013). Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research traditions: Epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences. *European journal of education*, 48 (2), 311-325.
- Zhang, C., Gong, Y and Brown, S., (2023). *Research Methodology. Autores, Blockchain Applications in Food Supply Chain Management. Contributions to Management Science*, pp.77-98.

## Appendix A

### Ethical Clearance



23 July 2025

Thembelihle Patience Maseko (222106096)  
School of Man Info Tech & Gov  
Westville Campus

Dear TP Maseko,

**Protocol reference number:** HSSREC/00008859/2025

**Project title:** Exploring the efficacy of employee motivation on municipal performance: A case study of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality

**Degree:** Masters

#### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 18 June 2025 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 23 July 2026.

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,



Doctor Shamila Naidoo (Interim 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](mailto:hssrec@ukzn.ac.za) Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

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

**INSPIRING GREATNESS**

## Appendix B

### Catekeeners Letter



POD 7, GROUND FLOOR, INTUTHUKO JUNCTION, 750 MARY THIPHE STREET, UMKHUMBANE, CATO MANOR, DURBAN 4001  
TEL: 031 322 4513, FAX: 031 261 3405, FAX TO EMAIL: 086 265 7160, EMAIL: MILE@DURBAN.GOV.ZA, WEBSITE: WWW.MILE.ORG.ZA

For attention:

Chair of Research Ethics Committee  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
College of Law and Management Studies  
Durban  
4001

22 May 2025

**RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT TO T.P MASEKO STUDENT NO: 222106096- GRANTING PERMISSION TO USE ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY AS A STUDY SITE**

The eThekweni Municipal Academy (EMA) Unit and Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE) in eThekweni Municipality, have considered a request from **Thembelihle Patience Maseko (Ms)** to use eThekweni Municipality as a research study site for the purposes of undertaking a research study entitled: "**Exploring the efficacy of employee motivation on municipal performance: A case of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality** - leading to the awarding of a **Masters degree**

We wish to inform you of the acceptance of her request and hereby assure her of our utmost cooperation towards achieving her academic goals; the outcome which we believe may help this municipality improve its evidence-base on employee motivation on municipal performance. The student is reminded of the ethical considerations and regulations when conducting this research. The student must take all necessary measures to ensure her personal safety during the research period as eThekweni Municipality indemnifies itself from any incidental claims that may arise. **In return, we stipulate as mandatory that the student contacts [sthabile.mbongwa@durban.gov.za](mailto:sthabile.mbongwa@durban.gov.za) to present the preliminary results and recommendations of this study to the related unit/s.**

Wishing the student all the best in her studies.

Supported

.....  
Prof. Mpilo Ngubane  
Head: eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit  
eThekweni Municipality

.....  
Dr. Collin Pinyay  
Program Manager: MILE  
eThekweni Municipality

.....  
I, **THEMBELIHLE PATIENCE MASEKO**.....hereby accept as mandatory that I will comply fully as per the conditions stipulated above.

Signed: ..  
Date: **23 MAY 2025**

## Appendix C



Editor: Govin Reddy

Email: [REDACTED]

Date: 27 November 2025

### LETTER CONFIRMING EDITING:

I hereby confirm that I have edited

Exploring the efficacy of employee motivation on municipal performance: A case study of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality

By

Thembelihle Patience Maseko

Student No: 222106096

A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

degree of Bachelor of Administration (Masters)

I have made amendments to grammar, language usage, syntax and have indicated by insertion of comments under the review function, any additional action which is required by the student to completely amend or address any queries relating to the clean copy.

The thesis has been returned to the author together with an editing report detailing any anomalies for rectification.

I trust the thesis will prove to be in good order.

Kind regards

Govin Reddy: MA (Applied Linguistics)

Cell No: [REDACTED]

## Appendix D

### Scheduled interview questions

1. What is your view on the work quality among the employees of the eThekweni Municipal Academy?
2. Do you think that the employees of eThekweni Municipal Academy produce the expected quantity of what they are supposed to produce (work quantity)?
3. Do you think that the employees of eThekweni Municipal Academy can be described as efficient in the performance of their duties (work efficiency)?
4. What is the role of recognition and reward in motivating you to perform better in your position?
5. To what extent do you believe your work contributes to the overall performance of the eThekweni Municipal Academy?
6. Do you feel that your personal goals and values align with the goals of eThekweni Municipal Academy?
7. As the eThekweni Municipal Academy Unit, how do you maintain impartiality and fairness in performance management?
8. How do you handle top performers who don't work well in a team?
9. Could you give an example of a time when you had to put a performance improvement plan into action?
10. How do you ensure continuous performance improvement in eThekweni Municipal Academy?

