

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS' PERCEPTIONS AND  
UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERFORMANCE  
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN MUNICIPAL COURTS: THE  
CASE OF THE CITY OF TSHWANE**

**(2015-2019)**

by

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## DECLARATION

I, Paulina Motlalepula Nthite, hereby declare that the dissertation titled: Administrative Officials` perceptions and understanding of performance management system in Municipal Courts: The case in the City of Tshwane (2015-2019), is my work that I am submitting for the degree of Master of Administration in Public Administration to the University of South Africa. I have never submitted the work to any other institution. The sources I have used and quoted have all been acknowledged and indicated on a list of references. The content of my study has gone through the Turnitin program to detect any plagiarism before submitting my final work.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my late younger son, Obakeng Rethabile Nthite and my late mother Meisie Jeanette Modibane. May your souls rest in eternal peace.

## ABSTRACT

The study examines the perception and understanding of administrative officials towards the 'performance management system' implemented in their respective department, the Group Legal and Secretariat Services. It is where the Division, Municipal Courts are established, in the City of Tshwane. The effectiveness of a 'performance management system' depends on how it is perceived and experienced by its users. Administrative officers, as key operational agents, represent an important yet under-explored group in 'performance management system' research. The study investigates how administrative officers perceive various dimensions of their organisation's 'performance management system', specifically in relation to clarity, understanding, fairness, developmental focus and outcome linkage, and how these perceptions influence job satisfaction and system acceptance. A mixed research method was the preferred method adopted and insights were gathered through semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample, exploring work experiences and contextual nuances.

The study highlights that when administrative officers perceive 'performance management system' as equitable, developmentally focused and well communicated, it enhances their engagement and positive attitudes towards the system. Findings suggest that, while many officers understood the meaning of 'performance management system', concerns persist about the lack of communication and development from senior management. The administrative officers perceive 'performance management system' as less of a developmental tool and more as a formality unless critical elements such as employee participation, capability of senior managers, fair appraisal and visible reward systems are embedded. Strengthening these areas is important in shifting perceptions and understanding towards viewing 'performance management system' as a credible means of performance enhancement.

The study concludes with recommendations for making 'performance management system' more inclusive, transparent and development focused to enhance both individual and organisational performance. If the system is implemented effectively, these changes can transform 'performance management system' into a trusted tool for performance improvement rather than an unreliable formality. This will improve the performance of the workforce and the organisation at large. City of Tshwane is a local government space, meaning that service delivery to the local communities will improve.

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## ACRONYMS

**BSC:** Balanced Scorecard

**CoT:** City of Tshwane

**IDP:** Integrated Development Plan

**KPA:** Key Performance Area

**KPI:** Key Performance Indicator

**NTF:** National Treasury Framework

**PMS:** Performance Management System

**SA:** South Africa

**SDBIP:** Service Delivery and Implementation Plan

**SMART:** Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic and Time-bound

**Q5:** Question Five

**Q6:** Question Six

**Q7:** Question Seven

## **CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this research was to examine the perceptions and understanding of the performance management system among administrative officials working in the Municipal Courts within the City of Tshwane Municipality. The performance management system provides employees with the support and encouragement they need to enable them to carry out their duties effectively and to develop their skills and careers (Hassan, 2022). Performance is developmental, meaning that it ensures that employees have the ability, motivation and opportunity to do well in the present and in the future (Armstrong, 2022). On the other hand, ‘performance management system’ involves passing down and interpreting the fundamental strategic goals of an organisation through successive layers of management to individual employees (Blackman, 2021).

In that capacity, the system will ensure that everyone involved understands the contribution they are expected to make for their achievement. The downside of the implementation of the performance management system may be the lack of top management support, the perception of the process as time-consuming, failure to communicate clear and specific goals and the lack of consistency (Agarwal, 2020). In South Africa, there are three spheres of government, namely - National, Provincial and Local or Municipal, - and they are autonomous, independent and interrelated. These three spheres of government have both administrative and legislative authorities in their respective jurisdictions. They are required to co-operate in ensuring that they co-ordinate their efforts and work together for the good of the citizens and the country. They all derive their powers from the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (as amended) and other legislations that have been put in place to ensure autonomy and foster good governance.

The municipal government is the closest to the communities and is constitutionally mandated to render and deliver sustainable basic municipal services (Makoti & Odeku, 2018). The adoption of the 1996 Constitution of South Africa (as amended) fundamentally changed the structure of government in the country. The local government, constituted by 257 municipalities of varying sizes, is recognized as a distinct sphere of government with executive and legislative powers that are vested in democratically elected municipal councils (Fuo, 2020). The study specifically focuses on Municipal Courts that operate under the jurisdiction of the

City of Tshwane.

These courts, which serve as the primary units of analysis, were established in 2003 and became operational in 2004. They function as specialised courts responsible for prosecuting violations of municipal by-laws, traffic offences, and certain provisions of national and provincial legislation delegated to the municipality. If a municipality government fails to discharge its constitutional responsibility or functions, the law allows the Provincial government to intervene. The interventions could be in various forms such as support, monitoring or takeover (Bronstein, 2020).

