

**DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**THE INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ON  
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY AT A  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

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**APRIL 2022**



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EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY AT A  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the  
degree of Master of Management Sciences

Specialising in  
Human Resource Management

in the

Faculty of Management Sciences  
at the Durban University of Technology

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**APRIL 2022**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery. Employees who receive valuable training and development have the potential to improve performance and provide quality service delivery. Community demands for essential services from public sector employees seem to have increased over time. To address community demands, municipalities depend on skilled employees to deliver desired performance. Public sector employees require ongoing and relevant development by means of which to supply quality essential services to the public. In South Africa, the development of public sector employees appears neglected which may lead to the inadequate provision of essential services exemplified by clean water.

Located in a positivist philosophical lens, the study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional research paradigm, using a survey design. The research site for conducting the survey was Mbhashe Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Based on a target population of 265 (N=265), a stratified random sample of 155 (n=155) respondents was drawn. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data and 115 questionnaires were returned. Data was analysed using statistical procedures and measurements such as correlation tests and multiple regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that human resource development had a positive influence on employee performance and service delivery. The study recommends the provision of training and development interventions to capacitate public sector employees. Future studies can probe the awareness of human resource development within the public sector.

**KEY TERMS:** Human resource development; employee performance; service delivery; local government; coaching and mentoring; public sector

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*“For nothing is impossible with God”. Luke 1:37 (NIV)*

## **DECLARATION**

I, Khuselwa Nama, hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the degree of Master of Management Sciences specialising in Human Resources Management in the Faculty of Management Sciences at the Durban University of Technology, is my own original work and has not been submitted previously at any institution of higher education. All the sources have been acknowledged, accurately cited and referred to in the bibliography list.

10 April 2022

Signed K. Nama..... Date.....

Khuselwa Nama

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human resource development
NRF	National Research Foundation
SPSS	Statistics Package for the Social Sciences

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Employees are often developed by enhancing skills and building knowledge to sustain organisations. The importance of human resource development is highlighted in the delivery of efficient operational functions in organisations (Ahmed, Arshad, Mahmood and Akhtar, 2017:135; Jang and Ardichvilli, 2020:184; Swanson; 2001:304). Recently, human resource development has gained prominence exemplified by rising volumes of resources that have been invested in employees, as catalysts for strengthening organisations around the world (Cloete, 2016:5).

In a bid to enhance capacitation of the workforce, the German government invested large sums of financial resources on human resource development. Similar investments have been made to developing employees in Asia and South America (Akdere, 2016:51). The investments suggest that the governments recognise the value of human resource development (Ngobese, 2017:1), which are likely to increase performance, contrary to low investments that may lead to lack of capacity to deliver services.

Human resource development encompasses an array of activities that enhance employee abilities to reach high potential. Activities aim to build employee abilities with the goal of organisations expanding proficiency, efficiency and effectiveness of human assets (Kim and Kim, 2020:29) . In the same vein, Jahan (2016:5) highlights that the United Nations centralises human assets as drivers of the development agenda.

Employee performance is critical for maintaining competitive advantage (Bakan, Ersahan and Buyukbese, 2013:86). Yet, lack of human resource development strategies probably reduce the capability of employees to deliver expected job outcomes and improve provision of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity, the public sector since the dawn of South Africa's democracy.

The promise to restructure South Africa's public sector came with post-Mbeki government in June 1999 with the aim to become more sensitive to the basic needs of the public. The objective which led to restructure government was to build up South Africa's human resources so as to have talented and competent human resources to contribute to economic development (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2010:12). Consequently, numerous advancing human resource development policies have been established with the intention of reversing the declining state of human resource development since 2000.

According to The presidency (2011), national skills development strategy (DHET, 2000), the human resource development strategy for South Africa (DHET, 2010:27) and the section 13 on *building a capable and developmental state* of the National Development Plan 2030 are the most prominent policies. Collectively, the policies represent a vision that deepens democracy and economic growth.

Cooperation amongst all spheres of government in a developmental state is vital in responding to issues and to translate the vision into action for the success of the national development plan (Cloete, 2016:2). The Knysna Weekly (2015:1), highlighted that since municipalities serve as a platform for developing human expertise, not just for own ends, but also for the country as a whole, they have a crucial role to play in the success of a national strategy.

People's demands for services from governments appear to have increased overtime. To respond to these needs, the local government ought to depend on the quality of human resources to deliver services. Mehlape (2017:106), citing Yahiaoui, Anser and Lahouel (2015) posits that, human resource is a vital component that needs to be developed in order to deliver quality services to the public.

Otoo and Mishra (2018:517), concur with Mehlape (2017:106), by pointing out that employees are believed to be an important source in an organisation which influences success and competitive advantage. Mehlape (2017:1), further argues that supply of quality service by all spheres of government including municipalities to citizens of South Africa, is a constitutional mandate.

Municipal employees ought to be well trained to deal with the public and to improve the quality of service delivery. Similarly, Yahiaou et al. (2015:1), highlight the necessity for every public institution to be developed through modernising and improving human resource management, by building efficiency of individuals and improving performance.

After employees receive training and performance improves, people will possibly be satisfied with the quality of service delivery which might reduce community protests and complaints. Boohene and Agyapong (2011:266) and Tshishonga (2019:157) were of the view that, there were scarce resources including human resources, particularly when employees are deployed effectively through appropriate human resource practices.

The study intends to assess the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Municipality in the Eastern Cape. To pursue the aim, a brief literature review, problem statement, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, research methodology, scope, demarcation and significance of the study, are conducted.

## **1.2.1 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **1.2.1.1 Human resource development**

Human resource development can be considered a sub-section of Human resource management and can be defined as a complex process in which competence (knowledge, skills and attitudes) accumulates through training, education, coaching, mentoring, and work and life experiences (DeSimone and Werner, 2012:4). Mehlape (2017:106) purports that human resource development is a process for developing and unleashing human expertise through organisation development and individual training and development with a goal of enhancing performance. The adopted definition is given by Mehlape (2017:106), as well as DeSimone and Werner, (2012:4).

### **1.2.1.2 Employee performance**

Employee performance can be defined as the employee's creativity, innovation and commitment, as well as the single result of an employee's work (Pawirosumarto and Sarjana, 2017:603). Moreover, Otoo and Mishra (2018:518) posit that employee performance is the performance associated with the productivity and quality of service, meeting of targets and deadlines, presence or attendance on the job, efficiency of the work completed, and effectiveness of work completed. The definition to be adopted is that provided by Otoo and Mishra (2018:518), which relates to municipal structure.

### **1.2.1.3 Service delivery**

Service delivery refers to the continuous process whereby accessible and affordable services are substantially and impartially provided by public sector institutions, as well as the private sector, to people on a sustainable basis (Govender, 2016:24). In addition, service delivery consists of various networks and organisations that supply services and goods to the multitudes of people.

### **1.2.1.4 Local municipality**

South African Local Government Municipal Systems Act (Act 32 of 2000) states that a municipality is described as part of the state within the local sphere of government, which is entitled to execute legislative and executive authority within its own jurisdiction, as determined in terms of the Municipal Demarcation Act of 1998. There are three categories of municipalities, namely metropolitan, district and local municipalities.

Metropolitan municipalities are defined as category A and govern the major city regions. District municipalities (category C) are for wider areas outside the cities, which share executive and legislative powers within the local municipalities. A local municipality (category B) is defined as a type of municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a category C municipality within whose area it falls (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

### **1.3.1 The concept of human resource development**

Human resource development is a complex process whereby competence accumulates by training, education, coaching, mentoring, work and life experiences (DeSimone and Werner, 2012:4). Hassan, Rymbai and Bhat (2019:1) noted that human resources development refers to the advancement of human expertise and knowledge of the employees. Similarly, human resource development enhances employee competencies to perform optimally (Asfaw, Argaw and Bayissa, 2015:190; Kim and Kim, 2020: 29).

Human resource development has been criticised for abandoning the original mission of developing human potential and instead has become an instrument of achieving profit maximisation goals (Ardichvili, 2013:452). The critique has been supported by several scholars that human resource development seems to ignore the advancement of the well-being of employees, instead practitioners provide training for record purposes (Schwartz, van Berkel, Hodson and Otten, 2014; O'riordan, 2017:3; Torraco and Lundgren, 2020:41).

Regardless of the conceptualisation employed, human resource development can be approached along potential and well-being angles. Organisations implement formal and informal human resource development processes to enhance employee potential, which could improve organisational performance. MacNeil (2001:246), states that relevant human resource development programmes enhance the performance of the organisation and employee.

Ballies (2009:76) and Ngobese (2017:56), argued that overall concern of training, which was tailor-made for personal development, but alternatively, training failed to enable employees to grow, thereby creating a need for further research. To exemplify, training needs analysis appears not to be conducted thoroughly in the public sector as employees were provided irrelevant training and development not linked to job performance (Beer, Finnstrom and Schrader, 2016:2).



There was a lack of commitment towards human resource development throughout organisations from top management to shop-floor employees. In particular, top management and managerial level employees seemed to be unresponsive towards training and development, whilst lower-level employees lacked motivation and commitment to participate in training as well as development programmes (Abdullah (2009:21). Extending the premise, human resource development practitioners were not competent enough to execute correct human resource development functions (Mone and London, 2018:3).

Human resource development was not recognised as a strategic business partner in the local government sphere (Chibi, 2017:100). Studies by Abdullah (2009:75) and Ngobese (2017:112) agreed with Chibi (2017:100), that the human resource development component seemed highly neglected and misinterpreted at local municipalities, where there appeared to be minimal research. In this regard, Mehlape (2017:111), citing the Public Service Commission (2011), proposed an evaluation of training as well as development initiatives within the public sector.

Evaluation ought to measure the effectiveness, both in terms of realising the set standards and the departments' strategic objectives, as well as measuring the improvement of employee capability in an organisation. Furthermore, Ngobese (2017:125) noted that there was no effective mentoring and coaching programmes to nurture the talent of inexperienced graduates in order to create managers. Against this backdrop, the study examines the origins of human resource development.

#### *1.3.1.1 The origins of human resource development*

The epistemology of conceptualisation of human resources development is unknown within the management discipline (McGuire and Cseh, 2006:655). However, Swanson (2008:2), noted that human resource development understands, explains and implements processes and assumes roles located within three core disciplines. These disciplines comprise psychology, economy and systems. In addition, systems Theory assumes multiple and dynamic interactions of environments, organisations, processes, groups and individuals. The economic discipline highlights core aspects around the productive and cost-effective utilisation of resources to meet set standards in a competitive environment.

### **1.3.2 Theoretical foundation of human resource development**

Swanson and Holton (2009:101), point out that human resource development integrates various management theories, which may be integrated in diverse ways. Cloete (2016:45), posits that the theoretical foundations of human resources development are underpinned by three assumptions. Firstly, human resource development is in various development disciplines.

Secondly, human resource development attempts to improve employee performance in organisations. Lastly, human resource development may utilise theories of change and relationship to the organisation. The study draws from evaluation models, mentoring and coaching theory and human capital theory in order to examine the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery.

#### *1.3.2.1 Evaluation model*

Kirkpatrick's evaluation model was used to examine the impact of individual improved knowledge and capability on specific job role and team as well as wider impact on business. The model suggests four levels of evaluation spanning reaction and organisational impact (Bird and Cassel, 2013:240). Human resource development practitioners may evaluate employee performance by measuring the quality of services to the community.

#### *1.3.2.2 Mentoring and coaching theory*

According to Garvey, Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2017:35), theory explains coaching and mentoring as strategies to enhance employee performance, knowledge and nurture skills in the organisation. In addition, Coetzee et al. (2013:222), noted that coaching described a relationship between manager and employee to develop and enhance employee performance.

In contrast, mentoring refers to a relationship between a senior who is an expert providing support, advise and friendship to a younger, newly employed and less experienced employee. To exemplify, the public sector through the municipality may allocate mentors and coaches to human capital for underperformance to improve job performance, skills and knowledge acquisition.

### **1.3.2.3      *Human capital theory***

Human capital theory was introduced by Schultz and Becker in 1959 to promote investment in employees through training and development programmes rather than treating employees as invaluable assets in the organisation (Tan, 2014:412). Tan (2014:412) professes that human capital theory explains the rewards of education and training as a form of investment in human resources, with the main idea being that employees are capital for development. Pertaining to a local municipality, human resource development could enhance employee performance and improve service delivery.

### **1.3.3            Human resource development and employee performance**

Pawirosumarto, Sarjana and Muchtar (2017:603) define employee performance as employee creativity, innovation, commitment and the result of employee work. Hee et al. (2019:1) found a significant relationship between training and development, as well as job performance. Hee et al. (2019:1) cited Huselid (1995) and Atteya (2012) who stated that providing formal and informal training was likely to further influence employees' job performance.

Hee et al. (2019:2) cited Arthur, Bennett, Eden and Bell (2003), who concluded that training and development programs were related to job performance in the organisation. On the contrary, the absence of a balanced human resource development conceptual understanding of the obligations and duties of organisational actors may be the main cause of poor employee performance and competency deficit in public sector was espoused by Cloete (2016:6). Human resource development probably improves employee performance for service delivery.

### **1.3.4            Human resource development and service delivery**

Section 152 of the South African constitution (1996), suggests that municipalities provide basic services in a sustainable manner to promote social and economic development through effective community involvement and participation. Municipalities are primarily agents of delivering services to the public through engaged integrated development planning processes, as well as taking the development needs of the people as a primary concern (Koma, 2010:1).

Service delivery entailed various networks and firms that provided services and goods to the people (Govender, 2016:24). The quality of the service provided is likely to depend on the skills, knowledge, abilities and experience of employees through human resource development (Hee, Halim, Ping, Kowang, Fei, 2019:64). Quality underscores a complex relationship of interactions and interdependencies between service delivery and human resource development.

Poor performance and corruption by public sector employees was a critical problem that affected the efficient provision of basic services at municipalities (Mpofu and Hlatywayo, 2015:1). Public sector employees have often been criticised for poor performance and work, with allegations of corruption and a lack of appropriate qualification and competencies to discharge duties exceptionally (Masiya, Davids and Managai, 2019:22). Quality standards and cost-effective employee training and development could lead to the advancement of employee performance which could result in an improved quality of service delivery to the public.

#### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In South Africa, the development of human resources appears to be neglected in organisations. Helao (2015:15), posits that local municipalities are failing to deliver basic services to communities. Extending the premise, Mpofu and Hlatywayo (2015:133), as well as Spoann, Fujiwara, Seng, Lay and Yim (2019:2), have noted that corruption and poor performance were outstanding issues in the efficient provision of basic services. Therefore, the public service has been largely criticised for poor performance, especially relating to service delivery by local municipalities (South African Local Government Association, 2014:30-31; Millington and Scheba, 2021).

The provision of essential services, for example, education, health, clean water, sanitation, electricity and road infrastructure was moving too slow (Mpofu and Hlatywayo, 2015:133). The performance of municipal employees seems to require development, as espoused by Jang and Ardichvilli (2020:184) as well as Swanson (2001:304). Mbhashe municipality under-performed in achieving the planned number of community halls, sports facilities and construction of bridges after embarking on several projects and programmes to improve performance (Mbhashe Annual Report, 2019:19). Such under-performance raises questions about the potential capabilities of employees to deliver basic services to the public.

Mbhashe municipality employees appeared to be facing a lack of financial management skills. According to the Mbhashe annual report (2019:20), the municipality experienced financial difficulties due to failure to accumulate enough income to meet operating expenses, debt commitments and maintain service levels. The budget deficit experienced in the municipality resulted in delays of payment of service providers. Similarly, Mantzaris (2014:82), Thebe (2017:127), as well Dewi, Azam and Yusoff (2019:1374), indicated that the public sector is faced with an escalating lack of financial accountability in local government nationally.

A lack of financial accountability has been publicly reported whereby communities expressed unhappiness with slow distribution of goods from the municipalities and the delivery of services that hinder progress (Masiya, Davids and Managai, 2019:22). At local government, the seeming lack of a human resource development plan and poor employee performance in financial management will affect service delivery. There appears to be few studies that have investigated the problem of underperformance in local municipalities in the Eastern Cape. The study interrogates the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery.

## **1.5 RESEARCH AIM**

The aim of the study is to examine the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at a local municipality.

### **1.5.1 Research objectives**

- To contribute to human resource development strategies for providing service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality
- To assist with human resource development practices for employee performance at Mbhashe Local Municipality
- To assist with human resource development guidelines for employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality

### **1.5.2 Research questions**

- What human resource development strategies should be implemented to improve service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality?
- How does human resource development influence employee performance at Mbhashe Local Municipality?
- What human resource development factors guide employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality?

### **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The findings of the study will allow the researcher to make pertinent recommendations on ways in which practitioners may use human resource development to enhance employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality and beyond. The researcher intends to suggest human resource development strategies analysis, interventions and approaches to educating, training or developing human resources in local municipalities.

The study ought to embolden senior management and employees with pathways to human resource development to improve employee performance and service delivery to address and satisfy public needs. The study may also be beneficial to scholars in examining associations between human resource development, employee performance and service delivery. Policymakers may use the findings of the study to guide policy and programme development. The study has also highlighted theories that may be relevant and useful to scholars conducting research on human resource development in future.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

Located in a positivist philosophy, the deductive study adopts a quantitative research paradigm. The positivism paradigm of exploring social reality is based around the idea that an individual can best comprehend the human behaviour by observation and reason (Nel, 2016:1). The positivist philosophy is aligned to the quantitative paradigm of using measurements and statistics to conduct research (Hair, Celsi, Oritinau and Bush, 2013:36). The study used a cross-sectional survey design to conduct the study on examining human resource development, employee performance and service delivery (Bhandari, 2021:1).

### **1.7.1 Target population**

The target population comprises of all employees of Mbhashe Local Municipality located in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa and equates to 265 (N=265) employees (Mbhashe Annual Report, 2018:2). The target population comprises of a list which will be obtained from human resource department of Mbhashe Local Municipality. Following ethical clearance and submission of gatekeeper's letter, the human resource department may provide the printed list of municipality employees, in preparation for a sample.

### **1.7.2 Stratified random sampling**

The study adopts probably sampling, particularly stratified random sampling. According to Clow and James (2014:229), probability sampling includes a random procedure in which everyone in the population has an equal and independent chance of being assimilated into the sample. The stratified random sampling method is suitable for the study to narrow the gap between dissimilar types of individuals through categorisation, which is suitable for extracting representative samples and reducing the sample size (Fei, 2015:1), and minimises the chance of sampling bias.

### **1.7.3 Data collection**

The researcher will use a closed-ended structured questionnaire to obtain data from the sampled respondents. In addition, McLeod (2018:2), posits that questionnaire responses are processed into data. The questionnaire will be developed by the researcher based on constructs and reviewed literature. Thereafter, the researcher will submit the questionnaire to the supervisor and a statistician.

The questionnaire will be piloted amongst selected respondents. The questionnaire will contain the cover letter, which will mention that participating in the study is optional. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section A will require the demographic information of the participants and Section B will have statements that relate to human resource development, in preparation for data analysis. In addition, Section C will consist of statements related to employee performance, whereas Section D will comprise of statements addressing service delivery variable.

#### **1.7.4 Data analysis**

The quantitative data in this study is analysed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26.0. The analysed data is further illustrated through bar charts, tables and pie charts. Various statistical measurements such as descriptive statistics and correlational tests will be used to establish relationships between the constructs of interest, namely human resource development, employee performance and service delivery. Data analysis, as defined by Ali and Bhaskar (2016:790), is the process of systematically applying statistical and logical techniques to report and portray, summarise and wrap-up, and examine data, as will be the case in the study.