*End of interview*

## Appendix D

### UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

#### APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

#### INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

#### Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 04 JUNE 2025

#### Greetings

My name is Thembelihle Patience Maseko from the University of KwaZulu-Natal under the School of Management, IT, and Governance. I am doing Master's in Public Governance. I am contactable on [REDACTED] and/or 222106096@stu.ukzn.ac.za.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research in exploring the efficacy of employee motivation on municipal performance focusing on eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality. The aim and purpose of this research is to examine what extent does employee motivation and manager's perception affect organizational performance. The study will clarify the hypotheses with areas of interest, for example, the current motivational techniques, the role played by manager's perception in influencing the staff, and the general impact on the unit performance.

The study is expected to include 10 participants in total, of the 10, 4 will constitute of managers/supervisors with the EThekweni Municipal Academy Unit, and 6 will be subordinates within the same Unit. The estimated time frame for the scheduled interviews is at least 30 minutes. All data collected will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. Your identity will remain unidentified and no personal identifiers such as your name and department will be disclosed in any reports. Your participation voluntary, you may withdraw at any stage without justifying yourself and your response will not be used if you choose to withdraw.

There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. Your participation will contribute in improving operational efficiency, staff motivation, and overall unit performance.

We hope that the study will create the following benefits:

- To ascertain the role of managerial perceptions in shaping employee behavior.
- To understand the impact of motivation on the overall performance of the EThekweni Municipal Academy.
- To determine the effectiveness of current motivational strategies on employee performance and satisfaction within the EThekweni Municipal Academy Unit.

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

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at [222106096@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:222106096@stu.ukzn.ac.za)/ [REDACTED], the supervisor at [Nzimakweth@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Nzimakweth@ukzn.ac.za)/0312602606 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](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Your participation in this study is voluntary and by participating you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses in the study. You may dismiss or withdraw to participate in the study at any time with no negative resultant. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this study. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, IT, and Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study.

All data, both electronic and hard copy will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this period, all data will be demolished.

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in the study, please contact me or my supervisor on the contacts mentioned above.

Regards,

Thembelihle

-----

**CONSENT (Edit as required)**

I (Name) have been informed about the study entitled Exploring the efficacy of employee motivation on municipal performance: A case study of eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality by Thembelihle Patience Maseko.

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 [222106096@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:222106096@stu.ukzn.ac.za)/ [REDACTED] or supervisor at [nzimakweth@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:nzimakweth@ukzn.ac.za)/0312602606

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](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

|                                                    |          |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion | YES / NO |
| Video-record my interview / focus group discussion | YES / NO |
| Use of my photographs for research purposes        | YES / NO |

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Witness**  
(Where applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Translator**  
(Where applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## Appendix E

### MASEKO Lihle Draft dissertation (19 Nov 2025).docx

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

|                  |                  |              |                |
|------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>5%</b>        | <b>4%</b>        | <b>2%</b>    | <b>3%</b>      |
| SIMILARITY INDEX | INTERNET SOURCES | PUBLICATIONS | STUDENT PAPERS |

#### PRIMARY SOURCES

|          |                                                                  |                |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>www.businessperspectives.org</b><br>Internet Source           | <b>1 %</b>     |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Submitted to Regent Business School</b><br>Student Paper      | <b>1 %</b>     |
| <b>3</b> | <b>ulspace.ul.ac.za</b><br>Internet Source                       | <b>1 %</b>     |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal</b><br>Student Paper | <b>&lt;1 %</b> |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Submitted to University of South Africa</b><br>Student Paper  | <b>&lt;1 %</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>openscholar.dut.ac.za</b><br>Internet Source                  | <b>&lt;1 %</b> |
| <b>7</b> | <b>core.ac.uk</b><br>Internet Source                             | <b>&lt;1 %</b> |
| <b>8</b> | <b>www.coursehero.com</b><br>Internet Source                     | <b>&lt;1 %</b> |
| <b>9</b> | <b>sserr.ro</b><br>Internet Source                               | <b>&lt;1 %</b> |