This chapter's structure provides:

- Background information on the establishment and purpose of Municipal Courts in the City of Tshwane.
- A problem statement outlining the performance management system and relevant policies currently employed by the municipality.
- The study's objectives and research approach.
- An outline of the actual research questions.
- Defines the locus of the study.
- Offers a preliminary literature review, focusing on key concepts, the scope of the study, and its time frame.
- Explains the research methodology.
- A summary and overview of the chapters that follow in the dissertation.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

The municipality as a local government provides - structure; manages administrative, budgeting and planning processes; gives priority to the basic needs of its designated communities; and promotes socio-economic development (Constitution of South Africa, 1996 - as amended). Section 154(1) of the Constitution of South Africa (as amended) provides that the National Government and Provincial Governments must support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs. In the same interest, section 4(1) of the Municipal System Act, 2000, also provides that the council of a municipality has the right to govern on its own initiative and exercise the municipality's executive and legislative authority without improper interference (Makoti & Odeku, 2018).

The municipality consequently works closely and directly with the people and the community to exercise their authority through the municipal councils. In the case of the City of Tshwane, the mayoral committee consist of elected councillors from the community led by an executive mayor that should have a five-year strategic objective plan.

The strategic objective plan is based upon the Constitution of South Africa. An objective, for example, is to fight poverty to ensure a clean, healthy, safe, secure and sustainable community (City of Tshwane, IDP: 2006-2011). In the City of Tshwane, the municipality has Municipal Courts that are working effectively in contributing to law enforcement and crime reduction. The National Department of Justice provides the magistrates for the Municipal Courts, whilst the City of Tshwane provides prosecutors, venues, and administration.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the City of Tshwane through its department of Legal and Secretariate and the Director of Public Prosecutions for the then Transvaal Provincial Division of the High Court of South Africa. This agreement was signed on 16 February 2004 in line with the council resolution 4 of 27 February 2003. Municipal Courts are regarded as branch Courts of various District Magistrate courts as defined in Section 2 of Magistrates Court Act No 32 of 1944 (as amended). The government` s plan for Municipal Courts roll out in South Africa started in the year 2000 in Cape Town and was championed by the then Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Cheryl Gillwald.

The aim was to deal exclusively with criminal cases relating to traffic offences, infringements of the municipality by-laws and contraventions of the national and provincial legislation that the municipality enforces. Cape Town was the first city to introduce Municipal Courts which are ten currently. The City of Tshwane has three main Courts, which are Pretoria Central, Centurion and Wonderboom. Periodical/satellite Courts have been established in Soshanguve, GaRankuwa, Temba and Rayton to extend the administrative court services to other regions within the City (City of Tshwane Strategic Plan, 2008). The former Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Cheryl Gillwald, stated in her speech at the Municipal Courts launch in Cape Town on the 18th of April 2000, that Municipal Courts were a hope to clamp down on those who show scant respect for local regulations and by-laws.

She further mentioned that, maintaining the rule of law at this level provides the foundation for the general maintenance of law and social order that will in the long term determine success in the fight against crime. Wright (2024:378), highlights that the judiciary has drawn attention to the serious impact of service delivery failures (that includes combating crime) and stated that the consequences for the community and the local economy are both catastrophic and devastating.

Importantly, the City of Tshwane made a presentation at the South African Revenue Protection Association Conference in 2006, where the functions of Municipal Courts were highlighted. It was stipulated that the Courts serve as revenue protectors. This meant that illegal use by consumers of electricity and water would be prosecuted and be made aware that these services cannot be accessed without lawful authorisation of the Municipality (City of Tshwane, Economic Development Presentation 2006). This simply meant that the Municipal Courts are classified under critical infrastructure which falls within the ambit of the Critical Infrastructure Protection Act (Act 8 of 2019). An infrastructure, in this regard, is defined as "... critical if its incapacity or destruction has a significant impact on health, safety, security, economics and social well-being of a state" (Cantelmi, Gravio & Patriarca, 2021).

The researcher realised that several academic researchers made contributions relating to the topic of performance management systems and monitoring and evaluation of these systems. For example, Ndasana and Umejese (2022), investigated the challenges facing performance management in South Africa - the case of Buffalo City Metropolitan. The study recommended that the municipality should have an approved performance management system policy framework to be implemented at all levels of employment within the organisation. Thus, the researcher realised that there was a need to investigate the perception of administrative employees of the 'performance management system' comprising a formal integrated and complete functional performance management system to sustain service delivery improvement in an organisation.

In this regard, the performance management system in the City of Tshwane as a local sphere of government is guided by the Municipal Systems Act 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) and includes the Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001). The Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations 2001, state that, "... to ensure that the

municipality meets and delivers on its scorecard's key performance areas and performance indicators at an elevated level, it is appropriate to define the performance management cycle to the managers before signing their performance plans or scorecards". It is a requirement for managers and other permanent employees to sign performance plans annually. The key performance areas, key performance indicators and targets are part of the balanced scorecard (City of Tshwane, Performance Management System, 2006). The performance of the Divisional Head for the Municipal Courts is reviewed on a quarterly basis and evidence is required as a support to measure performance.