#### **1.7.5 Validity and reliability**

Validity will be maintained by drawing findings from a representative sample (Somekh and Lewin, 2011:221). The researcher will develop a questionnaire, which will be checked by the supervisor to ensure content validity. Face validity of the questionnaire will be addressed by conducting pilot testing and the measuring instrument will be subject to scrutiny by experts, namely the supervisor and statistician.

The researcher will conduct a Cronbach's alpha test to measure the reliability of the questionnaire. Internal consistency estimates how well the set of items in a questionnaire are related. Construct validity will be achieved by translating theories and test scores based on the existing research knowledge and choosing relevant statements to measure the items.

### **1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The study maintains anonymity by means of clear and simple instructions on the covering letter (Annexure A) of the questionnaire (Annexure B). The covering letter reassures respondents of non-disclosure of information and names.



The study ensures the confidentiality of respondent identification, which will be used to analyse data only. The researcher will apply for ethical clearance at the research directorate within the Durban University of Technology's research directorate. Data will be stored in a safe place for five years. The covering letter ensured voluntary participation by clearly highlighting that respondents can refuse to participate and they could withdraw at any time.

## **1.9 OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION**

Chapter 1 comprises of an introduction, definition of terms, theoretical framework, statement of the problem, aim, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, brief overview of literature review, brief overview of research methodology, outline of the study and chapter summary.

Chapter 2 provides a literature review on secondary sources regarding human resource development, employee performance and service delivery.

Chapter 3 explains the adopted research methodology and design to address the aim of the study by providing deeper data to respond to research questions and objectives. The chapter presented a detailed account on research philosophy, research design, research paradigm, target population, sampling, collecting, and analysing data, validity, reliability, as well as ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents the results and findings to answer the research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of key findings and makes recommendations emerging from the empirical analysis of the study; describes the limitations and provides directions for future research.

## **1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter one presented the background and overview of the study. As local municipalities were faced with the seeming problem of ways to enhance the quality of service delivery to the public, the study intended to investigate the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality. In relation to the aim of the study, research questions and objectives were formulated.

The study envisaged adopting theories to conduct a quantitative study on human resource development, employee performance and service delivery. Key definitions of the study were clarified. The next chapter reviews the literature on previous studies and approaches to examining human resource development, employee performance and service delivery.

The study adopts probability sampling, particularly stratified random sampling. Probability sampling includes a random procedure in which everyone in the population has equal and independent chance of being assimilated into the sample. Stratified random sampling method is suitable for the study to narrow the gap between dissimilar types of individuals through categorisation, which is suitable for extracting representative samples and reducing the sample size. Stratified random sampling also minimises the chance of sampling biases.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter one, the study problematised the seeming lack of service delivery amidst community protests in underperforming local municipalities (Govender, 2017:427; Helao, 2015:15; Millington and Scheba, 2021). *The study aims to examine the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at local municipality.* Chapter two provides a literature review on secondary sources regarding human resource development, employee performance and service delivery. The concept of human resource development is examined to draw components to the foreground of the study. A theoretical framework is presented and used to guide the study. Thereafter, human resource development strategies, performance management and service delivery are discussed.

#### **2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Human resource development is defined as a complex process in which competence (knowledge, skills and attitudes) accumulates through training, education, coaching, mentoring and work and life experiences (DeSimone and Werner, 2012:4). According to Mehlape (2017:106), human resource development is a process for developing and unleashing human expertise through organisation development and personnel training and development for the purpose of improving performance.

Hassan, Rymbai and Bhat (2019:1) noted that human resources development refers to the advancement of human skills, competencies and knowledge of the labour force. Yet, McGuire and Cseh (2006:655), have argued that the disciplinary bases of human resources development are unknown. Various definitions of human resource development point to the lack of a singular conceptualisation. Hence, the study draws from Mehlape's (2017:106) definition to guide the research.

The primary components of human resource development include organisational development, which is the process of systematically implementing organisational change with the intention of enhancing performance (Garavan, McCarthy, Lai, Murphy, Sheehan and Carbery, 2021:94). The second component is training and development, which is defined as the process of systematically developing talent and skills in individuals for improved performance (Akdere, 2016:54). McGuire and Cseh (2006:656), further stated that human resource development processes occur under various components that direct, complement and imbed in various settings. Human resource development enhances the competencies of employees to perform optimally (Asfaw et al., 2015:190).

Human resource development has been criticised for abandoning the original mission of developing human potential, instead becoming an instrument of achieving the profit maximisation goals of corporations. The criticism has been substantiated by several authors, that human resource development seemed oblivious to advancing the well-being of communities through developing human potential, where instead practitioners provided training for superficial and administrative purposes (Ardichvili, 2013: 452; Garavan and McGuire, 2010:487; Kuchinke, 2010:575; MacKenzie, Garavan and Carbery, 2012:1). Hence, the study examines the concept of human resource development to uncover peculiarities, components and assumptions to advance knowledge.

### **2.2.1 Human resource management**

According to Heathfield (2021:1), human resource management consists of but not limited to compensation, recruitment, and hiring, performance management, organisation development as well as training. Jones and George (2004:374), explains human resource management as all the activities that managers engage in to attract and retain employees and to ensure that people in the organisation perform at efficient and effective levels so as to contribute to the accomplishment of organisational goals. On the contrary, DeSimone and Werner (2012:8), define human resource management as the effective selection and utilisation of employees to achieve the goals and strategies of an organisation, as well as the goals and needs of employees. The definitions point to the value of employee performance in meeting organisational needs in a centralised or decentralised way.

### **2.2.2 Development**

The concept of development appears to lack a universal definition due to diverse interpretations. The study conceptualises development alongside education, training and learning. Steward (2011:99), Hall Pilbeam and Corbridge (2013:157), critique the differentiation between development and learning. Hall et al. (2013:157) and Du Plessis (2015:145), argue instead that learning is the core element at the centre of development, while in the context of a job and organisational output, development focuses on the direction the learning takes. Fourie (2014:23), defines development as a broad concept that may be regarded as a process of moving from a position of unconscious incompetence to a state of unconscious competence.

Development can be regarded as a dynamic process that brings about change or growth through formal and informal development experiences and practices to allow people to achieve their human potential (Matthews, Megginson and Surtees, 2004:6; Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk, 2003:20; South African Board of People Practice [SABPP], 2013:31). In the context of the study, development and learning are mutually inclusive terms. Development has an intense concentration on performance that brings about desired organisational and individual effectiveness and efficiency to ensure that internal organisational capability is achieved.

Development entails a complex management process of improving organisational productivity through promoting organisational and individual development. Moreover, development suggests methods in which the organisation trains employees to be qualified for possible promotion. Organised formal and informal organisational strategies can be used for improving an organisation's overall performance (Manninen and Viitala, 2007:63; Mathis and Jackson, 2002:82; Rothwell, Alexander and Bernhard, 2008:1; Du Plessis, 2015:143).

Performance management is a crucial element of development, exemplified by a comprehensive approach used to determine skills gaps within an organisational system. In turn, the approach proposes appropriate interventions and strategies that are practically effective in attaining the desired performance results.

In the event that performance management is conducted thoroughly, employees become more productive and contribute to higher levels of organisational performance (Berman, Bowman, West and Van Wart, 2010:219, Mone, 2010:3; SABPP, 2013:33 and Du Plessis, 2015:170). Although the concept of development can be interpreted holistically, the concept is located on two pillars (Hamlin, Nassar and Wahba, 2010:210; Elegbe, 2010:180), namely:

- Organisational development;
- Individual development.

#### *2.2.2.1 Organisational development*

The proven value brought to organisations and stakeholders has contributed to organisational development being able to grow and thrive immensely as a field (Organisational Development Conference, 2015:1). Edward and Fillingham (2015:13), purport that organisational development encompasses disciplines ranging from psychology to sociology, anthropology, organisation behaviour and human resource management. Organisational development ensures that organisations and people can adapt to change in a fast-paced and lean environment (Edward and Fillingham, 2015:13). From the organisational perspective, development is implemented when the organisational environment and motivational systems are realigned to support performance improvement and organisational development plans (Edward and Fillingham, 2015:13).

Training departments have been re-named 'organisational development teams' over time. Organisational development interventions at an individual level would typically include activities related to personal development, enhancing personal skills, effectiveness and ensuring coaching and mentoring in public organisations (Edward and Fillingham (2015:15). Mpofu and Hlatywayo (2015:133), posit that interventions would enable higher employee performance and municipality service delivery to communities than previously understood. Furthermore, organisational development interventions are commonly evident in team building and team development activities at a team level to improve communication between team members. The municipality may not function effectively in achieving its objectives without healthy relationships amongst team members and departments.

Organisations cannot do without some kind of training and development activities. Development is directed at organising new and productive organisational solutions to performance problems and organisational inefficiencies by considering the organisation's vision, structure, policies, procedures, managerial practices and strategies (Benstead, 2018:2; Ngwenya, 2010:29). Similarly, organisational development involves the design and execution of appropriate solutions and interventions for the smooth functioning of the organisation (Harrison and Kessels, 2004:5; SABPP, 2013:41).

A key feature of organisational development is to improve an organisation, as well as change the organisation or municipality through continual reflexivity and self-examination. In conducting succession planning, the municipality will be able to provide suitable training to the employees to be more competent and improve its service delivery.

- *The learning organisation*

A learning organisation as an organisation that is constantly developing its capacity to discover its preferred future (Senge, 1990:14). The idea that organisations and their members learn has been present for decades (Austin and Bartunek, 2003:318). However, most scholarly attention to learning examined adaptative change in behavioural responses to a stimulus, particularly the learning of routines (Levitt and March, 1998; Quick and Nelson, 2011:612-613). Austin and Bartunek (2003:318) cite Argyris and Schon (1978), who noted that learning was only introduced in a positive way as a means of improving organisations in the 1970s.

Learning organisation is an environment where human resources are recognised and appreciated and work cooperatively through development that results in action. A learning organisation is impossible without learning individuals, and individuals can learn the most from each other through coaching and mentoring interventions within a culture conducive to learning (Vora, 2015:1).

Organisational culture can be one of the biggest bottlenecks in how organisations transfer learning and practice what they learn to create meaningful results (Gino and Staats, 2015:2). Moreover, it does not matter how much the organisation may invest in training and development, it is not meaningful without promoting a culture where employees are motivated to share their learning experiences.

Organisations can be improved through training employees. The effectiveness of organisational development activities often relies on organisational support and commitment from management (Maund, 2001:514; Manninen and Viitala, 2007:68; Van Eeden, 2014:11). For instance, in the case of a local municipality, the human resources department may identify individuals who seem to have the potential for development to build a learning culture.

#### 2.2.2.2 *Individual development*

New competencies are required for positions to keep the employee functional and to avoid them becoming useless in the organisation amidst technological advances. Therefore, employees ought to constantly upgrade their skills to remain relevant and productive. From the viewpoint of the individual, development happens when employees engage in activities invented to introduce new competencies that enhance performance behaviours through establishment of formal and informal activities (Nel, Loedolff and Haasbroek, 2001:14, Mathis and Jackson, 2002:75, Elegbe, 2010:175).

An organisation ought to ensure that a strong human resource base is planned for. Capable human resources emanate from constantly identifying training and development needs, which are followed by the systematic planning and execution of human resource development interventions within an organisational (Jahmurataj, 2015:206). New capabilities obtained from development programmes by individual employees are probed through multiple management interventions.

Individual development ought to be approached in diverse ways. Organisations ought to provide training and development interventions for employees to acquire competencies that the organisation has identified as being significant to achieve its goals (Manuti, Pastore, Scardigno, Giancaspro and Morciano, 2015:4). On the contrary, when development programmes are planned, organisations more than often tend to consider formal planned approaches in creating development strategies, claiming that informal, accidental development was irrelevant (MacNeil, 2001: 246).



## **2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

There are many debates taking place on human resource development theories, exemplified by three aspects. Firstly, human resource development is a relatively nascent academic field of study, which is still maturing. Secondly, human resource development draws upon multiple theories in articulating disciplinary foundations. Swanson and Holton (2009:101), built on Swanson's (2001:302) work, that human resource development is anchored on diverse management theories and with integration in divergent ways. Furthermore, most academic fields of study are applied, such as medicine, engineering, education, business and communication. Lastly, most disciplines are rooted in a set of theories that are uniquely integrated for the purpose of the discipline. Business, psychology and human resource development draw upon mentoring and coaching theory (Salter, 2014:3).

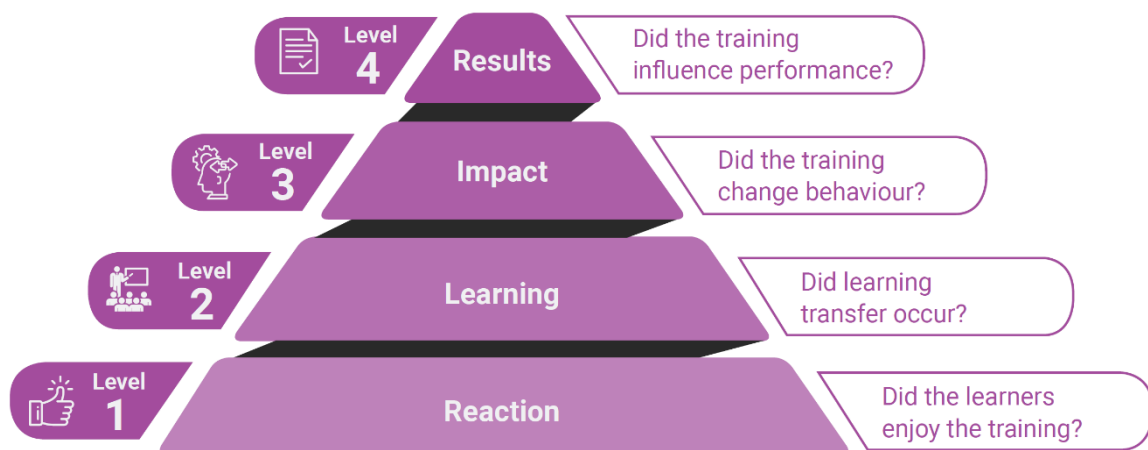
The theoretical base of human resource development had three assumptions. Firstly, human resource development is based on research and theories emanating from multiple development disciplines. Secondly, human resource development is concerned with improving employee performance in an organisation. Lastly, human resource development utilises theories of change and related organisation. Cloete (2016:45), seems to agree with both Swanson (2001:302) and Swanson and Holton (2009:101), that human resource development theories emanate from a plethora of theories and are thereafter integrated in different ways. Human resource development core theories are shared by other disciplines, hence at present, there is no universal view or agreement on the theory or multiple theories that support human resource development as a discipline.

### **2.3.1 Evaluation model**

Kirkpatrick's Evaluation model is relevant for human resource development within an organisation. Ngobese (2017:57), states that the theory assists to evaluate training programmes implemented by organisations to enhance employee skills and improve performance. According to Enojo, Ojonemi and Omisore (2015:7), Kirkpatrick (1976) maintained that trainers ought to endeavour to collect four types of data when evaluating training programmes, namely reaction, learning, behaviour and organisational results, as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

Kirkpatrick's model is used to examine the impact that an individual with an improved knowledge and capability has on a job role, team and business Bird and Cassel (2013:240). For instance, human resource development practitioners may evaluate employee performance through the quality of municipal services delivered to communities. Each stage of the evaluation model is further discussed below.

**Figure 2.1 Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Model**



Source: Bretz (2018)

### **Level 1: Reaction**

The reaction level evaluates the reactions of individuals to the training programme by asking questions that establish trainees' thoughts (Kurt, 2018:2). In so doing, the level establishes whether trainees enjoyed the training experience exemplified by the training material. Alternatively, the trainees may find the training programme a waste of time and resources due to a lack of relevance and impact. Trainees may be provided with an evaluation form, known as a smile sheet, to measure reactions towards the training program.

### **Level 2: Learning**

The learning level emphasizes training content that was learnt, or not learnt. In addition, learning illuminates the improved knowledge and skills arising from training. Hence, organisations ought to assess the extent to which training enhances employee capabilities to deliver performance in an organisation.

### **Level 3: Impact**

The impact level reflects whether trainees change their behaviour at the workplace as a result of the training. On the contrary, trainees could exhibit same behaviour after training. Similarly, Kurt (2018:3), claims that the impact level assesses and monitors the differences in the employee's behaviour at work after successfully attended the program. Assessing the behaviour change enables the determination of the knowledge, mindset and skills the training program delivers and that is implemented in the workplace.

### **Level 4: Results**

Level four on training results analyses the overall success and benefits of the training programme by measuring factors such as lowered spending; higher returns on investments; more efficient production times; and a higher quality of services. Level Four also determines the organisation's benefits resulting from the training (Bretz, 2018:3) and possible mentoring.

#### **2.3.2 Mentoring and coaching theory**

A theory by Garvey, Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2017:35), proposed that coaching and mentoring were training and development strategies that could be used to enhance employee performance and knowledge and nurture skills in the organisation. In the same vein, Coetzee et al. (2013:222), note that coaching underscores the relationship between a manager and an individual employee.

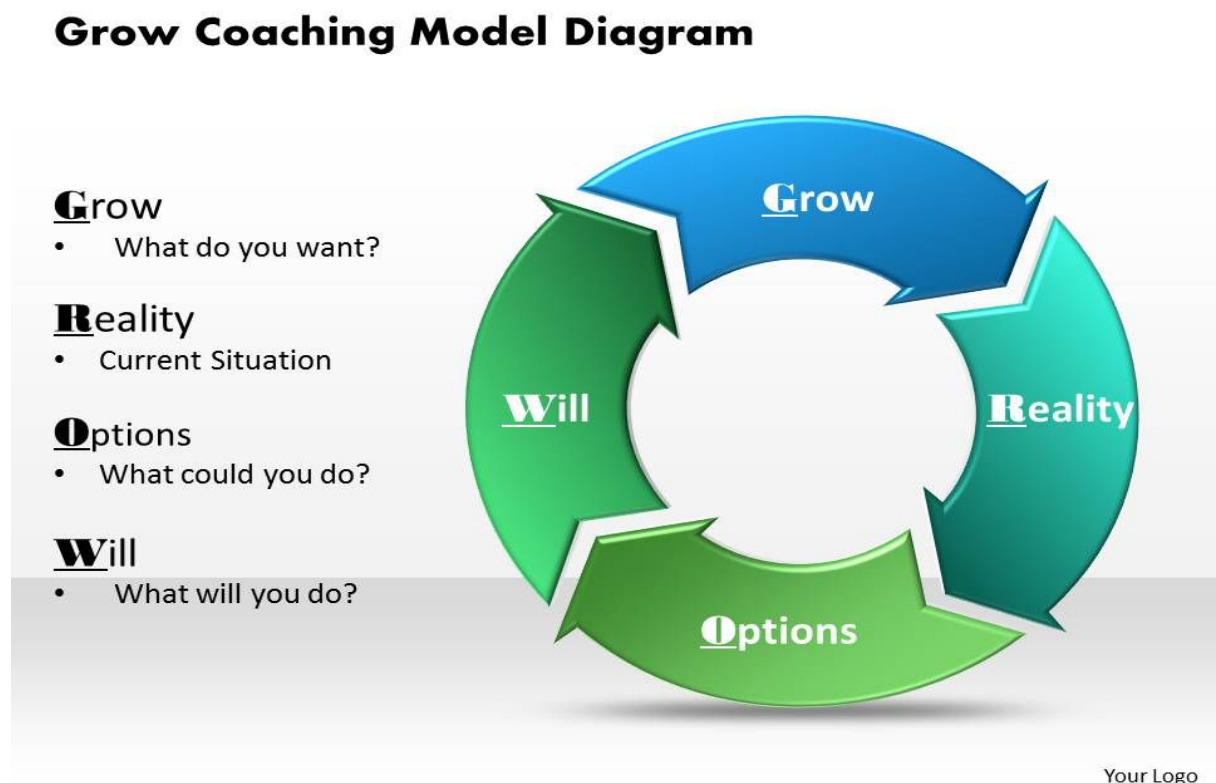
The aim of the coaching and mentoring strategy is to develop and enhance the employee's performance. Yet, mentoring refers to a relationship in which an expert in the field gives guidance, advice and friendship to a younger, less experienced employee (Ragins, 2016:229). For instance, the municipality may allocate mentors and coaches to employees who under-perform in an attempt to improve job performance.