Departments in the City of Tshwane are made responsible by the Human Resource Department to compile balanced scorecards and measure performance from the level of Deputy- Directors, Directors, Divisional Heads to the Group Heads with the system being gradually cascaded down to the operational workers level to also include administrative officials (City of Tshwane, Performance Management System, 2006). The evidence that forms part of quarterly reports, required from the Divisional Head and the Group Head, is compiled by same administrative officials. The focus in this dissertation was to find out how these administrative officials perceive and understand the said performance management system, as they are instrumental to the process in the City of Tshwane. The administrative officials that are permanent workers for the City of Tshwane, from the three main Municipal Courts, form the case study for this work. The Municipal Courts are structurally a Division within Group Legal and Services Department that is directly accountable to the City manager (City of Tshwane, Structure, 2006).

The scorecard of the Group Head of a Department should be aligned with the municipality's five-year strategic plan, then be cascaded down to Divisional Heads, Directors and to the level of Deputy Directors (Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001). The Group Legal Department's scorecard (where Municipal Courts is situated) is aligned with the municipality's five-year strategic plan, which is also cascaded down to the division's scorecard. According to the City's corporate scorecard, 2015 to 2019, constitutes the perfect period to investigate the understanding of performance management among administrative officials in Municipal Courts as a Division. This period falls within the cycle of the five-year-strategic-plan of the city. The results of this research can assist other scholars to further investigate Municipal Courts by adding their contribution to the South African country.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The City of Tshwane has two policy frameworks pertaining to their performance management system being, (i) Performance Management Policy, and (ii) Procedure for Top Management and for Permanent Employees (2006). These policies serve as a guide to monitoring and evaluating individual performance in the City. The difference between the two policies is that the top management in the City is regulated by Section 57 of Municipal System Act (2000) whereby a manager, who directly is accountable to the city manager, may be appointed to that position only in terms of a written employment contract and a separate performance agreement.

The balanced scorecard model is used as a measurement tool in both policies and then cascaded downwards from the City's scorecard to the levels of Deputy Directors effectively, and thereafter slowly to all levels including that of administrative officials. Employees from the director position to the general workers are regarded as permanent employees in the city. The old appraisal system is still used as a tool to measure their performance concurrently with the slowly introduced balanced scorecard model (City of Tshwane, Performance Management System: 2006).

A newly approved policy relating to the individual performance management system (2022) in the City of Tshwane provides what is stipulated in Municipal Staff Regulations (2021), that the policy is applicable to all permanent employees excluding staff members that are on a fixed term contract of less than 12 months, and includes Section 54 and Section 56 managers and those who are serving notice or are participating in internships or any public works programs. The City of Tshwane is currently experiencing gaps in its performance management system, which are negatively impacting employee morale, organisational efficiency and overall service delivery outcomes. These gaps are characterised by inconsistent application of performance management process and the introduction of the automated system, the weak alignment between performance management system, the current performance appraisal system and a lack of consistent workshops to the workforce of the city. The city's intension is to cascade the performance management system to the lower operational level of employees as indicated above and for the employees to understand the organisational strategic objectives that impact service delivery outcomes. These gaps result in employee's reduced motivation, seeing performance management system as non-transparent and ineffective. These inefficiencies

contribute to regular absenteeism, employees not trusting the senior managers and total disengagement. The intention in the research problem was to reveal if there was a clear understanding of the 'performance management system' by administrative officers based at the Municipal Courts of the City of Tshwane. The lack of a structured and enforced performance management system in an organisation, limits the ability to identify underperformance, support employee development, and to optimise productivity. These challenges have a direct impact on service delivery. The resultant factors concurrently contribute towards declining quality of services, increased public complaints and risks to compliance and audit outcomes. If the gaps are not addressed by the city, the gaps will continue to establish a culture of underperformance and compromise the achievement of strategic priorities and service delivery commitments. The intention of the research consequently was to find out whether the operational level employees - for example, that in Municipal Courts, administrative officials that are regarded as permanent employees according to the policy framework, - understand what was expected of them and how they perceive the concept of 'Performance Management System'. The City of Tshwane Municipality is the targeted local government as the *White Paper, 1998 on Local Government* (South Africa) states, and this mandates municipalities to develop mechanisms to ensure citizen participation in policy initiation, evaluation of decisions, and monitoring and implementation.

As a Public Administration researcher, it is important to determine the degree of success of government's administration and its political process, which in this regard was the focus on Municipal Courts. According to Alexander (2024), the policy should therefore be seen as a system that gives direction to the administration as the implementation of the political will of council to achieve its strategic intent. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 provides that the national and provincial governments, by legislation and other measures, must support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs to exercise their powers and to perform their functions. Government at all levels in South Africa, since its inception of democracy in 1994, has been increasingly active in developing public policies. The flows of public policies occur in areas of governmental action such as education, welfare, law enforcement, medical care and consumer protection (Patel, 2024).