Several models that contribute to coaching and mentoring theory. However, the GROW model by Fine, Alexander and Witmore is entrenched since the 1980s (Kamarudin, Kamarudin, Darmi and Saad, 2020:294). The GROW model is used as a performance coaching instrument and adopted by most organisations for dealing with performance matters (Mukherjee, 2014).

Extending this premise, the model was established to help develop employee performance and unleash potential. The GROW model consists of four stages, as illustrated in Figure 2.2 on the next page (Kamarudin, Kamarudin, Darmi and Saad, 2020:294).

- **Grow:** Identify what an employee aims to attain, and the focus is on solutions than problems. This model advises that coaching sessions should have clear, challenging, attainable and measurable goals.
- **Reality:** Help the employee review his or her current performance because only then can the employee be able to determine how to move forward to achieve those goals.
- **Option:** Help the employee explore what options are available for achieving the goals, such as, but not limited to, attending a short course training programme, mentor-mentee programme, workshops or conference or, on-the-job training.
- **Will:** At this stage, the employee needs to determine the relevant and suitable approaches to attain his or her goals.

**Figure 2.2 Diagram of the GROW coaching model**



Source: Louise (2022:1)

### **2.3.3 Human capital theory**

Human capital theory was introduced by Schultz and Becker in the 1950s to promote investment in human beings through training and development programmes rather than treating employees as invaluable assets in the organisation. More recently, Tan (2014:412) defined human capital as any cumulative knowledge or acquired characteristics a person has that contributes to both individual and organisational effectiveness. According to Tan (2014:412), Human capital theory assumes gains of education and training as a form of investing in human beings, and the main proposition is that people are regarded as a form of capital for development. In the case of a local municipality, training and development could enhance employee performance and thus probably improve service delivery.

## **2.4 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

Human resource development maintains robust service delivery through the provision of training and development strategies to equip employees with new skills and knowledge (Mabope, 2018:63). Gibb (2002:5), defines human resource development strategies as the development of skills for work in order to advance effective role performance. Development strives to change employees in totality, rather than just their knowledge and skills.

Human resource development strategies are crucial in enhancing employee performance as the local government has been criticised for poor-quality service by the public (Mdlongwa, 2014:39; Helao, 2015:15; Fuente and Bartram, 2018:262). Moreover, according to Rui, Ismail and Hussaini (2014:2940), most development ventures suffer from unsatisfactory performance in terms of time delays, budget overruns and quality shortcomings.

Poor service problems can be addressed by well-organised and effective human resource development strategies (Soerdi, Soenargo and Wahyudi, 2011:861). Similarly, human resource development strategies play a critical role towards a successful organisation (Tabassi, Ramli and Bakar, 2011:509). According to Nazir, Sorensen and Manca (2015:137), human resource development strategies are intended to either enhance job performance or alternatively train employees on new skills and future jobs. The development ought to benefit both employees' and organisations' current and future goals.

A well-planned training programme can serve its purpose whether conducted off-the job or on-the job Almeida and Aterido (2011:572). According to Durham (2016:2), on-the-job training and development involves developing employees within the workplace with regular tools and equipment for specific tasks and activities. Tabassi, Ramli and Bakar (2011:511), posit that on-the-job training is probably the most common method of employee development employed at all the various levels, particularly in the public sector.

Training and development has been largely limited to local and regional efforts (Tabassi, Ramli and Bakar, 2011:512). In addition, increasing attention ought to be focussed upon internal training and the use of on-the-job training, rather than off-the-job training. Tabassi et al. (2011:512), further affirmed that conducting on-the-job training is less expensive than off-the-job training. In the study's case, the human resource department may offer on-the-job training, which seems relevant at the local municipality, instead of external training.

Off-the job training involves conveying training outside the actual work environment. In addition, there are many human resource development strategies such as classroom lectures, conferences, workshops, films and simulation exercises (Nazir, Sorensen and Manca, 2015:139). Practitioners cannot rely on a single method of training since workers are exposed to multi-tasking jobs (Mossa, Boenzi, Digiesi, Mummolo and Romano, 2016:472).

To identify organisational and individual development areas, human resource development needs tools or assessments. In the absence of proper assessment strategies and the ability to predict employee competencies, organisations may become unclear about necessary competencies (Hussein, 2019:566).

By implementing assessment strategies and processes in the right place, organisations ought to be able to measure critical competencies and take steps to address areas that need development. In addition, effective training and development interventions and strategies will increase employee job performance and enable employees to develop the required knowledge and skills.

#### **2.4.1. Coaching and mentoring**

There was an ongoing debate regarding the analysis of coaching and mentoring (Mason, 2021:3). Scholars argue that while coaching and mentoring concepts may historically derive from different roots, more recently the concepts were primarily similar (Lues, 2016:242). Lues (2016:242), argues that employee coaching refers to a planned one-to-one instruction where a coach explains tasks, address questions and offer counsel to the employee.

Coaching, mentoring and regular feedback ought to be used as methods of developing and managing talent and employee performance at municipalities (Mabope, 2018:62). Talented employees ought to be developed through training and development. Similarly, Grosbeck (2014:144), iterated that employee coaching is an example of promoting behaviour at work that can improve employee skills, knowledge and abilities, which may result in improved employee performance and good quality service delivery at the municipality. Yet, care needs to be taken, especially in weak internal cultures, that managers are not dependent on external coaches (Mabope, 2018:62; Garvey et al., 2014:2).

Mentoring involves mentor-mentee relationship programmes in which the mentor promotes the personal and professional growth of the mentee (Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2016:98). Mentoring relationships sometimes grow informally. However, others are allocated as part of an official mentoring program. Ragins (2016:229), postulates that mentoring relationships occur within a constellation of relationships that can consist of formal mentors, informal mentors, peer mentors, supervisory mentors and additional developmental relationships within and outside the workplace.

Mentoring relationships are projected to deliver exceptional results that advance employees, enhance their competence and propel their careers (Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2016:100). Mabope (2018:62), perceives mentoring as a popular mechanism to develop a talent pool of employees and transfer essential job-related skills, behaviours and attitudes. Salter (2014:2), highlights that the potential for transferability of skills from mentoring and coaching programmes is also under-researched and not widely addressed in the literature.

There are several models contributing to coaching and mentoring, such as Stride's model, Oskar's model and the GROW model Kamarudin, Kamarudin, Darmi and Saad (2020:294). For the current study, the GROW model by Fine, Alexander and Witmore (1980) is the most relevant model, as the model clarifies the growth trajectory of the individual through coaching.

#### **2.4.2 Induction training**

Induction training is that moment when the organisation's vision and mission, structure, major policies, procedures, benefits and other important matters are introduced to the newly appointed employees. This is done to alleviate job insecurity and to belong in the company. In addition, induction training programmes need to be planned and monitored to reduce problems and uncertainties encountered by newly appointed employees in an organisation (Rodica, Hurloiu and Gabriel (2014:369). Nandi (2015:29) argues that induction training is a special sort of training established to assist newly employed personnel to familiarise themselves about tasks, to be introduced to colleagues and to settle at work.

Findings from Okorie and Musonda's (2020:357), study revealed that induction training is not executed properly due to a lack of management commitment. Furthermore, inadequate induction training has also been manifested by poor performance, which is caused by limited levels of employee awareness of the firm's operations. Salau, Falola and Akinbode (2014:48), state that organisations need to have an effective induction training program for new employees to improve performance and job satisfaction and in turn, overall organisational performance.

The process of on-boarding as the process that would help alleviate new employees' ambiguity and panic in the organisation. This process helps newcomers recognise and observe organisational policy and culture and support organisational socialisation activities (Klein, Polin and Leigh Sutton (2015). Furthermore, the on-boarding process can help a new employee to quickly reach the stage of contribution/competence; enhances job satisfaction and loyalty; and builds stronger relationships amongst colleagues.



Moon (2018:117), proposed four on-boarding process steps by Dunn and Jasinski (2009:116), which are employee orientation (on-the-job experience, observation); learning process of interaction and group participation; acculturation; and the acquisition of new skills, thinking and creativity. The four steps are explained below:

### **Step 1: Employee orientation**

The first step is associated with learning practices of knowledge acquisition, whereby an employee is assigned a coach, familiarising him or her with the job role and monitors the employee through observation.

### **Step 2: Learning process of interaction and group participation**

The second step of on-boarding activities allows newcomers to actively engage in organisational activities and provides opportunities to easily adjust. It is also noted that an effective socialisation process aligns the organisational members' job attitudes and behaviours with the organisational perspective.

### **Step 3: Acculturation**

The results of the second step above is building interesting environments for newcomers to learn so that they can be engaged in organisational activities to meet the ultimate goals of the organisation.

### **Step 4: Acquisition of new skills, thinking and creativity**

New employees require the alignment of their knowledge and skills and qualifications for organisational adjustment and suitability to be able to perform their respective jobs effectively and to think forward for the organisation, beyond the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

### **2.4.3 Apprentice training**

Apprenticeship training is regarded as an input for organisations on apprentices (Jens and Uschi, 2018:12). Fuller and Unwin (2010:409), argue that apprenticeships can be perceived as a training agreement which involves employment, on-the-job and off-the-job training, with reciprocal obligations drawn for both employers and the trainee. The apprenticeship program is formalised and managed by national or regional government.

Local authorities have encouraged employers to take apprenticeships, as well as creating them within local government (Lethbridge, 2016:3). In addition, Moon (2018:118) proposed that a coach or mentor in the apprenticeship process is imperative for the acquisition of new skills and knowledge.

Well-designed apprenticeship programs may attract the best apprentices and simultaneously supply the municipality with access to talent and add a great impact for the improvement (Coletti, 2019:381). Apprenticeships help reduce skills shortages because employees are capacitated with relevant competencies for the world of work. Formal training does not only increase the career opportunities and income of the workers, but also provides the municipality with a stable, trained workforce (Duncan, 2019:4).

An organisation may train apprentices when retaining former trainees as skilled employees after the fulfilment of training, which is more affordable compared to hiring skilled workers from the external labour market (Muhlemann, Wolter and Wuest, 2009:2). Furthermore, Lerman (2014:1), states that organisations can benefit from apprenticeship training through contributions to production, condensed turnover and training expenses, as well as assurance that employees have expertise.

#### **2.4.4 Workshops and conferences**

Training and development conferences, as well as workshops, are thought to be a helpful method to equip employees with necessary skills and knowledge (Rodica, Hurloiu and Gabriel, 2014:372). Likewise, the most part when educating, transferring knowledge to employees related to the organisational matters, ideas, theories, technologies and approaches is directed through conferences and workshops (Rodica et al., 2014:372).

Training workshops can consolidate training, team building, development, communications boundaries and planning together (Willemse, 2011:27). Furthermore, Willemse (2011:27), states that participation and the involvement of employees in training workshops increases a sense of proprietorship and empowerment and enables the advancement of both the individual and organisation. Training conferences are discussions on subject matter imparted to employees.

The importance of conferences and training workshops lies in two-way communication and the simultaneous dissemination of information to large numbers of employees (Jahanzeb and Bashir, 2013:245). Workshops and conferences help employees to become familiar with job functions and get actively involved. In addition, workshops and conferences enable employees to handle problems that arise on a regular basis (Milhem, Abushamsieh and Arostegui, 2014:21).

#### **2.4.5 Formal training and development courses**

Formal training and development courses refer to structured learning situations, with a specific curriculum by means of which experts deliver relevant information. Employees' technical and problem-solving skills can be developed effectively through the classroom lecture method (Stan, Stancovici and Palos (2013:722). Films can also be used to explicitly portray technical and vocational skills, most suitable for technicians in helping employees to improve job performance at the municipality. Furthermore, conducting simulation exercises may be relevant in developing employees involved in executing projects at the municipality such as housing, infrastructure, water taps, sanitation, etc. as this method is used to assess required capabilities for successful task performance.

### **2.5 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

An organisation cannot operate and be productive without employees. The consequences for an organisation depend on employee performance (Jubek, Wasike and Muturi, 2019:2). Otoo and Mishra (2018:518), posits that employee performance is the performance associated with the productivity and quality of service, meeting of targets and deadlines, presence or attendance on the job, efficiency of the work completed, and effectiveness of work completed.

The absence of a coherent human resource development conceptual interpretation of obligations and duties of managerial involvement, human resource development and other prominent leaders who are supposed to play a role may be the main cause of poor employee performance and competency deficits in the public sector (Cloete, 2016:6). Hee et al. (2019:1), argued that training and development has a significant positive relationship with job performance.

Hassan (2016:38), concurred with Hee et al. (2019:1), when he posited that human resource development practices of performance appraisal and training positively affect employees' performance. Hee et al. (2019:1), cited Huselid (1995) and Atteya (2012), who stated that by providing formal and informal training such as basic skills and management skills development, the organisation could influence employee performance. Nadarajah, Kadiresan, Kumar, Nissa and Yusoff (2012:12), concurred that once employees are well equipped, they share information and experiences to enhance service and organisational productivity.

Performance is measured in terms of how well the organisation can meet its vision, mission and objectives. The main objective of human resources management is to utilise human resources optimally to meet targets (Memon, Soomro, Lakho, Memon and Bhutto, 2018:2879). Performance management maintains, develops and motivates employees to deliver better results (Mone and London, 2018:3). Managers ought to propel employees to accomplish goals. Hence, the study examines the influence of human resource development on employee performance to improve the quality of service delivery.

### **2.5.1 Performance management**

Performance management is a demanding and interesting sub-dimension of human resource management (Kgati, 2013:66). DeNisi and Murphy (2017:421), state that performance management involves various activities, policies, procedures and interventions established to help employees improve performance. Performance appraisal is the primary step during the performance management process, and it includes feedback, goal-setting and training, as well as reward systems.

Performance management is at a turning point with close scrutiny and questioning by scholars for being too one-sided, a waste of time and damaging relationships between managers and subordinates (Moynihan, 2008:4), Van Dooren, Halligan and Leuven (2010:5), Lawler (2012:1) as well as Mackenzie, Wehner and Correll (2019:1). However, they believe that there is something worthy of careful investigation through examining assumptions against performance management.

There is acknowledgement that performance management will continue to be primary to local government to serve key purposes for public sector management (Van Dooren, Halligan and Leuven, 2010:5). Pulakos and O'Leary (2011:24), Adler, Compion, Colquitt, Grubb, Murphy, Ollander-Krane and Pulakos (2016:86), and Mone and London (2018:3), report that accumulated research and practice reveal that managers have a set of performance management tools and processes that may produce desirable results. However, there is considerable evidence of issues about how performance management is executed, as well as a need for improvement pertaining to its implementation. Similarly, Kinicki, Jacobson, Peterson and Prussia (2013:34), argue that managers lack execution of the performance management process due to uncertainty and time constraints.

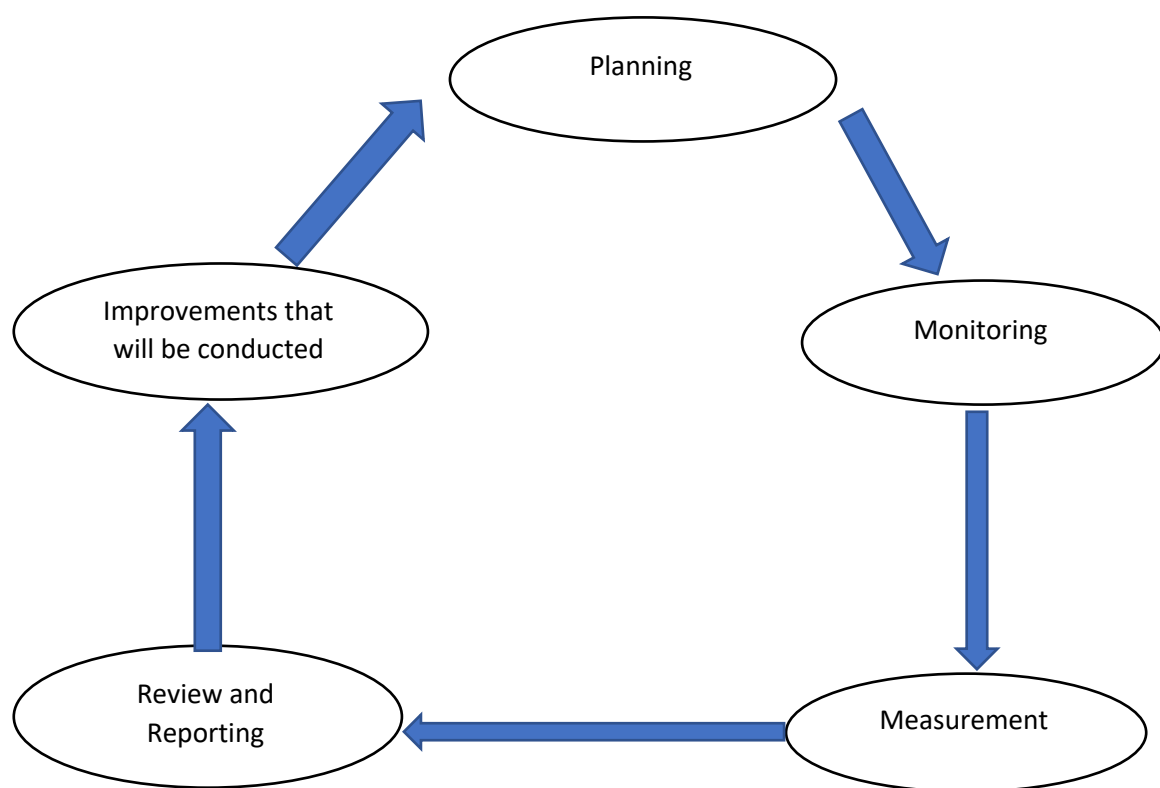
The greater difficulty of measuring and monitoring performance in the public sector than in the private sector since public goals are complex to quantify, and the public sector operates differently from competitive environments (Voom, van Genugten and Van Thiel, 2020:194). The human resource department needs assurance that performance assessment techniques are aimed at identifying employee strengths and weaknesses to execute sustainable corrective measures, when necessary (Mone and London, 2018:2). In addition, budget and planning cycles need some consideration when assessing development programmes.

The public service regulations (2013:22-23), require that employee performance be constantly monitored, and that satisfactory performance be incentivised. Furthermore, monitoring performance is needed to achieve the specific targets set by the organisation (Gusnadi and Hermawan, 2020:81). Kariuki and Reddy (2019:107), posit that performance agreements ought to be developed timeously and poor performance ought to be investigated and corrected.

Performance management finds out the reasons of under-performers, as well as suggest ways to improve their performance (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017:421). According to Aguinis (2019:8), receiving feedback about performance increases the motivation to perform better for future performance. In addition, proper performance management systems can assist the municipality in terms of improving the quality of service delivery, as this process may be conducted annually.

Poor implementation of performance management systems may lead to decreased motivation to perform, including the feeling that superior performance is not translated into meaningful tangibles such as increases in pay, promotions and rewards (personal recognition). A consequence of unfair performance management systems may also be increased levels of job dissatisfaction amongst employees, which may result in high employee turnover (Aguinis, 2019:9). According to Ndevu and Muller (2018:5), a performance management system consists of four elements, which are explained below.