This was where the question of understanding of the term 'performance management system' came in, which was part of the intent of this research project.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH TO THE STUDY**

The primary objective of this research was to establish the perception and understanding of a performance management system amongst administrative officials, and permanent employees in Municipal Courts within the City of Tshwane. The two systems, that is, Performance Management and Monitoring and Evaluation, are regularly heard by administrative officials within the city.

The concept of a Monitoring and Evaluation System cannot be ignored; however, for the purpose of this research project, the terminology ‘performance management system’ was the most preferred. The reference of the latter system will only assist this researcher to understand how administrative officials perceive a performance management system within their working environment. The literature-based theories explaining how a performance management system contributes to the effectiveness of an organisation were explored in Chapter 2. For example, theorists such as Roberts, Yaida, and Hanin (2022), define expert based information as “... content generated by professional, scientific and technical methods of inquiry”. This study was an investigation that was supported based on local and international theorists. The study consequently fulfilled the following research objectives and questions that investigated the research problem identified:

### **Research Objectives:**

1. To evaluate the level of understanding of performance management system by administrative officials.
2. To determine whether performance expectations are clearly communicated and consistently understood.
3. To assess the impact of perception of performance management system by administrative officials.

### **Research Questions:**

1. To what extent do administrative officials understand the purpose, objectives and importance of performance management system?
2. Are there sufficient communication platforms (meetings, systems and circulars) to support performance management system?

3. What is the level of administrative officials` s perceptions of performance management system?

### **1.5 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

The researcher chose to use Municipal Courts as a case study because they are part and within the structure of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The findings of this research project may assist senior managers in the municipality to take informed decision in the future regarding the utilisation and impact of a performance management system. The Municipal Courts work concertedly with the Metropolitan Police Department within the City of Tshwane, meaning that the departments within the city are interdependent or work as internal stakeholders.

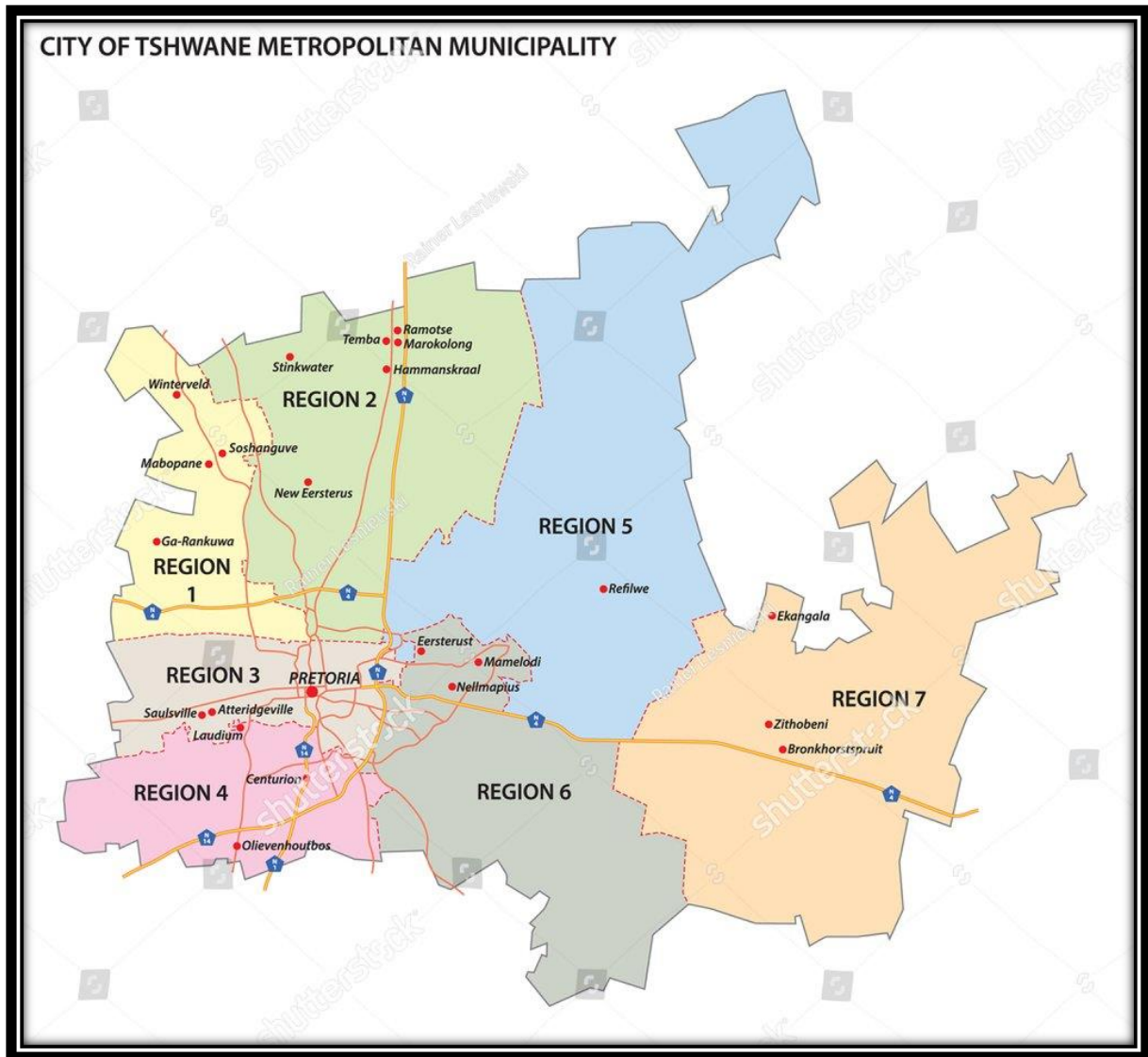
The caseload of the Municipal Courts directly relates to the number of officers of the Tshwane Metropolitan Police Department on duty. Importantly, the findings of this research may equip the leadership and management of the two departments with better insights on performance management systems and thereby set as an example within the city. It was in the interest of this study to investigate the perception of the terminology ‘performance management system’ within the same Municipal Courts. The findings may in turn also indicate whether these Municipal Courts were a success or not.