## 2.5.2 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



**Figure 2.3 The process towards a municipality's PMS (Source: Adapted from Werner (2007:109))**

The approval of a municipality's performance management system with key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets for their Integrated development plans (IDPs) lies with the municipal council (Magoro, 2016:392). Pornprasert and Poonikom (2016:400), highlight that KPIs serve as key indicators of progress as they demonstrate and evaluate how effectively the municipality is attaining its key business objectives and targets.

The established KPIs and targets are monitored, measured and reviewed, and mechanisms for this are designed and executed. The role of the municipal council is to ensure that set mechanisms are able to rectify unsatisfactory performance early and where applicable, execute corrective measures.

### **2.5.3 Performance Appraisal**

A performance appraisal process assesses and discusses employee performance where applicable (Byars and Rue, 2011:217). According to Cascio (2010:334) and Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2018:171), performance appraisal plays a prominent part in the overall process of performance management as it can be successfully utilised for assessing employee performance and development. Similarly, developmental objectives focus on determining employee and organisational strengths and weaknesses to maintain healthy supervisor-subordinate relationships as well as providing appropriate coaches (Rebore, 2007:203). On the contrary, Aguinis (2020:8), highlights that a consequence of a poor performance appraisal may be a damaged relationship between the supervisor and individual employee as appraisal has become a critical task of supervision.

Organisations ought to be aware of employees' capabilities in order to manage such employees and, in turn, re-align these capabilities with the organisation's business strategy. Determining and knowing employees' strengths and weaknesses will enable the municipality to allocate relevant training and development for its employees. Byars and Rue (2011:216) agreed with Woods and West (2010:277) that performance appraisal provides valuable information that can be used to establish individual and organisational training and development.

## **2.6 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

Municipalities are principal agents for the provision of services to the public since municipalities engage citizens in integrated development planning processes to prioritise the development needs of communities (Koma, 2010:1). The quality of services provided depends on the skills, knowledge, abilities and experience that human resources possess. According to Govender (2016:24), service delivery consists of various networks and organisations that supply services and products to the public.

The quality creates a complex relationship of interaction and interdependencies between service delivery and human resource development. According to Section 152 of the Constitution (1996), one of the objectives of municipalities involves the provision of basic services in a sustainable manner and promoting social and economic development through effective community participation.

Fast-growing populations contribute a lot to the service delivery challenges faced throughout the world (Makanyeza, Kwandayi and Ikobe (2013:2). In many developing countries such as South Africa, the concern of service delivery is a major issue given the poor-quality service provision and the urgent needs of the indigent (Makanyeza et al., 2013:2). Makanyeza et al. (2013:2), citing Khalid (2010), stated that local councils in Malaysia face pressure to improve service delivery.

In Nepal, the development plan to improve the quality of service delivery has failed as municipal provision has remained low (Tamrakar, 2010:33). The problem of service delivery is faced by many towns in the world, especially in Africa and other developing countries, and is not unique to South African towns alone. Hence, there is a need for strategies to improve the local municipality's service delivery quality.

There are limited studies that formally investigate the influence of human resource development on service delivery and strategies that can be implemented to improve local government. Helao (2015:13), states that crucial services such as sanitation, housing, electricity and road infrastructure remain a huge challenge to regional council and local authorities in Namibia. Despite putting proper governance structures in place, regional and local government institutions remained lacking in vigorous policy implementation and accountability; have financial mismanagement; and decentralisation is slow. Similarly, it seems there is a lack of communication and consultation amongst public institutions, which results in delays in delivering services.

The South African Local Government Association [SALGA] (2016:8), posits that employee training and development is a local municipality's goals. The goal emphasises the achievement of human resource development for stability and growth. According to SALGA (2016:13), addressing human resource development and labour relations challenges was critical for the local municipality. Although the local municipality addresses human resource development issues, there seems to be challenges, as exemplified by ongoing community protests.



Local municipalities face challenges of inequality and the poor provisioning of basic services to local communities around the world (Horn and Lloyd, 2001:59; Koma, 2014:41). Mdlongwa (2014:39), posits that service delivery remains one of the key and straining challenges that governments face. During the post-apartheid era, some improvements have been noted. However, at the local government sphere, the effective supply of essential services to people remains a major challenge (Govender, 2017:427; Ngobese, Mason and Maharaj, 2017:45).

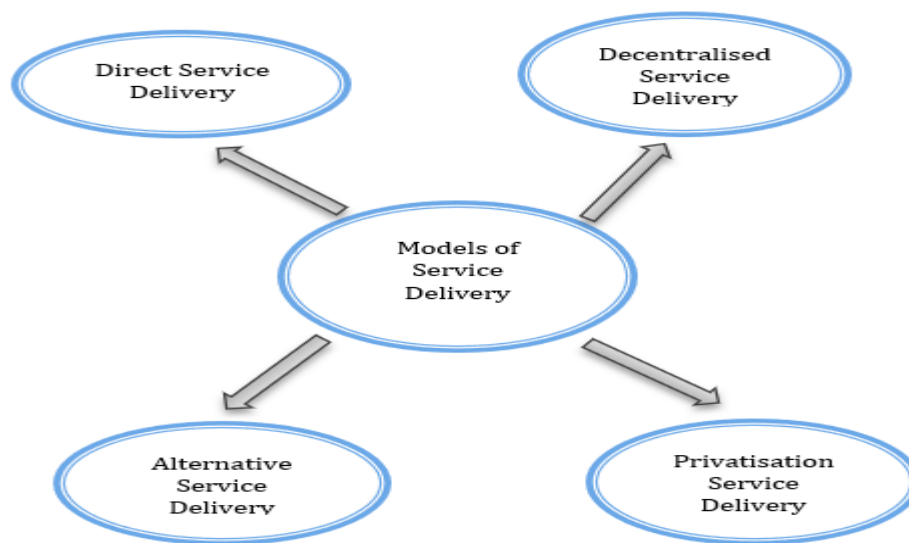
In recent years, there has been an escalation of violent protests in relation to service delivery across South Africa, with communities expressing their unhappiness at poor delivery and corruption (Makanyeza, Kwandayi and Ikobe, 2013:5; Beyers, 2016:168; Wasserman, Chuma and Bosch, 2018:146). Hence, the study is necessary in proposing human resource development strategies for the local municipality.

### **2.6.1 Models of service delivery**

Various public service models can be adopted, namely the direct service delivery model, privatisation service delivery model, decentralised service delivery model and alternative service delivery model. The direct service delivery model is when the government assumes full responsibility and accountability in provisioning of services either directly operating from headquarters or through de-concentrated line agencies (Pradeep, 2011:7).

In the privatisation service delivery model, the central government enables public services delivery for private companies' ownership and control (Bauer and Markmann, 2016:284). In this case, the government has no responsibility and control over how services are distributed, except for monitoring and enforcing the company's compliance with legal codes. The basic rationale of privatisation is that it tends to run a business more efficiently as private firms often employ people with the best skills. Private firms are likely to cut costs and be efficient as they are interested in profit-making.

**Figure 2.4** Diagram showing four models of service delivery



Source: Pradeep (2011:21)

The decentralisation of service delivery functions is widely practised around the world, especially in local government structures. Decentralisation is a philosophy of organisation and management that focuses on either moving decision making away from centralised control (higher-level managers) and closer to middle or lower-level managers (Plunkett et al., 2008:247-248; Pradeep, 2011:21). Decentralisation is based on the principle of sub-solidarity, a rule where the provision, production and delivery of services is devolved to local structures that comply with the requirements and needs of the citizens.

Decentralised authority enables the management level to make appropriate decisions, smoothly run the organisation, and lastly, employees become empowered as they are also involved in the decision-making of the company. Kamara, Leonard and Haines (2017:35), citing Sharma (2000), argued that decentralised local governance contributes to development to promote participatory development strategies and establishment of policies for local needs.

## **2.6.2 CHALLENGES WITH SERVICE DELIVERY**

Capable human resources are a major variable that affects better service delivery in South African municipalities, particularly in Mbhashe municipality (Kuhlengisa, 2018:6). Shortages of qualified and experienced persons exist where a lack of training and development affects service delivery. Moreover, corruption affects the provision of quality basic services like water to the public (Rauch and Johannes, 2015:3). Corruption is defined by Cuervo-Cazurra (2014:1), as the abuse by individual officials of public resources, such as financial and physical resources, for enrichment. Beyers (2016:176), highlighted that “corruption and maladministration has become endemic and lack of accountability or transparency in supplying services to the public is a cause for concern”

Poor performance and corruption by municipal employees has been established as a challenge in the effective provision of basic services by municipalities. Municipal employees have been characterised by poor performance and work conduct due to corruption and a lack of qualified employees (Mpofu and Hlatywayo, 2015:1). Quality employee training and development could assist with improving employee performance towards improved quality service delivery to communities.

Local government deals with an escalation of weak financial controls nationally. Communities express dissatisfaction with the poor delivery of municipal goods and services (Mantzaris, 2014:81; Mashamaite, 2014:231). Another issue that South African municipalities are faced with is poor financial controls, which have a diverse effect on service delivery as there is a positive correlation between sound financial control and effective service delivery (Beyers, 2016:170; Tshishonga, 2019:161). Reports have been brought to the auditor-general's attention regarding the maladministration, mismanagement of public funds and abuse of resources by officials at local government levels (Auditor-general South Africa, 2018:16).

The post-Mbeki government sought to introduce government operations to address community needs. The objective was to build capacity within South Africa's human resources to support socio-economic development and growth (DHET, 2010:12). Since the year 2000, several progressive human resources development policies have been legislated, with the aim of reversing the downward human resource development trend.

The most notable of these policies are the National Skills Development Strategy (2000), the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (2010) and the National Development Plan 2030 (2011). Collectively, the strategies narrate a vision for development.

Municipalities in South Africa have a poor record of developing employees (Shayamano, 2017:20). The achievement of the National Development Plan depends on the cooperation of all spheres of government when responding to development challenges and implementing the set vision. Municipalities are critical stakeholders for driving human development (The Knysna Weekly, 2015:1). Nzewi, Ijeom, Sibanda and Sambumbu (2016:39), argue that organisational culture in municipalities affects talent management and service delivery. The assertion is compounded by a prevailing organisational belief that human resource development projects and programmes such as skills development, capacity building, coaching and mentoring can be achieved without planning for them (Nzewi et al., 2016:38).

Various municipalities are constantly experiencing poor service delivery and raise questions of human resource development practices and continuing protests about service delivery (Mehlape, 2017:106). Salleh and Sulaiman (2019:683), suggest that to improve poor quality service in local municipality, human resource practitioners need to establish training and development. Mehlape (2017:106), further argued that professionals ought to upgrade skills and knowledge to provide suitable training and development programmes that address issues of poor service delivery.

## **2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter reviewed the literature on human resource development, employee performance and service delivery. The literature confirmed that training, as well as skills development, played a vital role to enhance productivity, commitment and the growth of employees. The study used various theoretical models to guide the study. Trained employees were generally motivated and better performers as compared to a non-trained employee for possible efficiency and improved service delivery. Furthermore, the literature highlighted the challenges of service delivery at local municipalities, characterised by community protests and a lack of basic service. Strategies to improve the municipality's service delivery have been proposed in the literature. The next chapter unpacks the research methodology and design.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter provided a comprehensive discussion of literature on the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery by reviewing various secondary sources. *The study aims to examine whether human resource development influences employee performance and service delivery.* Chapter three explains the research methodology and design that was used to address the aim of the study by providing in-depth data to answer the research questions and objectives. In addition, the chapter provides a detailed account of the process of research philosophy, research paradigm, research design, target population, sampling, collecting, and analysing data, validity, and reliability, as well as ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 POSITIVISM RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY**

There are various research philosophies for verifying a theoretical proposition, namely positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016; Nirod, 2015:1). For the purposes of the study, the research embodied the positivism philosophy to infuse the research methodology and design of the study, as positivism claims that knowledge can be revealed using a scientific method. In pursuit of the ontology and epistemology of knowledge production, the positivism paradigm of exploring social reality was premised on checking human behavior through observation, objectivity, experience, and reason (Nel, 2016:1; Kuhn, 2012:217; Hume, 2019:35; Mouton, 2001). Hence, the study was located within positivism to conduct a quantitative research approach.

### **3.3 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH**

Whilst there are qualitative and mixed research approaches, the study was located within a positivist paradigm and adopted a cross-sectional quantitative research paradigm (Creswell, 2014:119; Cooper and Schindler, 2014:138; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2016). According to Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014:3), a quantitative approach involved a set of strategies, techniques and predictions that were used to study various processes through conducting numerical analysis. Similarly, the study used a quantitative paradigm to perform statistical analyses on responses regarding human resource development, employee performance and service delivery. The study further systematically compares responses using measurements.

#### **3.3.1 Survey research design**

A research design is a strategy for collecting, probing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies (Tobi and Kampen, 2018:1211). The study employed a survey research design to examine variables of interest. Jann and Hinz (2016:105) explain that, in a survey design, respondents could provide meaningful responses to a questionnaire. The researcher chose to conduct a survey research design to collect rich data about the knowledge, attitude, skills and opinions of both management and employees to examine the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery (Jann and Hinz, 2016:106). The survey research design reduced the time taken to complete and enhanced the response rate which was 74% of the respondents (Story and Tait, 2019:192).

The study further employed a quantitative non-experimental research approach. Price, Jhangiani, Chiang, Cuttler and Leighton (2017:1) explain a non-experimental research approach, in a study, that lacks the manipulation of an independent variable. Non-experimental research was preferred for the study as it takes place in a non-controlled environment (Price, Jhangiani and Chiana, 2015:2). In addition, the non-experimental approach and design meant that alternative routes ought to be used to draw conclusions.

### **3.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The survey research study was conducted at the Mbhashe Local Municipality, a public service organisation located in the Eastern Cape province of the Republic of South Africa. The Mbhashe Local Municipality is one of six municipalities under the auspices of the wider Amathole District Municipality in the Eastern Cape province. To be clear, with the exception of Mbhashe Local Municipality, which is the research site of the study, the remaining municipalities under the auspices of Amathole District Municipality were excluded from the study. Interestingly, the name “Mbhashe” comes from the picturesque river called Mbhashe, which flows through Dutywa, Willowvale and Elliotdale areas (Mbhashe Local Municipality Socio-economic Review and Outlook, 2017:1).

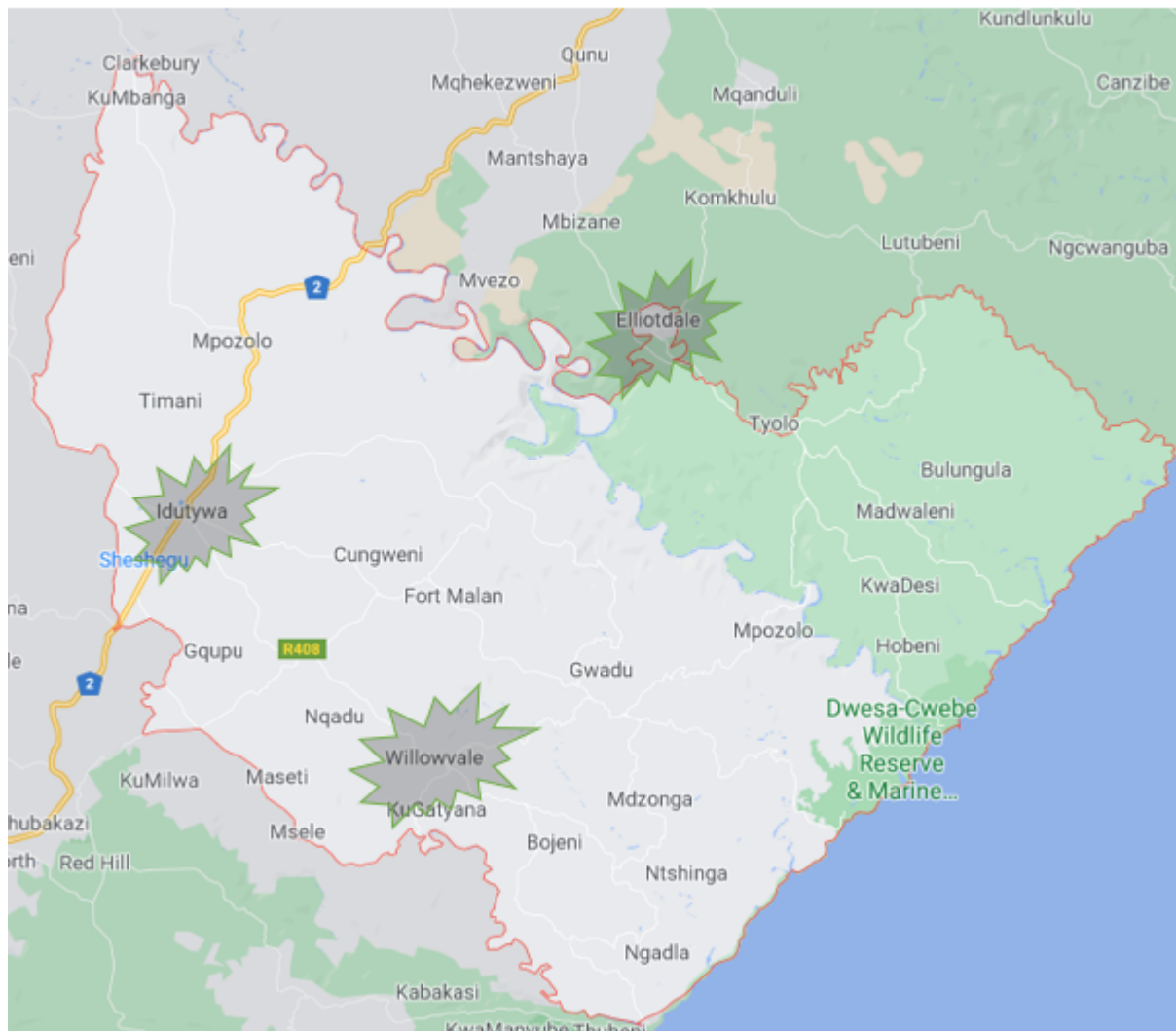
The Mbhashe Local Municipality covers three municipal areas, namely Dutywa, the central municipal branch, which also supports smaller satellites Elliotdale and Willowvale municipal branches respectively. The municipality delivers services such as electricity, sewerage, sanitation, water, and solid waste services to local rural communities. In addition, the municipality consists of seven departments, which are the municipal managers’ office, corporate services, finance department, community services, infrastructural services, operations department, and developmental planning department. As a unit of analysis, the research sites were selected as potential respondents of interest, which comprised the target population. Research sites under Mbhashe Local Municipality are highlighted with stars on the map below.

### **3.5. TARGET POPULATION**

After complying with ethical considerations that included a gatekeepers’ letter (see Annexure D), the researcher requested information from human resources to demarcate the target population of the Mbhashe Local Municipality. Alvi (2016:10) described a target population as the entire population that meets a criterion specified for a research investigation, as was the case in the study. Upon receiving permission to conduct the study, the researcher was provided with a ‘summary of employees’ list by the human resource department of the Mbhashe Local Municipality (Workplace Skills Plan and Annual Training Report, 2020:3). A summary of employees list is known as the sample frame.

The target population equated to two hundred and sixty-five (N=265) employees at Mphashe Local Municipality (Mphashe Annual Report, 2019:3). The below map provides an illustration of the geographical location for Mphashe Local Municipality. It also shows its satellite branches which are Willowvale and Elliotdale which are marked with stars on the map.

**Figure 3.1 Map of Mphashe Local Municipality**



Source: Google Images (2021)

### 3.6 Stratified random sampling

The sampling method was an act of ensuring that the sample used was representative of the whole population (McCombes, 2019:1). For the purposes of the quantitative non-experimental survey study and based on the target population (N=265), a probability sampling technique was used to select potential respondents (n=155).



According to Clow and James (2014:229), who agree with Alvi (2016:12), the probability sampling technique includes a random procedure in which all members of the population had an equal chance of being integrating into the sample. In particular, the study used stratified random sampling for the proportional representativity of respondents. Respondents held different jobs at local municipalities namely Dutywa, Willovale and Elliotdale, which comprised Mbhashe municipality as a unit of analysis.

Stratified random sampling involves the classification of a population into smaller groups known as “strata”, based on members’ shared attributes. The stratified random sampling method was suitable for the study to narrow the differences between various clusters of individuals, which was conducive to extracting a representative sample size (Khan, Reddy, and Rao, 2015:2081) and Rahi (2017:3). Furthermore, stratified random sampling minimised the chance of sampling bias as there was an equitable chance of selecting respondents from a stratum of the population.

In applying the stratified random sampling as tabulated in Table 3.1, the respondents were classified into three strata. Stratum 1 comprised general managers; stratum 2 comprised general assistants, while stratum 3 comprised administrative staff members. The sample sizes for the different strata were based on Sekaran and Bougie (2016) sample guide at 95% confidence level of accuracy. The researcher pooled subsets of the strata together to form a random sample. A total of 155 (n=155) respondents were involved in the study at Mbhashe Local Municipality,

**TABLE 3.1 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION**

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Target population</b>	<b>Stratified sample</b>
<b>General managers</b>	20	12
<b>General assistants</b>	113	66
<b>Administrative staff</b>	132	77
<b>Totals</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>155</b>

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION**

A questionnaire was a research instrument comprising a series of questions for the purpose of obtaining data from respondents (McLeod, 2018:1). Data from the stratified sampled respondents was gathered using a closed-ended structured questionnaire (See Annexure B). The structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher, guided by variables of interest that emerged from the literature review (Byars and Rue, 2011:217; Vora, 2015:1; Ngobese, 2017:57; Garvey, Garvey, Stokes, and Megginson, 2017:35).

#### **3.7.1 Structured questionnaire design**

In relation to the designed questionnaire, the cover letter (See Annexure A) mentioned that participating in the study was voluntary, and assured anonymity and confidentiality. The structured questionnaire was designed by following the guidelines according to Somekh and Lewin (2011:225). The guidelines include but not limited to deciding on the information required, choosing appropriate method of reaching target respondents, choosing questionnaire content, and putting questions in a meaning order and format. In addition, the questionnaire (See Annexure B) was divided into four sections, as illustrated in Table 3.2 below. Section A required demographic information of participants such as permanent, management, administrative, general assistant, gender, age group, years of service and highest level of education. Respondents could tick the appropriate box to denote selection.

**TABLE 3.2 SECTIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

<b>Section A</b>	<b>Demographic information</b>
<b>Section B</b>	<b>Human resource development</b>
<b>Section C</b>	<b>Employee performance</b>
<b>Section D</b>	<b>Service delivery</b>

The above scales were developed by the researcher guided by the sections of the questionnaire based on reviewed literature. The study conducted Cronbach Alpha tests to confirm scores. The questionnaire's Section B comprised 15 statements that related to the human resource development variable of interest. In addition, section C of the questionnaire comprised 15 statements related to employee performance variable. Thereafter, section D comprised 15 statements related to the service delivery variable of a local municipality. In response to each statement, a Likert scale was provided with five options, namely strongly agree; agree; neutral; disagree and strongly disagree, in anticipation of the pilot study (See Annexure B).

### **3.7.2 Pilot study**

A pilot study as preliminary research that assists with the design of an important study through techniques and guidelines of questionnaire development (Dikko, 2016:521). A pilot study was crucial and an appropriate guide to reduce incidences of non-responses by highlighting ambiguities and potential pitfalls of the questionnaire (Hilton, 2015:2). Furthermore, a pilot study helped to strengthen and maximise the research instrument to be employed to collect data. Studies similar to the current study normally use 10-20 people for pilot studies (Akinbowale, 2013:61; Taduvana, 2017:85).

The pilot study was conducted in August 2020 by approaching and choosing 10 respondents who neither formed part of the target population nor working at the research site. The researcher applied convenience sampling in selecting respondents for the pilot study. All Covid-19 protocols were observed during this period to reduce the spread of the virus. Respondents were advised that participation was voluntary, and withdrawal is allowed.

Furthermore, confidentiality was maintained by not specifying respondents' details or any identification details of respondents on the research instrument. The researcher physically distributed questionnaires to the respondents and they were given two days to complete the questionnaire. After two days, the researcher collected all 10 questionnaires, which translated to a 100% response rate. The study obtained the most used Cronbach's Alpha, using standard procedures for social science to ensure if respondents understood the questionnaire.

A few unclear questions were rectified on the research instrument. One statement from human resource development and employee performance variables was identified to be poor and was rectified by the researcher. numbering in the questionnaire was replaced with numbering items by the sections such as B1, C1 and D1. The researcher made the final necessary amendments and corrections to prevent ambiguity. After the researcher was convinced that she got rid of errors in the questionnaire, the questionnaire was administered to the stratified random sampled respondents.

### **3.7.3 Personal method of collecting data**

The researcher hand delivered the questionnaires (See Annexure B) with a covering letter (See Annexure A) to respondents (n=155) using the personal method of data collection. The questionnaire was delivered in September 2020 to the human resource department of the municipality taking into consideration all the Covid-19 protocols, which are social distancing, wearing of masks and sanitizing. The selected stratified-random sampled respondents were asked to return the completed questionnaires within two weeks to the human resource department of the local municipality. Therefore, the researcher collected the completed questionnaires (See Annexure B) from the human resource department at Mbhashe Local Municipality. Mbhashe Local Municipality has two satellite branches situated in Willowvale and Elliotdale, which were also part of the target population.

Respondents were asked to use this method of return with Mbhashe Local Municipality as a central office to facilitate completed questionnaires reaching the researcher. The Human resource development office was well informed to not tamper with the data. The researcher also advised the HR department to keep questionnaires safe until collection. The personal method ensured a higher response rate than a telephone survey, computer assisted personal interviewing, electronic mailing, postal survey, and web-based questionnaires in preparation for validity testing (McLeod, 2018:2).

### **3.8 VALIDITY**

Validity is the extent to which the research questionnaire measured what it claimed to measure Heale and Twycross (2015:66). Validity was strengthened through a sample of respondents from which the conclusions of the study were drawn (Middleton, 2019:2).

There are many ways to measure validity and two measures particularly applicable to testing instrument evaluation are content validity and face validity (Angell, 2015:4).

### **3.8.1 Content validity**

Content validity was the extent to which a research instrument accurately measured what it was intended to measure. The researcher developed a questionnaire and the supervisor, statistician and academic checked the questionnaire to ensure content validity (Surucu and Maslakci, 2020:2696). The experts checked whether the questionnaire adequately covered relevant content that ought to represent the variables of interest. After the questionnaire was assessed, a few unclear questions were rectified on the questionnaire by restructuring and amending some items.

### **3.8.2 Face validity**

Face validity is about assessing a questionnaire's items related to the subject under investigation at face value. The face validity of the questionnaire was checked by conducting a pilot test (Taherdoost (2016:30). In addition, the questionnaire was scrutinised by two experts, namely the supervisor and statistician (Taherdoost, 2016:30). A pilot study was conducted by approaching and selecting 10 respondents who neither formed part of the target population nor worked at the research site.

The researcher physically distributed questionnaires to respondents, who were given two days to complete the questionnaire. Thereafter, the researcher collected 10 questionnaires from the respondents, which translated into a 100% response rate. One statement relating to human resource development and employee performance variables was identified to be poor and was rectified by the researcher.

### **3.8.3 Construct validity**

Construct validity is determined by a degree to which the measuring instrument used captures the constructs that it is intended to represent. Construct validity was ensured by translating theories and test scores based on the existing research knowledge and choosing relevant instrument to measure the items (Bedford and Spekle, 2018:23). The study drew from Akdere and Egan (2020) study to adapt the application and measurement of human resource development.

The study by Akdere and Egan (2020) followed employee performance construct guidelines from Combs, Crook and Rauch (2019). Pertaining to service delivery, the study pursued Vandenabeele (2008) interpretations of service delivery construct. Thereafter, the study adapted the constructs to suit the purposes of the study.

#### **3.8.4 External validity**

In the context of this study, external validity is defined as an extent to which the results of the study are generalisable to municipal employees working in other areas, especially the population that the sample was intended to represent (Pneumol, 2018:183). The study was generalised to a larger population and in making future predictions. Furthermore, external validity was ensured by choosing interventions that are feasible to apply.

#### **3.8.5. Nomological validity**

The study relied on the nomological validity practices of Kuss, Shorter, van Rooj, van der Mheen and Griffiths (2014), to guide the conduct of the study. The directions of the hypothesized relationships between constructs were reflected in the conceptual model of the study. Thereafter, the link or lack thereof between constructs would be discussed in later chapters of the study. Therefore, the study conducted a Cronbach's alpha test to predict the validity of the questionnaire items of each construct namely human resource development, employee performance and service delivery.

### **3.9 RELIABILITY**

Reliability refers to the extent to which a research method consistently reproduces the same results when repeatedly applied under the same circumstances (Surucu and Maslakci, 2020:2707). Taherdoost (2016:29), explained two types of measuring the reliability of the questionnaire, namely test-retest and internal consistency reliability. Story and Tait (2019:197), highlighted that test-retest was measured by having the same sample of respondents to complete the same survey at two different points in time. Hence, test-retest was conducted by the researcher in to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher conducted test-retest by administering the same set of questionnaires twice to test whether there would be variances in responses (Middleton, 2020:2).

The researcher compared the data collected and no difference was found in respondents' responses, in preparation for internal consistency reliability testing. The study obtained the most used Cronbach's Alpha, using standard procedures for social science to ensure the reliability of a questionnaire with Likert scales. The results of the reliability and validity tests of the measuring instrument utilised in the pilot study are presented in Table 3.3 below.

The reliability outputs presented in Table 3.3 below were for the positively aligned statements in the research questionnaire. Taherdoost (2016:29), stated that there were no absolute rules for internal consistencies. However, a minimum internal consistency coefficient of .70 was suggested in anticipation of data analysis. According to Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2014:123), Alpha Cronbach value of 0.6 indicates an acceptable level of reliability.

**TABLE 3.3 QUESTIONNAIRE RELIABILITY SCORES**

		<b>N of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
B	Human resource development	15	0,810
C	Employee performance	15	0,694
D	Service delivery	15	0,689
<b>Overall</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>0,845</b>

### **3.10 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is defined by Ali and Bhaskar (2016:790), as a time-consuming process used by researchers to reduce, structure, illustrate, evaluate, and interpret collected data to derive insights. The quantitative data was analysed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 26 for Windows. The researcher cleaned the data set by counting and re-counting to ensure completeness.

The captured data was verified by double-checking to get rid of any capturing errors. The statistician ran statistical analyses on the data after the researcher had captured the data. Thereafter, descriptive statistics were generated through frequencies and percentages, which were used to describe the data. The results are illustrated using tables and graphically represented by bar and pie charts. Correlational analysis tests, chi-square and factor analysis were also conducted.

### **3.10.1 Descriptive statistics**

A descriptive analysis provides simple summaries about the characteristics of a data set through tables, cross-tabulations, graphs, and pie charts. Data analysis comprised descriptive and inferential statistics (Loeb, Dynarski, McFarland, Moms, Reardon and Reber, 2017:1). After data collection, the researcher captured the data on Excel spreadsheet to form a data set using percentages.

Percentages assisted the researcher and statistician in determining the actual percentage of respondents who agreed, disagreed, and were not certain (neutral) about their responses to the items in the questionnaire. Thereafter, data was sent to a statistician to compile descriptive statistics for demographics and inferential statistical tests. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26 was used to generate descriptive statistics from primary data.

### **3.10.2 Inferential statistics**

The researcher used inferential statistics to determine the relationship between variables and to ascertain whether there was any difference between two or more groups (Trochim, 2020:1). In addition, the researcher was able to compare the sample and population through inferential statistics. Non-parametric tests were adopted to analyse data at nominal and ordinal levels

#### **3.10.2.1 Correlation analysis**

For this study, the relationship between variables was established using the Pearson correlation ( $r$ ) and Spearman's rank correlation tests. According to Govender (2017:79), correlation analysis denotes a relationship between two or more quantitative variables. For the purposes of the study, descriptive statistics were considered adequate to describe the profile of the respondents.

Govender (2017:80), explained that the result of a correlation coefficient whose value was +1 indicated that the two variables have a perfect positive relationship; whilst a correlation coefficient of -1 indicates that a perfect negative relationship exists between the two variables. Lastly, a correlation coefficient of zero indicates that there is no existence of a relationship between the two variables being studied and does not imply independence (Curtis, Comiskey and Dempsey, 2015:23).



### 3.10.2.2 *Chi-square test*

The chi-square test was conducted to determine whether the association between two research variables was statistically significant. As confirmed by Cooper and Schindler (2014:445), the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test is the most widely used non-parametric test of significance. In addition, a chi-square analysis determines the association with a significance level of 0.05 or less (Burns and Bush, 2010:572). According to Burns and Bush (2010:572), “when the level exceeds 0.05, it suggests that there is no existence of relationship between the measured variables”. The test of independence between the variables was conducted using a cross-tabulation known as a bivariate table. Furthermore, the p-value of the chi-square was examined using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), with a 95% confidence level. A Pearson’s chi-square test was used to compare observed results with expected results to determine the difference, and if there is an association between the variables.

## 3.11 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

In a quantitative study, the researcher uses question statements and hypotheses to devise and direct the aim of the study (Mourougan and Sethuraman, 2017:35). In this study, the researcher used hypotheses to relate and describe variables of interest. In addition, the hypotheses were formulated before data-gathering and interpretation of the research and provided direction for the collection and interpretation of data. Mourougan and Sethuraman (2017:34), highlight that good hypothesis should have the character of a logical relationship and be testable.

## 3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics are research principles that are designed to respect research participants, researchers, and their institutions as well as maintaining a good name of research. The researcher has focused on three ethical principles, namely, anonymity, confidentiality as well as non-disclosure of respondents’ identity (Anderson and Morrow, 2020:1). The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the Durban University of Technology’s Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate. Ethical clearance was mandatory for this research to ensure that there would be no harm to the people involved (Mbabe, Ajayi, Bagula, Leenen and Schoeman, 2021:1). The institution has granted ethical clearance to the researcher in July 2020.

The study ensured anonymity through clear instructions (See Annexure A) on the questionnaire. The covering letter assured respondents that information would not be disclosed, and they would remain anonymous. Voluntary participation was ensured by clearly highlighting in the covering letter (See Annexure A) that respondents could refuse to participate or could withdraw from participating in the study at any time. In addition, confidentiality and anonymity were upheld by omitting names in the questionnaire (See Annexure B).

Confidentiality is a principle that allowed non-disclosure and publication of information that may be harmful to parties other than the research team (Sim and Waterfield (2019:3008). The study ensured confidentiality by excluding respondent details. The Durban University of Technology issued the researcher with a gatekeeper's Letter (See Annexure D) to proceed with the research study.

The researcher also obtained a gate-keeper's letter (See Annexure C) from the municipality, providing access to the municipality for data collection. Hard-copy data was stored in a safe place for five years and the electronic data was password secured. The manuscript was putted in Turnitin prior to submission for examination to ensure that the document was within the threshold of plagiarism of 20%.

### **3.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter explained the research methodology design employed to gather primary data for the study. A positivist philosophy and cross-sectional quantitative research paradigm were adopted to conduct the study. A survey research design was used to collect data from the stratified sample of respondents. In addition, a structured questionnaire was developed, piloted, and validated.

The unit of analysis was the Mbhashe Local Municipality located in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Data were analysed using statistical tests such as Pearson's chi-square, Spearman's rho and Kendall's tau<sub>b</sub>. The study complied with ethical considerations such as anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research process. The next chapter discusses the analysis of results and provides a discussion of the findings.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology and design to collect and analyse data from respondents in this study. Located within a positivist research philosophy, the study adopted a quantitative paradigm and cross-sectional survey research design to collect and analyse data from sampled respondents. The aim of the study was *to examine the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at a local municipality in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa*.

In pursuit of the aim, the study formulated three research questions as follows:

- What human resource development strategies are used to enhance service delivery?
- How does human resource development influence employee performance?
- What factors influence employee performance and service delivery?

In addition, five hypotheses were formulated to test the significance of the results. The unit of analysis was the Mbhashe Local Municipality located in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa.

Chapter four presents the data results and discusses the findings in order to answer the research questions and hypotheses. Descriptive statistics through tables and graphs are used to describe the data. Furthermore, high-level inferential statistics of correlational analysis ( $r$ ), factor analysis and chi-square tests ( $\chi^2$ ) were conducted to ascertain relationships between constructs of interest. The study discussed the key findings supported by data results, interwoven with the reviewed literature. The chapter begins by explaining the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) scores, discusses the demographic data, human resource development, employee performance and service delivery.

## 4.2. CRONBACH'S ALPHA

The study conducted a Cronbach's alpha test to establish the internal consistency of scores for the questionnaire on human resource development, employee performance and service delivery, using the formula displayed as Figure 4.1. Nominal scores were captured on a spreadsheet using SPSS computer software to obtain Cronbach alpha scores between a zero and one level of significance. Human resource development shows a significantly high reliability score of 0.810. Employee performance (0.694) and service delivery (0.689) also show an acceptable reliability score, which is above 0.60 and relatively close to 0.70.

**Figure 4.1: Cronbach's alpha formula**

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Source: Bujang, Omar and Baharum (2018)

**TABLE 4.1 Questionnaire reliability results**

	Section	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
B	Human resource development	15	0,810
C	Employee performance	15	0,694
D	Service delivery	15	0,689
Overall		45	0,845

A score above 0.70 was considered acceptable and reliable, although 0.6 is sometimes acceptable (Taber, 2018:1278; Taherdoost, 2016:29). Table 4.1 indicated that the overall Cronbach's alpha test result showed a high reliability score of 0.845. Results in Table 4.1 indicated that constructs of human resource development, employee performance and service delivery were considered to have an acceptable level of reliability at above 0.6 (Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2014:123). The questionnaire ensured reliability by eliminating differences in questions and presentation, in preparation for the demographic data.

### 4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Demographic data summarised the profile of respondents who participated in the study. Data was collected on the age, gender, employment contract, job position, length of service and educational levels of respondents. Statistical data are presented in the form of frequency tables, cross-tabulations and figures. Table 4.2 displays the frequencies and percentages of responses by means of which to present data results. The discussion of demographic results follows a presentation of all demographic results under section 4.3

**Table 4.2: Frequencies and percentages of employment contract and job position (n=115)**

Position	Employment contract				Total	
	Permanent		Fixed			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Management	12	10,4	1	1.0	13	11.4
Administration	36	31.3	16	13.9	52	45.2
General assistant	25	21.7	25	21.7	50	43.4
Total	73	63.4	42	36.6	115	100

#### 4.3.1 Employment contract and job position results

Table 4.2 presents the type of employment contract and position of respondents of the unit of analysis. In terms of position and employment type that the respondents held within the company, Table 4.2 showed that 10.4 percent were permanent managers; 31.3 percent of administrative staff were permanent; and 21.7 percent were permanent general assistants. According to Table 4.2, one manager was on contract, 13.9 percent of administrative staff were on contract and 21.7 percent of general assistants were on contract.