### **1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY**

The City of Tshwane is in the Gauteng Province and is the administrative capital of South Africa. It is the centre of government with all the national government departments located in it. The Municipal Courts are structurally a Division within a Group Legal Department in the City. They were established in 2003 and then implemented in 2004.

This research measures the perceptions or understanding of a ‘performance management system’ from 2015 to 2019. The period stretches approximately five years which was assumed as reasonable enough to capture whether the implementation achieved success or failure when investigated by the researcher.

**Table 1:** The City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality Map



*Source: Administrative vector map of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng, South Africa:2022*

## 1.7 CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

The following key concepts are defined as being regularly utilised. The terms are found in the background to the study, objectives and problem statement sections of this chapter.

1.7.1 Administrative Management is a method of tending to or managing the affairs of a group of people or an organisation, for example, the administrative organisation (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2022:14).

1.7.2 Evaluation is a time-bound and periodic exercise that seeks to provide credible and

useful information to answer specific questions to guide decision making by staff, managers and policy makers. It also assesses relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability (Solayman, Hossen & Aziz, 2023).

1.7.3 Key Performance Area is a specific area of operation which the organisation wishes to categorize its desired achievements. The employee needs to know what is expected of them and at what standard, Performance Management Framework (City of Tshwane, 2006).

1.7.4 Key Performance Indicators are a quantifiable measurement that reflects the critical success factors of an organisation. They may change as the organisation goals change or as it gets closer to achieving a goal, Performance Management Framework (City of Tshwane, 2006).

1.7.5 Local government is the third sphere of government that is referred to as grass root government because of its direct association with communities at local level. Matters dealt with by the local sphere of government include refuse sewage, electricity, water and sanitation, infrastructure, and others (Municipal Structures Act No 117 of 1998).

The White Paper on Local Government of 1998 suggests ways in which national and provincial government can work with local government to enhance the effectiveness of all spheres of government.

1.7.6 Performance Management System refers to the processes planning, supervising and improving the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation. The goal is to increase productivity, set performance goals, measure performance, provide feedback, develop performance and support effective decision making (Boas, 2024).1.7.7 Performance Measurement purpose is to assist in decision making and to understand progress towards meeting the outcomes of the strategic plan and action plans (Akpa, Asikhia & Nneji, 2021).

1.7.8 Public administration is a process by which public resources and personnel are organised and coordinated to formulate, implement and manage public policy decisions (Howlett, Ramesh, Perl & Ferreira, 2022).

1.7.9 A Scorecard provides a framework in which an organisation can determine the quality of its delivery service and create an interface between the strategic objectives and developmental objectives, Performance Measurement Framework (City of Tshwane, 2006).

## **1.8 RESEARCH METHOD AND INFORMATION GATHERING**

In this study, the ‘mixed’ research methods were employed within which Municipal Courts in the City of Tshwane were effected as a case study. Integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches provide a comprehensive understanding of administrative officials’ s perception and level of understanding of the performance management system within Municipal Courts. The integration of the two methods ensures complementarity and holistic analysis (Battista & Torre: 2023). The quantitative data for example may reveal low levels of satisfaction with performance management system communication while qualitative data explains this through lack of feedback and unclear expectations (Creswell & Inoue: 2024). The use of mixed methods is appropriate as it allows the study to quantify trends and patterns while exploring in-depth experiences and meanings associated with the performance management system (Clarks & Clarks: 2022).

### **1.8.1 Research Method**

Municipal Courts administrative officials encompass a case study that was suitable for both qualitative and quantitative methods applied. The intention was to observe the group and find out what their actions in the setting were, what their setting looked like and the significance of the signs and symbols in the setting (Jha, 2024). Semi-structured interviews with Municipal Courts administrative officials were conducted. The intention of this approach was to ensure that each interviewee was presented with the same questions in the same order (Belina, 2023). This ensured that answers are reliably aggregated and that comparisons can be made between sample subgroups. According to Elliot and Timulak (2021), the ‘qualitative’ method enables one to get under the skin of a group or organisation to find out what really happens. This means that when wanting to study people in real life, one must study people in the context of the way they operate. The quantitative analysis assisted in validating qualitative findings and providing measurable evidence which supported conclusions.

#### **1.8.1.1 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Municipal Court administrative officials were grouped according to their work experience, age, specifically working within the main administration offices of the Courts and as permanent employees. Junnier (2024), describes this method as “... a type of study in which the researcher will select one or more subjects or sites to make an in-depth analysis of a process, organisation

or other event”. The questions were asked in a set order and in a set manner to ensure no variation between interviews. The researcher then administered the questions to participating administrative officials at their working stations. The researcher collected answers on the same day as per the set date of interviews for each of three Courts in the City.

## **1.8.2 Information Gathering**

According to the research questions in this dissertation, the need to establish how administrative officials perceived and understood the ‘performance management system’ was of concern. The literature in this context is available in South Africa, and some references have been made to the international perspective. The concept of specifically looking at Municipal Courts is the first with this research project and because existing literature is available, the study was applicable.

### **1.8.2.1 Literature Study**

Literature in this research was drawn on relevant sources to shape this work in a direction that is relevant to the stated research problem. Literature on performance management systems, for example, policies with reference to individual performance management from within the City of Tshwane were utilised as part of sources for this research. The following sources gave direction to the relevance of the research topic, namely:

- Political Speeches.
- Unpublished/published Dissertations and Theses.
- South African Constitution, 1996 (as amended).
- Scholarly literature on the individual performance management system.
- Scholarly literature on performance management systems.
- Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001).
- Articles from scholarly journals.
- Official documents from the City of Tshwane.
- White Paper on Local Government (1998).
- Municipal Systems Act (2000).
- Municipal Structures Act (No 117 of 1998).
- Municipal Finance Management Act (2000).
- Performance Management Guidelines for Municipalities (2001).

- Government- Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System (2005).

## **1.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

The collection of data from interviews was administered by the researcher. The data was categorized and classified according to the research objectives. The concept of understanding a ‘performance management system’ was investigated from the interpretation of the data. The results are regarded as answers to the research questions. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis were effected during the analysis of the results.

## **1.10 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

### **Chapter 2**

This chapter provided a rhetorical view on the theoretical framework employed by the study. The theories relating to a performance management system that included different articles, thesis, dissertations and books were consulted. The relevant headings within the chapter to address the research problem were utilised. The legislative framework relevant to this work was provided and discussed.

### **Chapter 3**

This chapter covered the research design, methodology and analysis. The research design was elaborated upon and an indication given of why the research method for this work was chosen. The case study and sampling size were motivated and discussed. The data analysis method was indicated and discussed which included the ethics for this research project.

### **Chapter 4**

This chapter presented results and data analysis with a brief discussion of the findings. The tables, graphs and calculations were presented, and the results were analysed and interpreted. The outcome of the results was discussed and addressed answers relating to the research questions/objectives of this work within the ambit of the stated problem.

## **Chapter 5**

This chapter concluded the study, provided recommendations on the remedial actions and highlighted the policy implications of the findings.

### **1.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the general overview and introduction of the research topic ‘management performance system’. The background and rationale of the study, research problem, research objectives, demarcation of the research area, clarification of concepts, relevance of the study and the sequence of chapters were included to provide context. A mixed research method was utilised to gather the responses to the research questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researcher with the administrative officials of Municipal Courts.

The next chapter discussed the literature review, theoretical framework and the legislative framework related to this study.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter introduced and discussed the research problem statement (managerial performance system), research statement objectives, research methodology and the significance of the study. The primary aim of this chapter was to critically discuss and analyse the different views from various local and international authors. Effective management of an individual or a team's performance is a crucial matter that is required in an organisation to ensure that goals are reached, therefore there is a need for a standardised and formal performance management system. This chapter integrated the literature review, theoretical framework, and legislative context of the study, serving a dual purpose – (i) to establish the rationale for the use of performance management systems in organisations, and (ii) to provide insights that address the research problem and questions central to this study. The research problems and questions focused on evaluating the extent to which employees at the operational level within an organisation comprehended and engaged with performance management systems.

In this literature review, a thorough examination of the concept of 'performance management system' was presented and contextualised by an extensive review of the relevant theories supporting the system. Theories related to employee motivation and the application of performance management systems within organisations were explored in detail. The theoretical framework underscored the importance of this study by highlighting key insights and approaches. Vapiro (2020), explains that after choosing a theory, the researcher can construct the theoretical framework that turns the theory into the object of the study. The legislative framework guiding this work is based on the Municipal Systems Act, which is applied in local municipalities, as well as the South African Constitution of 1996 (as amended). The outcome of this study should hopefully guide the senior management within an organisation when implementing strategies and interventions that would lead to improved performance of an organisation. The chapter concluded by synthesising the key ideas presented in the theoretical framework, summarising their relevance and application to the study.