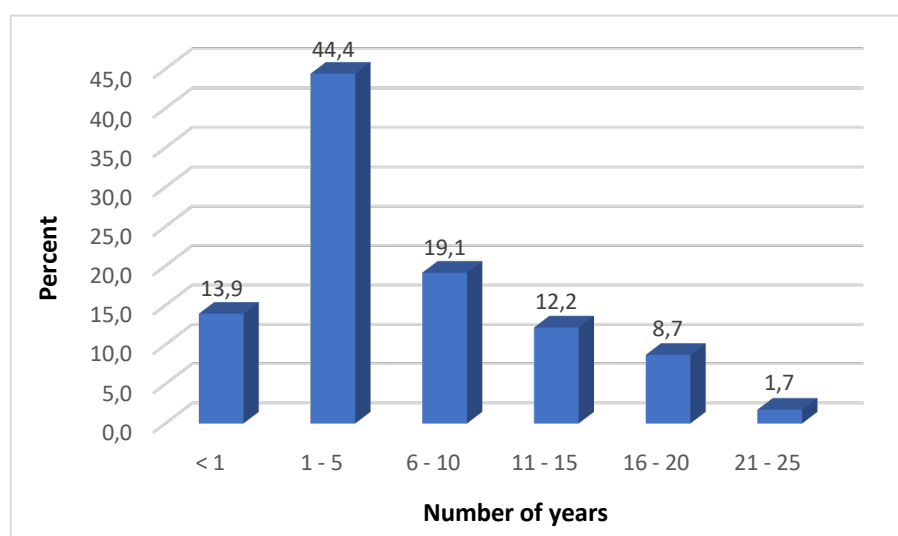
### 4.3.2 Gender and age of respondents

**Table 4.3: Frequencies and percentages on gender and age (n=115)**

Age group (years)	Gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
20-25	1	1	3	2.6	4	3.5
26-30	12	10.5	15	13	27	23.5
31-35	9	7.8	25	21.7	34	29.6
36-40	13	11.3	12	10.4	25	21.7
41-50	13	11.3	7	6.1	20	17.4
>50	2	1.7	3	2.6	5	4.3
Total	50	43.6	65	56.4	115	100

According to Table 4.3, one percent of male respondents indicated that they were between 20 and 25 years of age, while 75 percent of the female respondents indicated that they were between 20 and 25 years of age. The table draws attention to the age group of 36 and 50 years by illustrating that a majority of employees were between 36-50 years of age. The table also revealed that the number of female respondents at 57 percent was more than males.

### 4.3.3 Length of service of respondents (n=115)



**Figure 4.2: Length of service of respondents (n=115)**

Figure 4.2 provided the length of service of respondents . In relation to the length of service of respondents, 44 percent specified one to five years and two percent specified between 21 and 25 years. The study highlighted that 14 percent of respondents had only been in the municipality for one year or less, while 19 percent had been working for the organisation for between six to ten years.

#### 4.3.4 Education levels of respondents

**Table 4.4: Frequencies and percentages of education levels of respondents (n=115)**

Highest level of education		
	Frequency	%
Matric / Certificate	36	31,3
Diploma / Bachelors degree	44	38, 2
Honours degree / Bachelor of technology	34	29.6
Masters	1	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>100</b>

In terms of the highest qualification that respondents possessed, the data recorded that 38 percent of employees held a national diploma or bachelors degree certificate, while only one percent had a masters degree. Moreover, Table 4.4 showed that 31 percent of employees possesd a matric certificate and 29 percent held honours degree certificates. None of the respondents held a doctorate certificate.

#### 4.3.5 Discussion of demographic results

Pertaining to the analysis of employment type and job position, the study showed that a majority of employees were in permanent positions, whilst a few were employed on a contractual basis. Most managers were holding permanent positions at the municipality. The large number of permanent employees implied that most employees occupied permanent positions in management specifically.

The finding is in accordance with Mhlanga, Mjoli and Chamisa's (2019:5) study, which reported that most employees were employed on a permanent basis at a selected municipality. On the contrary, Okem and Bracking (2019:275) revealed that municipal employees were concerned and showing dissatisfaction over short-term contracts.

Table 4.3 affirmed that most respondents were female. There was a high percentage of females in the age group 31-35 years when compared to males. The finding was consistent with Ryan's (2020:90) study contained in a World Bank 2019 report, which stated that women's representation share in the labour market has increased in South Africa over time, despite a persistent male domination of industries. In addition, Sheridan (2018:25), found that there were limited industries where women were dominating, rather than males.

Regarding length of service, many respondents fell within the range of 1-5 years in the municipality. The results implied that respondents had been employed for a reasonable period. The study further showed a small percentage of respondents with 21-25 years of service. The results clearly identified that the Mbhashe Local Municipality had new employees who might not be familiar with municipality operations which necessitated certain skills. The employees might have limited experience, which could lead to poor service delivery. Furthermore, the municipality was probably lacking employees with quality skills and experience to coach and mentor junior employees (Nzewi, Ijeom, Sibanda and Sambumbu, 2016:39; Kuhlengisa, 2018:6 and Tshishonga, 2019:161).

The study showed that the majority of employees held a diploma or bachelors' degree, whilst some employees held only a matriculation certificate. Data results revealed that a small number of employees possessed a master's degree and none of the employees held a doctoral degree. The findings indicated that municipal employees did not focus on improving the qualifications of employees. This may be caused by a lack of motivation as decision to further one's studies needs something to motivate the person. Hurst (2017:1), highlights that some progressive companies facilitate access to education by sponsoring bursaries towards employee education.

Funding motivates employees to take a step forward in terms of furthering their educational qualifications, as the stress of financial burden will be eased. According to the Mbhashe Local Municipality study bursary policy (2017:3), the municipality did encourage its full-time employees to undertake further studies by offering financial assistance to suitable officials. McDonough and Oldham (2020:2), maintain that creating employee education programs that are attractive and relevant for the employee helps to build and retain a skilled workforce for the employer.



## **4.4 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.4.1 Statistical procedure**

The study obtained descriptive statistics to summarise data in the form of basic quantitative measures such as percentages, means and graphical representations (Kaliyadan and Kulkarni, 2019:83). Descriptive statistics were useful to represent basic aspects of the analysed data. Descriptive statistics that relate to human resource development, employee performance and service delivery are presented in this subsection of the study.

The researcher and the statistician computed descriptive statistics using SPSS. In the study, descriptive statistics were presented by using frequency tables and graphs, and various statistical tests were performed to analyse the data. Table 4.5 depicted the descriptive results on human resource development. In addition, Table 4.5 showed the percentile summary of the scoring patterns relating to human resource development.

### **4.4.2. Human resource development results**

Table 4.5 depicted that about 44% of respondents received coaching for the improvement of job performance, whilst 43% did not receive coaching at the municipality. As shown in Table 4.5, 59% of respondents indicated a lack of participation in mentoring programmes, whilst approximately 40% were allocated to mentors within the municipality. There was a lack of growth as 46% of respondents indicated a lack of development for higher positions, whilst 41% indicated the availability of development opportunities for higher positions.

Pertaining to the question on training and development's influence on job performance, 65% of respondents indicated having attended training and development courses that impacted on their performance positively whilst 24% revealed that they attended training but did not have any valuable impact on their job performance. Results revealed that about 76% of respondents has shown a necessary need for more training to enhance their skills and competencies, while only 14% did not require training.

**Table 4.5      Frequencies and percentages for human resource development  
(n=115)**

	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Sample (%)
Statement	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
1. I am aware of my organisational skills audit.	55	47.86	2	1.74	58	50.4	
2. I am coached so as to improve my job performance.	49	42.6	4	3.5	62	53.9	
3. I am mentored in order to develop my skills.	68	59	1	1	46	40	
4. I am developed for higher positions.	53	46.1	15	13	47	40.9	
5. HRD trains me on-the-job to improve the organisation's service delivery.	40	34.8	6	5.2	69	60	
6. The training and development I receive, influences my job performance.	28	24.4	12	10.4	75	65.2	
7. Human resource development at my organisation impacts positively on quality of service delivery to the public.	22	19.1	14	12.2	79	68.7	
8. My training needs are established prior to training implementation.	56	48.7	23	20	36	31.3	<b>115 (100%)</b>
9. I require training to acquire new skills and knowledge.	17	14.8	11	9.5	87	75.7	
10. I am aware of training and development policy of the organisation.	61	53	10	9	44	38	
11. My organisation promotes a conducive learning environment.	23	20	43	37	49	43	
12. The training and development I receive, enhances the organisation's performance.	25	21.8	14	12.2	76	66	
13. I have the knowledge and skills to support organisational plans.	20	17	34	30	61	53	
14. My training and development assists in the service delivery goals of the organisation.	21	18	18	16	76	66	
15. I have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform my duties in an effective manner.	18	15.6	8	7	89	77.4	
<b>Total number of respondents</b>	<b>115</b>						

#### **4.4.3 Examination of human resource development**

The study found that the municipality had not implemented a mentoring programme strategy to nurture employee skills efficiently. This finding contradicted Mabope's (2018:62) assertion that coaching, mentoring and regular feedback on employee performance ought to be used as a strategy for developing and managing talent in municipalities.

Grosseck (2014:144), highlighted that employee coaching was an outstanding strategy to attain a certain work behaviour that can improve employee skills, knowledge and abilities, which could result in the improvement of employee performance and quality service delivery at the municipality. Moreover, mentoring and coaching theory affirmed that coaching and mentoring are training and development strategies, used to enhance employee performance and knowledge and nurture their skills in the organisation (Halawi and Haydar, 2018:28).

There was lack of growth as a majority of respondents indicated minimal development for higher positions in the municipality. The lack of growth and development probably highlights that the municipality sourced talent externally, instead of identifying potential talent internally by implementing a development strategy for promotion. The finding contradicted Mensah's (2015) argument that the implementation of a talent management system led to improved employee performance. Putting a talent management system in place could assist the municipality in terms of retaining good quality and experienced employees.

Nurturing the skills of employees was vital to emboldening potential. Hanaysha and Tahir (2016), as well as Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2019), revealed that employee training had a positive effect on employees' performance. Hanaysha and Tahir (2016), further highlighted that a lack of growth in the company could lead to job dissatisfaction and poor performance. Therefore, training was a crucial component for probably increasing organisational performance to reinforce the degree of competency amongst employees. Furthermore, the main objective of developing employees was to enhance their skills to prepare for promotion.

Data results affirmed that human resource development positively impacted employee performance as most respondents indicated that their training enhanced job performance. However, some respondents revealed that training provided by the municipality was irrelevant and did not add any value to job performance. The results implied that a majority of respondents have been provided with relevant and effective training programmes at the municipality. Interestingly, most respondents indicated training as a means to acquiring new skills and knowledge to deal with performance problems.

Human capital theory promotes the investment in human resources through training and development programmes to improve both employee and organisational performance (Fix, 2018:2). Notably, most administrative employees indicated that the municipality provided effective training. Consequently, the majority of employees who held general assistant position had shown a strong desire for training and development. General assistants were at the forefront in terms of delivering services to the communities.

The lack of a training needs analysis could lead to ineffective training programmes. Hussein (2019:562), posited that a training needs analysis was crucial before implementing any training programme. Hussein (2019:562), further highlighted that before training implementation, organisational analysis, task analysis and person analysis needed to be undertaken for effective training and development. Delivering training in the absence of the above approaches meant that the training would have no impact in terms of enhancing employee performance.

The study found that most managers indicated that training was not required at the municipality, whilst most non-managerial staff showed a need for training. Respondents pointed out that the quality of service delivery would be improved if relevant training and development courses were provided by the municipality. The study agreed with Hee, Halim, Ping, Kowang and Fei (2019:67), who posited that training was a process of enhancing efficiency, capacity, effectiveness and job performance at work. The purpose of training was to enable employees to obtain competencies to perform their job tasks adequately. Trained employees can share knowledge and skills with colleagues to better the service and performance of the municipality.

## 4.5 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

### 4.5.1 Statistical procedure

The section deals with the descriptive statistics regarding the perceptions of employee performance by respondents at Mbhashe municipality. Figure 4.2 showed the percentiles relating to employee performance at Mbhashe municipality using a bar graph. The researcher and the statistician computed descriptive statistics using SPSS. Statistical tests were employed to describe employee performance in connection with human resource development and employee performance.

### 4.5.2. Employee performance results

**Figure 4.3: Summary of employee performance scoring patterns (n= 115)**

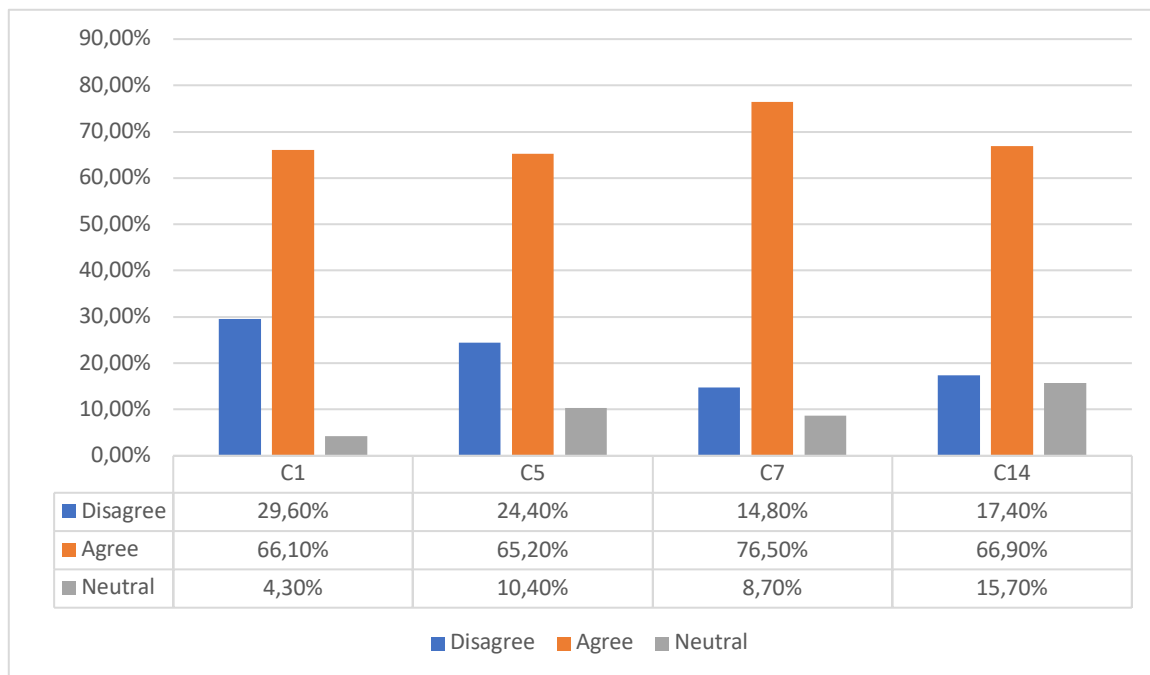


Figure 4.3 illustrates the summary of scoring patterns pertaining to employee performance. The statement about measuring and monitoring performance showed that 66% felt that performance was measured and monitored annually at the municipality; while 29.6% indicated that performance lacked measurement. The statement on the provision of training for performance improvement indicated that about 65% of respondents were provided with training to enhance job performance, while 24.4% stated that training was not received at the municipality.

Figure 4.3 in relation to the statement on whether employees require training showed that around 76% of respondents indicated that training was required to enhance job performance, while 14.8% revealed that training was not required. The statement on the effect of performance appraisal on employee performance depicted that 66.9% of respondents indicated that the performance appraisal policy and implementation were motivating to strive for best performance, while 17% did not regard appraisal as extrinsic motivation towards the improvement of job performance.

#### **4.5.3 Evaluation of employee performance**

Most respondents (66.1%) indicated that performance was measured and monitored annually at the municipality. The finding was similar to Gusnadi and Hermawan's (2020:1), that measuring, and monitoring employees' performance was required to identify training gaps and provide relevant training. In addition, continuous monitoring of employee performance was crucial to determine whether employees could apply the acquired knowledge and skills in their jobs in order to enhance organisational performance (Tomczak, Lanzo and Aguinis, 2018:251).

Pertaining to the statement about whether employees were provided with training to improve performance, most respondents revealed having attended training programmes at the municipality. However, the training received might not have had an effect on increasing the competencies of employees due to a lack of training needs analysis or the training strategies delivered to attendees. The finding was substantiated by the rise in public protests due to a lack of provision of basic services to the communities (Govender, 2017:427).

Data results showed that a majority of the respondents (75.7%) required training and development interventions to deal with the existing performance problems. Jubek et al. (2019:38), argued for the need to enhance employee performance as businesses required competent employees. Training employees assisted to develop skills, competency and the ability to achieve better performance. The accomplishment or failure of organisations is likely to depend on employee performance. Jubek, Wasike and Muturi (2019:39) cited Kijura and Mukuru (2018), who affirmed that achieving the organisation's vital targets depended on employee performance. Furthermore, the study agreed with Jubek, Wasike and Muturi (2019), who concluded that there was a significant relationship between training and employee performance.

The study found that performance appraisal played a major role in eradicating performance problems, which led to poor service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality. DeNisi and Murphy (2017:421), defined performance appraisal as a formal process that occurred infrequently, through which employee performance was evaluated by a person such as a supervisor who assessed employees against the set standards of the organisation. Moreover, a supervisor employed a certain criterion when assessing employee performance, assigned a score to that assessment and informed the employee of the formal rating. The appraisal process assisted in identifying training gaps and providing relevant training to employees to enhance performance.

Employees were likely to have a greater acceptance of performance reviews when the review was linked to rewards, as well as deemed procedurally fair based on appraiser explaining the rating clearly. On the contrary, Brutus and Baronian (2020:29), argued that an indirect impact of linking performance evaluations with compensation was that employees ignored appraisal development purposes. Nevertheless, performance management was important for employee development, to assist with identifying training gaps. There were arguments that managers lacked the ability to execute the performance management process, either due to uncertainty or limited time.

## **4.6 SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **4.6.1. Statistical procedure**

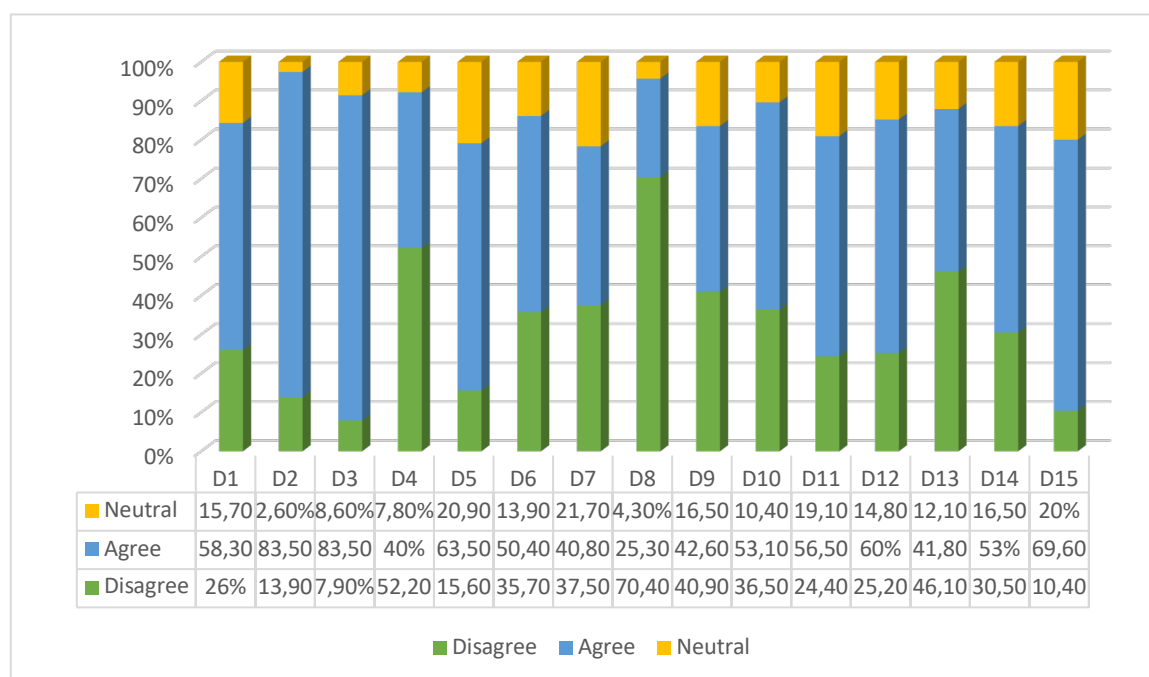
The section presents the descriptive analysis underpinning the service delivery construct. Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4 summarise the percentile scoring patterns relating to service delivery, followed by the descriptive analysis. Statistical tests were employed to describe service delivery, and human resource development and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality.

### **4.6.2. Service delivery results**

A high number of respondents at 83.5% in Figure 4.4 on the effect of corruption and financial mismanagement on service delivery revealed that corruption and financial mismanagement affected the effective provision of basic services at Mbashe Local Municipality. Consequently, 52.2% of respondents to the statement on whether the Mbhashe community was satisfied with the service delivery of the municipality indicated that Mbhashe community was not satisfied with services.

Figure 4.4 in relation to infrastructure projects showed that a majority of respondents at 56.5% indicated that the municipality appointed competent service providers for construction work such as roadwork, renovation, repair and maintenance; whilst 24.4% indicated that service providers were usually not competent.

**Figure 4.4: Summary of the scoring pattern relating to service delivery (n=115)**



The statement about whether the municipality appointed competent officials in monitoring infrastructure projects showed that 60% of respondents revealed that the municipality appointed competent officials to monitor provision of basic services to the community, whilst 25,2% indicated that unqualified officials were assigned to monitor service delivery at the municipality. Figure 4.4 on financial expenditure illustrated that 69,6% of respondents revealed that municipal management reported to government about financial expenditure on community projects, while 10,4% indicated that the municipality failed to report to government about financial expenditure.



#### **4.6.3 Assessment of service delivery**

Many respondents revealed that corruption and financial mismanagement were factors negatively affecting the quality of service delivery to the Mbhashe community. The finding was consistent with Mpofu and Hlatywayo (2015:1), who affirmed that poor performance and corruption by municipal employees had been a major problem in the efficient provision of basic services. Therefore, municipality corruption and maladministration has become endemic and the lack of accountability and transparency in rendering services to the people was a cause for concern (Mpofu and Hlatywayo, 2015:1).

A majority of the respondents indicated that Mbhashe community was not satisfied with the quality of service by the municipality. The finding was illustrated by numerous service delivery protests by communities in municipal areas, including the Amathole District (Govender, 2017:427; Wasserman et al., 2018:145). This was also substantiated by Ngumbela, Khalema and Nzimakwe (2019:15) study when they highlighted that unsatisfactory, inadequate or a complete lack of service delivery remained a key challenge in South Africa, and there were many protests concerning poor service delivery in municipal areas, including the Amathole District in the Eastern Cape province to which Mbhashe Local Municipality belongs.

Beyers (2016:170), professed that local government was faced with poor financial accountability across the country. Consequently, the auditor-general received numerous reports regarding maladministration; the mismanagement of public funds and the abuse of resources by officials at local government levels (Auditor General Annual Report, 2018:16). Effective financial control was critical to any organisation. Based on the results, a lack of sound financial control had a direct impact on service delivery, as there was a strong relationship between sound financial control and service delivery (Auditor General Annual Report, 2018:16).

Results showed that municipal officials reported to government about financial expenditure on community projects, while there were few respondents who opposed the assertion. Libate (2019:4), affirmed that financial transactions ought to be recorded, processed and reported by decision-makers.

Libate (2019:4), citing the national treasury and Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (2014), further maintained that challenges of municipalities with unlawful expenditure and deficiencies around supply chain management were cause for concern persistently. Furthermore, financial reporting systems about expenditure were not effectively managed at municipalities. Due to Mbhashe municipality's financial challenges, the municipality failed to settle invoices timeously (Mbhashe Municipality Annual Report, 2019:2).

## **4.7 HYPOTHESES TESTING**

Following a descriptive analysis of the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe municipality, hypotheses were presented pertaining to the empirical analysis. In addition, statistical tests were performed by the statistician at a 95% confidence interval using SPSS computer software version 26. In the study, the Pearson chi-square, Spearman and multiple regression analyses were adopted to test the significance of relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Bun, Gautam, Steinke and Wu (2019:156) highlighted that a hypothesis was an unproven theory that can be tested through research.

### **4.7.1 Human resource development and employee performance**

#### **4.7.1.1 *Statistical procedure***

A correlation test was conducted on hypothesis one to discover the relationship between human resource development and employee performance. Table 4.6 represents the predictive effect of human resource development on employee performance through path regression analysis. Beta values indicated the impact and direction of relationships, while p-values estimated the significance of the predictive effect.

**(H<sub>01</sub>):** ***There is a significant relationship between human resource development and employee performance.***

#### 4.7.1.2 *Results of the association between human resource development and employee performance*

According to the results displayed in Table 4.6, human resource development has a positive ( $\beta = 0.672$ ) and statistically significant ( $P = 0.000$ ) impact on employee performance at Mbhashe municipality. The result meant that the human resource development construct explained up to 44.7% of the variance in employee performance. Therefore, HO1 was accepted.

**Table 4.6: Relationship between human resource development, employee performance and service delivery**

Human resource development				
	Beta coefficient	T value	P value	N of valid cases
Employee performance	0,672	9,656	0,000	115
Service delivery	0,271	2,997	0,002	115

#### 4.7.1.3 *Discussion on human resource development and employee performance*

As depicted in Table 4.6, the correlation test and path regression analysis showed a significant positive relationship between human resource development and employee performance. The results were consistent with the findings of Hee, Halim, Ping, Kowang and Fei's (2019:63) and Jubek, Wasike and Muturi's (2019:37) studies, which revealed a positive significant relationship between human resource development and employee performance.

A study conducted by Tshishonga (2019:170) acknowledged that human resource development interventions and support programmes strengthened and enhanced the capacity and performance of local government. Furthermore, the interventions transformed local government to be responsive, accountable, efficient and effective.

## **4.7.2 Human resource development and service delivery**

### **4.7.2.1 Statistical procedure**

A chi-square correlation test was conducted to assess the association between human resource development and service delivery. The predictive effect of human resource development on service delivery is represented in Table 4.6 above through path regression analysis. The beta value indicated the impact and direction of the relationship, while the p-value estimated the significance of the predictive effect.

**(Ho2):        *There is a significant relationship between human resource development and service delivery.***

### **4.7.2.2 Results for human resource development and service delivery**

The results in Table 4.6 indicated that human resource development had a positive ( $\beta = 0.271$ ) and statistically significant ( $P = 0.002$ ) impact on service delivery. Therefore, Ho2 was supported.

### **4.7.2.3 Examination of human resource development and service delivery**

The findings of the study suggested that an improvement in service delivery at the municipality depended on the provision of training and development programmes to enhance capabilities, skills, and performance, as supported by Mehlape (2017:106). Quality employee training and development had the potential to result in improved employee performance, which will ultimately lead to quality service delivery.

Likewise, human capital theory is of the view that investments in employees through training and education increase both employee and organisational productivity (Fix, 2018:2). Fuente and Bartram (2018:262) agreed with Hee et al. (2019:63), who acknowledged that the provision of formal and informal human resource development activities and programmes to employees will ultimately give rise to improved service delivery.

### 4.7.3 Relationship between training and mentoring

#### 4.7.3.1 Statistical procedure

Correlation analysis tests were conducted to assess the association between training and mentoring at Mphashe Local Municipality as aspects of human resource development. A positive relationship between training and mentoring is represented in Table 4.7 below through the Kendall rank correlation coefficient, Spearman's rho and Pearson's chi-square test. The correlation coefficient for all three tests indicated a positive relationship between the elements.

**(Ho3):** *There is an association between training and mentoring at Mphashe Local Municipality*

**Table 4.7 Results for the relationship between training and mentoring**

Statement B2 and C5	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Kendall's tau_b	.349**	1.000	.000
Spearman's rho	.383**	1.000	.000
Pearson's chi-square test	.395**	1	.000
Number of valid cases	115		

#### 4.7.3.2 Discussion of the association between training and mentoring

The relationship between the training and development strategy as, but not limited to, mentoring and employee performance is depicted in Table 4.7. The results for the correlation coefficient were ( $p < 0.01$ );  $p = 0.000$  and showed that mentoring impacts positively on employee performance.

Mabope (2018:63), highlighted that the aim of training was to promote effective and efficient service delivery through competent and well-trained employees. According to the human capital theory contained in Tan (2014:412), an investment in employees through education and training contributes to improved employee capabilities, skills and knowledge, which results in improved organisational productivity.

Human resource development strategies such as mentoring play a critical role in maintaining an effective and efficient quality of service delivery (Tabassi, Ramli and Bakar, 2011:509). Hussein (2019), reported that effective training and development strategies would increase workers' job performance and enable them to develop specific knowledge and skills for tasks.

#### **4.7.4 Relationship between employee performance measurement, monitoring and the provision of feedback to employees**

##### **4.7.4.1 Statistical procedure**

Correlation analysis tests were conducted to examine the relationship between measuring and monitoring employee performance and the provision of feedback at Mbhashe Local Municipality, by looking at aspects of performance. A significant relationship between the above elements is represented in Table 4.8 below through the Kendall rank correlation coefficient, Spearman's rho and Pearson's chi-square test. The correlation coefficients indicated a significant impact between the elements.

**(Ho4): There is a positive relationship between measuring and monitoring employee performance and the provision of feedback on performance at Mbhashe Local Municipality**

**Table 4.8     *Results of the relationship between employee performance measurement and the provision of feedback to employees***

<b>Statement C1 and C8</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymptotic significance (2-sided)</b>
<b>Kendall's tau_b</b>	.281**	1.000	.001
<b>Spearman's rho</b>	.319**	1.000	.001
<b>Pearson's chi-square test</b>	.284**	1	.002
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	115		

#### 4.7.4.2     *Discussion of the relationship between performance measurement and the provision of feedback to employees*

The results in Table 4.8 show that measuring, and monitoring employee performance had a positive relationship with providing feedback to employees about performance. The Pearson's chi-square test p-value was 0.002, ( $p < 0.01$ ). Voom, van Genugten and Van Thiel (2020:194), stated that the difficulty of measuring and monitoring performance in the public sector was greater than in the private sector since public goals are complex to quantify, and the public sector operates differently from competitive environments. Findings from Sebashe and Mtapuri's study (2011:1331), revealed that feedback was not given to employees after performance assessments.

Sebashe and Mtapuri (2011:1332), promoted the importance of feedback by professing that feedback on employee performance should be provided and intervention mechanisms to address gaps be agreed upon between employees and supervisors. To further support the importance of feedback, Sebashe and Mtapuri (2011:1332), cited Max (2001:32), who acknowledged that receiving feedback is a key benefit or component of performance management systems and a fundamental skill that managers need to ensure effectiveness.

#### 4.7.5 Relationship between giving employees an opportunity to submit job development plans and the establishment of training needs prior to training implementation

##### 4.7.5.1 Statistical procedure

Table 4.9 presents the results of the correlation tests conducted to assess the relationship between giving employees an opportunity to submit individual development plans annually, and the establishment of training needs prior to the implementation of training at Mbhashe Local Municipality, as components of human resource development. Correlation coefficients through the Kendall rank correlation coefficient, Spearman's rho and Pearson's chi-square test in Table 4.9 below showed a positive association between the elements.

*(Ho5): There is a significant relationship between giving employees an opportunity to submit their job development plans and the establishment of training needs before training implementation*

**Table 4.9 Results of the association between giving employees an opportunity to submit job development plans and the establishment of training needs prior to training implementation**

Statement B8 and C4	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Kendall's tau_b	.404**	1.000	.000
Spearman's rho	.465**	1.000	.000
Pearson's chi-square test	.447**	1	.000
Number of valid Cases	115		



#### *4.7.5.2 Discussion of association between giving employees an opportunity to submit their job development plans and the establishment of training needs before training implementation*

According to the results in Table 4.9, a large positive and significant association existed between giving employees an opportunity to submit individual job development plans and the establishment of training needs before training implementation at Mbhashe Local Municipality. The result for the correlation coefficient was .000, which was less than .01 and was a large correlation. This showed a significant correlation between the elements. Noe and Kodwani (2018:5), affirmed that giving employees the opportunity to submit job development plans was necessary to assist in identifying whether training was needed, and which form of training was provided to employees.

Identifying training needs before training implementation can be achieved through conducting organisational analysis, person analysis as well as task analysis. Seaworth (2020:8), confirmed a positive relationship between the elements by stating that individual job development plans played a major role in motivating employees to participate in learning activities at an organisation. In addition, individual development plans served as a guide because employees were requested to record their skills and knowledge gaps for the future.

## **4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter analysed and presented the results and discussion of the findings regarding human resource development, employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. Constructs of interest were examined through graphical and statistical procedures. Descriptive statistics were presented to describe the data on human resource development and employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality. Furthermore, hypotheses were tested for statistical significance. The next chapter presents the conclusion and makes recommendations on the basis of the empirical findings.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The study aimed to examine the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at a local municipality. In pursuit of the aim, the study probed the human resource development of employees to be able to deliver services around the world. Firstly, the study evaluated whether human resource development shaped employee performance at the Mbhashe Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Whilst service delivery protests were probably increasing, the study also investigated the association between human resource development and service delivery. The study probed whether municipal employees are trained and developed to deliver basic services to communities. In addition, the researcher tried to identify the existing training and development strategies employed by the municipality in the fight against the issue of poor service delivery.

The researcher found that human resource development was one of the factors that affected employee performance at organisations. As highlighted by Hee, Halim, Ping, Kowang and Fei (2019), providing formal and informal training such as basic skills and management skill development is likely to further influence the employees' job performance, which results in better service delivery. Furthermore, Nadarajah, Kadiresan, Kumar, Nissa and Yusoff (2012:12) affirm that once employees have acquired valuable skills and knowledge, they are able to share them with others to enhance the service and overall performance of the organization.

The study found that there is a significant relationship between human resource development and employee performance at Mbhashe Local Municipality. Findings of the study also revealed that there is a positive association between human resource development and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality. In the study, the researcher found that training and development strategies play a major role in enhancing the performance and service delivery of the municipality.

Chapter five presents a summary of key findings and makes recommendations emerging from the empirical analysis of the study; describes the limitations, as well as demonstrates directions for future research. The key findings of the study were in accordance with the research questions, research objectives and aim of the study. Since the study was an internal examination, the recommendations were generalised to Mbhashe Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape only. However, the recommendations may be useful for scholars in the same fields of study. Limitations of the study may be used to guide future studies on human resource development, employee performance and service delivery.

## **5.2 KEY FINDINGS FROM PRIMARY DATA**

The subsection focused on the key findings to forge conclusions based on the aim and research objectives of the study. Based on the collected, analysed and discussed data, the study presents key findings around the research objectives of the study.

### ***Research objective 1: To contribute to human resource development strategies for providing service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality***

The objective was intended to assist with training and development strategies for effective and efficient service delivery in the municipality. To achieve the objective, Chapter two explored the literature by outlining several training and development strategies and their influence on employee performance and service delivery at municipalities.

Coaching and mentoring, induction training, apprenticeship training, workshops and conferences, and formal training and development courses were examples of human resource development strategies. Human resource development strategies are crucial in enhancing employee performance as the local government was criticised by the public for poor-quality service (Mdlongwa, 2014:39; Helao, 2015:15; Fuente and Bartram, 2018:262).

Findings from the empirical study were that most respondents did receive coaching for the improvement of their job performance. It was also found that a majority of the employees lacked career growth as a majority of the respondents revealed that they did not attend any formal training, nor were they developed for higher positions. Instead, employees were provided with on-the-job training to assist them to perform well in their respective jobs. Formal training and developmental courses such as workshops and conferences may be suitable in equipping those employees involved in executing some projects in the municipality such as housing, infrastructure, water taps and sanitation.

The study concludes that, based on empirical data, the municipality had not really implemented a mentoring programme to nurture employee skills. According to Mabope (2018:62), coaching, mentoring and regular feedback on employee performance ought to be used as methods of developing and managing talent in municipalities. Similarly, Grosseck (2014:144), confirms that employee coaching is an outstanding way to attain a certain work behaviour that can improve employee skills, knowledge and abilities, which could result in improved employee performance and good quality service delivery at the municipality.

Based on the findings, that the municipality is not providing its employees with relevant training and development in fighting against poor service delivery. A study conducted by Hanaysha and Tahir (2016), revealed that employee training has a positive effect on employee performance. Training is a crucial composite for increased organisational performance to reinforce the degree of competencies amongst employees. The municipality also needs to encourage employees, especially managers, in developing themselves academically. This will have a great impact on the service delivery of the municipality.

***Research objective 2: To assist with human resource development practices for employee performance at Mbhashe Local Municipality***

It is clearly indicated from the findings that the performance of most respondents was measured and monitored annually in the municipality, whilst some of the respondents indicated that their performance was not measured and monitored.

According to Gusnadi and Hermawan (2020:1), measuring and monitoring employees' performance was required in order to identify training gaps and provide them with relevant training. The study found that the human resource development department in the municipality did measure and monitor employee performance continuously. Although employee performance should be measured and monitored often, Kinicki, Jacobson, Peterson and Prussia (2013:34), argue that managers are just not doing their best at carrying out the performance management process—either because they are uncertain of what to do or are just not showing their full commitment towards the process.

The objective of performance management is to find out the reasons for under-performance, as well as to suggest ways to improve employee performance. Feedback to employees about their performance is crucial as the supervisor can use that as the platform to facilitate the establishment of a plan for improvement or corrective action. Furthermore, performance appraisal is significant as it helps identify and improve poor performance. According to the results, a majority of the respondents indicated that they received constructive feedback about their job performance, while some indicated that the municipality did not communicate with them about their job performance. Observing the results, the study found that the performance management process was not being well executed in the municipality because supervisors or the HR department lacked in providing feedback to the employees.

The data showed that most respondents required training to enhance their job performance, while a few revealed that they did not need training. A study conducted by Jubek, Wasike and Muturi (2019), revealed that the provision of training to employees helps to enhance and nurture skills, competency and ability, which ultimately improve the employee performance and service delivery of the organisation. Furthermore, based on the results of Jubek, Wasike and Muturi's study, a conclusion was made that there was a positive and significant association between employee training and employee performance. This study found that Mbhashe Local Municipality employees require training interventions to enhance their performance. Tan (2014:412), highlights that the human capital theory promotes investment in human beings through training and development programmes to equip them with the necessary skills, abilities and knowledge to enhance their performance.

***Research objective 3: To assist with factors that influence employee performance and service delivery at Mbhashe Local Municipality***

Most respondents (83.5%) revealed that corruption and financial mismanagement affect the effective provision of basic services to the Mbhashe community. Consequently, most of the respondents indicated that the Mbhashe community is not satisfied with the service received from the municipality. A study conducted by Mpofu and Hlatywayo (2015:1), affirmed that under-performance and corruption by municipal workers had been identified as core issues in the efficient provision of basic services by municipalities.