### **2.1.1 The context of performance management**

This section explored the rationale behind the implementation of performance management systems, particularly in the context of local government. Performance management is a critical management tool that can significantly enhance how governments and organisations achieve their objectives (Awan, Habib, Akhtar & Naveed, 2020). According to Ndasana and Umejese (2022:02), a performance management system must facilitate clear communication between employees and employers, outlining the objectives to be met and the methods through which these objectives can be achieved within the organisation. Ndasana (2022:33) further emphasizes the primary objective of performance management, which is "... to enable employees to reach their full potential, benefiting both the individual and the organisation by defining role expectations and responsibilities". The performance management system is fundamentally designed to improve employee performance by identifying strengths and weaknesses, with the primary goal of enhancing overall organisational performance. Riyanto, Endri, and Herlisha (2021:163), argue that "... a clear understanding of the performance management system within an organisation fosters active employee engagement in the organisational goals". Moreover, this approach to performance management, when systematically administered, measured, and governed, can prioritise transparency and accountability (Rasmini & Mimba, 2021).

On the contrary, the performance management system may be confused with the performance appraisal system. The two terms are clearly related but not identical (Armstrong, 2022:8). Performance management uses the balance scorecard as part of its measurement. The balanced scorecard is a strategic measurement tool with indicators developed to combine data from various sources into a statement system (Franz, Beck, Compagna, Durr, Gehra & Wegner, 2023). It is a tool that supports decision-making at the strategic management level, used to assess top management and to oversee organisational progress (Cignitas, Arevo & Crusells, 2021). The advantage of using a balanced scorecard in a performance management system is that it measures employee productivity, skill and morale increase, improving internal processes and customer satisfaction. The balance scorecard framework involves defining the objectives, selecting appropriate measures, setting targets and undertaking congruent actions to meet the targets (Mio, Costantini & Panfilo, 2021). Consequently, the balanced scorecard solves the implementation strategy issue by providing an effective and efficient performance measurement system.

To improve performance and increase profitability in an organisation, four perspectives originally developed by Kaplan and Norton (1992), ensure that performance is not only on financial outcomes but on key drivers that influence long-term success. The four perspectives, namely: financial, customer, internal business process and learning and growth as in Figure 1, offer a balanced view by integrating both financial and non-financial measures:

**Figure 1:** The four perspectives of the Balanced Scorecard



**Source:** *Balanced Scorecard Success: The Kaplan-Norton Collection (4 Books)*. Harvard Business Review Press (Kaplan & Norton: 2015)

The financial perspective on Figure 1 above assists to answer the question - “how do we look at the shareholder?” It focuses on long objectives of the business by emphasizing profitability objectives and other financial objectives (Ha, Le & Fisher, 2023). The customer perspective helps to answer the question - “How do customers see us?”. In the company a customer plays a significant role; therefore, a company’s mission is to be number one in delivering value for its customers. The international business process perspective distinguishes the balanced scorecard from the performance measurement in that it focuses on recognizing new processes to effectively meet the customer and financial objectives. In the learning and growth

perspective, the infrastructure of an organisation is examined with the purpose of achieving long-term growth and improvement (Cignitas *et al.*, 2021). These processes support employees in meeting performance expectations, which are assumed to positively influence the overall performance of the organisation (Mashiane, 2020).

In the local government context, the performance management system aligns organisational goals with employee objectives serving as a core function that establishes a shared understanding of what needs to be accomplished (Nkadimeng, 2023:11). The system's objectives include providing feedback on agreed-upon targets and improving delivery mechanisms to ensure efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Performance management can be conceptualised as a system encompassing goal setting, feedback, control, measurement, review, and a reward mechanism (Awan *et al.*, 2020). Armstrong (2022:7) offers a detailed definition, describing the performance management system as "... a process aimed at improving performance by setting individual and team goals aligned with organisational strategies". These strategic goals include planning performance to achieve objectives, reviewing progress, and developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees. By fostering an environment where organisational performance becomes a collective responsibility, performance management encourages every employee to understand strategic priorities and take responsibility for achieving and improving performance continuously (Armstrong, 2022).

Mogorosi (2023), argues that performance management should focus on identifying an individual's strengths and weaknesses to drive improved outcomes. As such, elements such as motivation, coaching, and monitoring should be incorporated into a comprehensive performance management system, leading to enhanced service delivery. Efficient internal support systems are essential for customer-focused service delivery, ensuring that inputs are effectively managed to meet output requirements. Given this framework, it is expected that sufficient resources will be allocated to deliver core services, with the departments responsible for these services receiving priority. Performance management, in this context, is viewed as a tool for public managers to monitor and assess employee performance. The human resources department, which is responsible for providing the necessary capabilities, funding, and infrastructure, plays a pivotal role in the successful implementation of performance management systems. Excluding human resources from this process can result in the

underutilisation of resources, and hinder the achievement of organisational goals (Maseke, Unengu & Haufiku, 2022).