According to Mantzaris (2014:82), local government was faced with an escalation of poor financial accountability throughout the country. Consequently, numerous reports regarding mal-administration, poor management of public funds and the abuse of resources by officials at local government levels has been brought to the auditor general's attention (Auditor General South Africa, 2018:16). For any organisation's success, sound financial control is crucial. The study found that the municipality suffered from poor financial control, which had affected service delivery in various ways as there was a strong correlation between sound financial control and effective service delivery.

Most respondents revealed that municipal management reports to government about financial expenditure on community projects, while a few of the respondents indicated that the municipality did not report to government about financial expenditure. Libate (2019:4), affirmed that every financial transaction must be recorded, processed and reported by decision-makers. Observing the respondents' responses, the municipality did report to government on financial expenditure.

On the contrary, Libate (2019:4), citing the national treasury and Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) (2014), stated that observing the challenges municipalities are faced with, unlawful expenditure and deficiencies around supply chain management are still a grave concern. Libate (2019:4), further posited that financial reporting systems on expenditure are not effectively managed.

A majority of respondents indicated that the municipality had stable financial resources to maintain a high quality of service delivery, while some respondents indicated that the municipality did not have stable financial resources. Findings from the literature review showed that the municipality was failing to settle invoices in a timely manner due to its financial challenges (Mbhashe Municipality Annual Report, 2018:22).

According to the Mbhashe Municipality Annual Report (2018:20), the municipality has experienced financial difficulties due to a failure to generate enough income to meet operating expenses, debt commitments and maintain service levels. The budget deficit experienced in the municipality resulted in delays in the payment of service providers. Based on the literature review, it can be concluded that the municipality did not have stable financial resources.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.3.1 Provision of feedback to employees after performance appraisal**

Based on the findings of the study, the municipality lacked in providing feedback to employees about their performance progress. The study recommends that supervisors or the human resource development department be active and cooperative in terms of communicating with employees after performance appraisals, so that employees may be aware of their weakness and strengths.

Communicating with employees about their performance after performance appraisal is recommended for employees to become aware of areas where they can improve their performance. The study also recommends that supervisors be provided with training on how to execute the performance management process- to be well educated about it and be informed of what to do. Proper performance management systems can assist the municipality in terms of improving the quality of service delivery, as this process may be conducted annually.

### **5.3.2 Implementation of human resource development strategies for better service delivery**

The municipality should implement human resource development strategies and programmes so that employees can be empowered with new knowledge and skills. Human resource development programmes can be coaching and mentoring programmes. Mentoring and coaching theory explains that these programmes assist employees in their growth, while developing and acquiring new competences under the guidance, direction and advice of professional personnel.

Mentoring and coaching are human resource development interventions that can be used by municipalities to support the goals of the organisation in the professional development of its employees. The findings of this study also showed that the municipality is lacking in implementing mentoring programmes. These training interventions can assist in improving employee performance, which will ultimately result in better service delivery. The municipality should ensure that managers are able to provide mentorship to junior and inexperienced employees and graduates.

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### **5.3.3 Provision of effective training and development**

Findings of the study revealed that Mbhashe Local Municipality employees were underperforming as they were not meeting the set performance standards in their respective departments, particularly those who were assigned to the provision of basic services to the communities. The study therefore recommends that the management of Mbhashe Local Municipality invests in providing their employees with the necessary training which is relevant to their respective jobs.

This is also confirmed by the human capital theory, which promotes investment in human beings through training and development programmes to better their performance (Tan, 2014:412). Training will help in improving their performance and reducing the time spent by managers on supervising employees. The study also found that corruption, a lack of financial accountability and financial mismanagement have affected the effective provision of basic services to the Mbhashe community.



The study recommends that thorough training be provided to both financial officials and the supply chain management department. This recommendation will assist in the improvement of financial performance through ensuring that financial accountability and financial management are maintained in the municipality. Well-trained employees with required qualifications in their respective departments can maintain a transparent use of municipal funds by the reinforcement of accountability for the expenditure of public funds.

Employees will obtain skills and the ability to ensure the effective use of municipal funds through complying with appropriate steps to get rid of any unauthorised, irregular and wasteful expenditure. Lastly, government should impose strict rules and measures on municipal authorities regarding the expenditure of municipal funds.

#### **5.3.4 Revision of the human resource development strategy**

It is strongly recommended that the municipality should revise and review the human resource development department's strategy. Once the strategy has been revised, it would assist to maximise the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The strategy would also address the lack of service delivery because employees would productively and competitively have a role in attaining a better quality of life for the Mbhashe community. The strategy would also assist the municipality to have a focus in terms of conducting training and development for employees. Lastly, the strategy would assist the municipality to conduct training systematically.

### **5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The data gathered was from a specific municipality in the Amathole district in the Eastern Cape. As a result, this study highlighted the findings and results specific to Mbhashe Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Thus, the results cannot be generalised to other local municipalities as situational factors may differ. The study has only focused on the quantitative research method. The stratified sampling technique of the study has extracted representatives of all employees through classification to reduce bias in the sample.

## **5.5 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The study has revealed that there was a great lack of service delivery in the municipality, which resulted in numerous protests by the community. Based on the findings and recommendations, the study proposes various directions for future research. Although this study is recommending that its findings be applied in a rural district of the Eastern Cape province and other similar sized municipalities in the country, future or subsequent studies may investigate whether district municipalities are aware of the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery of the municipality.

There were no effective mentoring and coaching programmes to nurture the talent of inexperienced graduates to create a pool of trained and experienced employees. This presents an opportunity to evaluate whether or not the human resource development strategies and interventions did empower employees and managers at a local government level through longitudinal studies. This study was conducted in one rural local municipality in the Eastern Cape. The situation could be unique in other contexts. Similar studies in other municipalities are recommended in order to contribute to theory and practice.

The study has only focused on the quantitative research method and would recommend that future studies consider both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather rich data from the respondents. The target population of the study was only the employees of the municipality, and the researcher would suggest that future studies on municipal service delivery consider including the community as the target population as they are the primary recipients of municipal services. Researchers may also conduct the statistical tests to ensure construct validity of the constructs. In addition, future studies can look at conducting nomological tests with the constructs.

## **5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter provided conclusions of the literature review as well as critical findings. Recommendations emerged from the findings of the study. Overall, all the research objectives of the study were addressed. The recommendations in the chapter should contribute knowledge on the role of human resource development at the Mbhashe Local Municipality, and lead to effective and efficient service delivery directed towards the surrounding communities.

The findings concur that quality employee training and development programs were significant for improved employee performance at the municipality. Relevant and quality employee training and development results in an improvement in employee performance, which ultimately leads to the better provision of services to the public and greater organisational profits. In addition, findings point out that improved, efficient and effective service delivery by municipal employees can be achieved when they are provided with relevant and effective training and development.

After employees have attended training and development programs, a performance appraisal process which consists of measuring and monitoring performance is very significant to determine the value added by that training. Furthermore, feedback is important if management is to address matters that may have to be reviewed or improved. Recognition awards are essential for those employees who perform well in the municipality. Future studies should examine the extent at which rewards such as compensation and remuneration may affect employee performance at a local municipality.

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Dear Participant

**ASSISTANCE: QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION**

I am a registered student at the Durban University of Technology in the department of human resource management. I am currently pursuing masters degree in human resource management within the Faculty of Management Sciences. My topic is titled: **The Influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at a local municipality in the Eastern Cape.** In order to successfully complete the latter part of my research, the secondary component deals with the empirical investigation. This involves the completion of a structured closed-ended questionnaire. You have been identified as one of the respondents that formed the sample for this study.

I shall be most grateful if you could please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me by the 2020-10-16. The researcher will make arrangements to personally pick up the questionnaire. The questionnaire will take about 10-15 minutes to complete and only requires you to tick the relevant pre-coded response in an objective manner. Your participation is voluntary, and you are at liberty to withdraw from answering this questionnaire at any time. Please rest assured that your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and no names will be divulged to any third party. The collated responses will be only used for statistical analysis. A brief summary of the main findings will be posted to you on completion of the project.

Your co-operation in assisting me with this important component of my study is highly appreciated and I look forward to a speedy return of the completed questionnaire. Please answer all the questions and do not leave any question or Likert scale statement blank. I have included a brief explanation of the key terminology relating to the concepts below to assist you when completing the questionnaire. If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above email address or via my cell phone. I take this opportunity to thank you once again for your kind assistance in completing this questionnaire in an informed and objective manner.

Sincerely

---

Khuselwa Nama  
Cell: 0784846676

---

Supervisor: Mr B Daweti  
Contact Details: 031-373-6787

**SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Note:** For this study, organisation refers to Mbhashe Local Municipality and all its staff members, unless otherwise stated.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:**

1. Please select **ONLY ONE** response with a tick ✓ for each question.
2. Answer **ALL** the pre-coded questions in this section.
3. Please **DO NOT** leave any question blank.

1. Please indicate whether you are a permanent or contract staff member at Mbhashe Local Municipality:

1.1	Permanent	1
1.2	Contract	2

2. Please indicate which ONE of the following is applicable to you:

2.1	Management	1
2.2	Administrative	2
2.3	General Assistant	3

3. Please indicate your gender:

3.1	Male	1
3.2	Female	2

4. Please indicate your age group:

4.1	20-25 years	1
4.2	26-30 years	2
4.3	31-35 years	3
4.4	36-40 years	4
4.5	41-50 years	5
4.6	> 51 years	6

5. For how long have you been employed at Mbhashe Local Municipality?

5.1	0-12 months	1
5.2	1-5 years	2
5.3	6-10 years	3
5.4	11-15 years	4
5.5	16-20 years	5
5.6	21-25 years	6
5.7	>26 years	7

6. Please indicate your highest level of qualification:

6.1	Matric / Certificate	1
6.2	Diploma / Bachelor's degree	2
6.3	Honours degree / B.Tech	3
6.4	Masters	4
6.5	Doctorate	5



**SECTION B: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

According to Heathfield (2018:2), "HRD is the framework for helping employees develop their personal and organizational skills, knowledge, and abilities".

**INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:**

1. Please select **ONLY ONE** response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below.
2. Answer **ALL** the pre-coded statements in this section.
3. Please **DO NOT** leave any statement blank.

**KEY:** SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

		SD	D	N	A	SA
B1.	I am aware of my organisation's workplace skills audit.	1	2	3	4	5
B2.	I am coached to improve my job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
B3.	I am mentored to develop my skills.	1	2	3	4	5
B4.	I am developed for higher positions.	1	2	3	4	5
B5.	HRD trains me on-the-job to improve the organisation's service delivery.	1	2	3	4	5
B6.	The training and development I receive, influences my job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
B7.	Human resource development at my organisation, impacts positively on the quality of service delivery to the public.	1	2	3	4	5
B8.	My training needs are established prior to training implementation.	1	2	3	4	5
B9.	I require training to acquire new skills and knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
B10.	I am aware of training and development policy of the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
B11.	My organisation promotes a conducive learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
B12.	The training and development I receive, enhances the organisation's performance.	1	2	3	4	5
B13.	I have the knowledge and skills to support organisational plans.	1	2	3	4	5
B14.	My training and development assist in the service delivery goals of the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
B15.	I have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform my duties in an effective manner.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION C: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

According to Keijzers (2010:13), "employee performance can be defined as the employee's creativity, innovation and commitment and also the single result of an employee's work".

**INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:**

1. Please select **ONLY ONE** response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below.
2. Answer **ALL** the pre-coded statements in this section.
3. Please **DO NOT** leave any statement blank.

**KEY:** SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

		SD	D	N	A	SA
C1.	My performance is measured and monitored annually.	1	2	3	4	5
C2.	I am provided with relevant training to improve my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
C3.	Senior positions are occupied by unqualified incumbents in my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
C4.	I am given an opportunity to submit my job development plan annually.	1	2	3	4	5
C5.	My organisation provides me with training to improve my job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
C6.	When I lack proper training, I perform poorly in my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
C7.	I require training to improve my job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
C8.	I receive constructive feedback about my job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
C9.	I am aware of the performance appraisal policy in my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
C10.	My supervisor is involved in designing performance appraisal policy.	1	2	3	4	5
C11.	I am involved in the design of the performance appraisal policy.	1	2	3	4	5
C12.	The performance appraisal policy enables me to achieve my job goals.	1	2	3	4	5
C13.	My performance is appraised fairly in my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
C14.	The performance appraisal policy motivates me to improve my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
C15.	The performance appraisal policy is constructive as it enhances my performance.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION D: SERVICE DELIVERY**

According to Govender (2016:24), “service delivery is made up of multiple networks and organisations that provide services and products to the masses”.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:**

1. Please select **ONLY ONE** response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below.
2. Answer **ALL** the pre-coded statements in this section.
3. Please **DO NOT** leave any statement blank.

**KEY:** SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree

		SD	D	N	A	SA
D1.	My municipality addresses community issues thoroughly.	1	2	3	4	5
D2.	Corruption leads to poor service delivery at my municipality.	1	2	3	4	5
D3.	At my municipality, financial mismanagement affects the effective provision of basic services to the Mbhashe community.	1	2	3	4	5
D4.	The Mbhashe community is satisfied with my municipal basic services.	1	2	3	4	5
D5.	My municipality implements local economic development policies successfully.	1	2	3	4	5
D6.	My municipality has stable financial resources to sustain service delivery.	1	2	3	4	5
D7.	My municipality has the relevant critical skills to ensure quality service delivery.	1	2	3	4	5
D8.	At Mbhashe Local Municipality, my community voter turnout is low.	1	2	3	4	5
D9.	Community projects implemented in the villages are completed before deadline at Mbhashe Local Municipality.	1	2	3	4	5
D10.	My municipality provides sustainable infrastructure services to the communities.	1	2	3	4	5
D11.	My municipality appoints competent service providers to implement infrastructure projects to the community.	1	2	3	4	5
D12.	My municipality appoints competent officials to monitor infrastructure projects.	1	2	3	4	5
D13.	Employees take necessary precautions when construction projects are delayed at Mbhashe Local Municipality.	1	2	3	4	5
D14.	The Mbhashe municipality demonstrates accountability by prioritising basic needs of the community.	1	2	3	4	5
D15.	Municipal management reports to government about financial expenditure on the community.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your cooperation



**The Municipality Manager**  
**Mbhashe Local Municipality**  
**Idutywa**  
**5000**

**THE INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY AT A LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

**REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I, Khuselwa Nama, am a Masters student conducting research titled "*The influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at a local municipality in the Eastern Cape*" at the Durban University of Technology. This letter requests to conduct research at the Mbhashe Local Municipality. I will request respondents to complete a questionnaire if they so wish. The research is about the interpretation and implementation of human resource development interventions in municipalities that affect employee performance and service delivery to the public community. The outcomes of the study will clarify the role that human resource development plays in improving employee performance and service delivery. Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed for the respondents.

I will apply for ethical clearance from the research director, Prof Carien Napier, and my research supervisor is Mr B. Daweti, 031 373 5493, [baphiwed@dut.ac.za](mailto:baphiwed@dut.ac.za). I will be so grateful if you may grant me the permission to conduct my study in your municipality as it will contribute to the success of my Masters' degree.

Kind regards,

Khuselwa Nama

0784846676 / 0640925112

[khuselwanama@gmail.com](mailto:khuselwanama@gmail.com)

---

**Baphiwe Daweti (Supervisor)**



**Mbhashe**  
Local Municipality  
Willovale | Dutywa | Elliotdale

All correspondence must be directed to the  
office of the Municipal Manager.  
454 Streatfield Street, Dutywa  
Eastern Cape Province  
Tel: 047 489 5800  
Email: [info@mbhashemun.gov.za](mailto:info@mbhashemun.gov.za)  
[www.mbhashemun.gov.za](http://www.mbhashemun.gov.za)

Enquiries: N. Hanise

17 July 2019

73 Riverhorse Road  
Riverhorse Valley  
Durban

Dear Ms K Nama

**REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

The Municipality has received your letter requesting to conduct your research, "Influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at Local Municipality".

The Municipality hereby grants you the opportunity to conduct your research. The municipality will appreciate to access to the final report upon completion, hoping this thesis will be of great benefit to the municipality

Yours in Developmental Local Government

**W. NAKO**

**MUNICIPAL MANAGER**

*"Ilifa lethu alixabisekileyo"*



**MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (FREC)**

11 September 2020

Student Name: **Ms K Nama**

Student No: 21528023

Dear Ms K Nama

**MASTER OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: HUMAN RESOURCES**

**TITLE: Influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at a local municipality in Eastern Cape.**

Please be advised that the FREC Committee has reviewed your proposal and the following decision was made: **Approved – Ethics Level 2**

**Date of FRC Approval: 27 July 2020**

Approval has been granted for a period of two years from the above FRC date, after which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the form located at the Faculty. This form must be submitted to the FREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the FREC according to the FREC SOP's. Please note that ANY amendments in the approved proposal require the approval of the FREC as outlined in the FREC SOP's.

Yours sincerely

---

Prof JP Govender

Chairperson: Faculty Research Ethics Committee



## LETTER OF CONSENT

**Title:** The influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery at a local municipality in the Eastern Cape.

**Principal investigator/s/researcher:** Khuselwa Nama (BTech HRM)

**Co- investigator/s/supervisor/s:** M. Lourens (PhD); B. Daweti (MEd; MTech)

**Brief introduction and purpose of the study:** The study focuses on human resource development, employee performance and service delivery within the public sector. The provision of essential services, for example, clean water, sanitation, education, health, electricity, and road network seems to be slow. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of human resource development on employee performance and service delivery.

**Outline of the procedures:** The researcher will personally deliver questionnaires to you. Completing the questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes and the questionnaires will be personally collected within ten working days. In addition, participation is voluntary, and you are invited to be honest and objective when completing the questionnaire.

**Risks or discomforts to the participant:** This study has no foreseeable risks or discomforts for the respondents.

**Benefits:** The research will disseminate information through publications, dissertation, and presentations. In addition, the findings will be made available to the Mbhashe Local Municipality.

**Reason/s why the participant may be withdrawn from the study:**

You may voluntarily withdraw from participating at any time. In addition, there are no adverse consequences if you voluntarily decide not to participate in the study.

**Remuneration:**

There is no remuneration for respondents who participate in the study.

**Costs of the study:**

You are not expected to cover any costs related to the study.

**Confidentiality:**

The researcher will ensure that confidentiality is always upheld. Names and any identification details are not included in the questionnaire. The covering letter has a clause where the research always undertakes to uphold confidentiality and anonymity during the study. The questionnaires will be used for the purpose of this study only and data will be presented for statistical purposes only.

**Research-related Injury:**

No known injuries are expected from this study and no compensation will be made for any injury or harm that may result due to participation in this study.

**Persons to contact in the event of any problems or queries:**

Please contact the researcher Khuselwa (0784846676), my supervisor Mr B. Daweti (0825366505) or the institutional research ethics administrator on 031 373 2900. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: Research Innovation and Engagement, Prof S Moyo at [dvcrie@dut.ac.za](mailto:dvcrie@dut.ac.za)



**Statement of agreement to participate in the research study:**

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Khuselwa, about the nature, conduct, benefits, and risks of this study - research ethics clearance Number: \_\_\_\_\_,
- I have also received, read, and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me."

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full name of participant**  
**Thumbprint**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Time signature / Right**

I, Khuselwa Nama, herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full name of researcher**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full name of witness (If applicable)**

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

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**Full name of legal guardian (If applicable)**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**





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SERVICE DELIVERY AT A LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

By

**KHUSELWA NAMA**

---

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