On the other side, the performance appraisal system comprises of established performance standards, a method of determining individual performance, comparison against standards and an evaluation of performance based on the comparison (Dangol, 2021).

It functions as a subset of performance management and attempts to measure performance while performance management aims to improve performance (Armstrong, 2022). The appraisal is an integral part of the organisation's human resource management effectiveness. Performance Appraisal is a key management tool which identifies employee strengths and weaknesses. The participation and consultative management should provide encouragement to employees to direct their creative energies toward organisational objectives. Performance appraisal is the process through which overall work of an employee is portrayed and his or her contribution to the organisation is reviewed (Dasanayaka, Abeykoon, Ranaweera & Koswatte, 2021). It is a key human resource practice aimed at measuring the achievement of goals, guiding training programs, structuring and restructuring compensation and benefits packages, job analysis and design, promotions and job rotations and planning. The delegation of functions from top management to departments enables employees to take responsibility for their roles, which in turn motivates them to enhance their capabilities and performance (Kafaji, 2020).

It is a correct portrayal of performance, constructive feedback, fairness in the appraisal and performance-based organisational treatment that enhance an employee's attitude towards his organisation. In addition, performance appraisal contributes as a major mechanism of gathering information for rewarding or training employees based on their performance and hence a key to achieving organisational goals by creating a satisfied workforce (Dasanayaka *et al.*, 2021). Employees may be motivated if the appraisal process is based on accurate and current job descriptions (Dangol, 2021). Consequently, this delegation and accountability contribute to strengthening employee performance and overall organisational success (Maseke *et al.*, 2022). The challenging side of the performance appraisal is that its origins can be attributed to the relationships between masters and servants or between employers and employees. The methods and techniques used for appraisal varied during distinct stages of human history (Dewakar, 2023). The traits relied on for appraisal were personal loyalty and allegiance to employers.

The traditional approach has been to judge employees based on their personality or activity traits rather than performance. The appraisers or managers judge performance by comparing the behavior with others instead of assessing performance in relation to the objectives of the organisation (Dangol, 2021).

An employee's motivation may be affected by the liberal/ strict or bias rating of some of the managers. The manager's ability to address the skills gaps can have a significant impact on the employee's motivation (Dewakar, 2023).

### **2.1.2 Theories of motivation to employees**

Employee motivation is crucial for ensuring that individuals possess the necessary competencies, values, attitudes, and cultural alignment with their organisation, all of which are essential for performing their jobs efficiently and effectively. As highlighted by Mvuyisi and Mbukanma (2023:91), "A motivated workforce is integral to the overall performance of an organisation". Motivational theories, such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, provide treasured visions into how organisations can improve employee satisfaction and performance through targeted motivational strategies. Contrary to the Herberg's Two-Factor Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the "Continuous Feedback and Agile Performance Management" approach to performance management system emphasize that roles and responsibilities evolve rapidly and employees require an ongoing support to meet new challenges. The Continuous Feedback theories contribute to the shift from the traditional annual reviews or performance management practices to the continuous feedback approach (Wood, 2021). This approach expresses that continuous learning and improvement is a better support to an employee's growth and overall productivity in an organisation (Aguinis, 2019).

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

Employee motivation plays a significant role in organisational performance, employee satisfaction, and retention. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, also known as the motivation-hygiene theory, posits that certain factors in the workplace lead to job satisfaction, while a distinct set of factors contribute to job dissatisfaction. Importantly, these factors operate independently of one another. According to Peramatzis and Galanakis (2022:971), Herzberg, along with Mausner and Snyderman, first introduced this model in 1959, building upon

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Herzberg identified two major categories of factors that influence employees' attitudes toward work. The first category, which aligns with the need for growth and self-actualisation, is referred to as "motivators". These include factors such as achievement, recognition, the nature of the work itself, responsibility, opportunities for advancement, and potential for personal growth (Thant, Pan & Taw, 2022).

The second category, known as "hygiene factors," pertains to the need to avoid unpleasantness. These include organisational policies, relationships with supervisors, interpersonal relations, working conditions, and compensation (Duty, 2022).

While the broad application of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has been critiqued by some scholars (Martin, 2020:366), there remains significant evidence supporting its relevance in explaining the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that contribute to employee job satisfaction (Mehrad, 2020). It is important to consider this theory in the context of its influence on employee satisfaction and its role in ensuring the retention of high-quality employees within organisations (Duty, 2020). Furthermore, Herzberg's theory draws influence from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, as noted by Peramatzis and Galanakis (2022:971), highlighting the interconnection between motivation and fulfillment of basic and higher-level needs in the workplace. The theories of motivation, particularly Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, have significant implications for performance management in organisations, especially in the context of improving employee performance and satisfaction. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory provides insight into the factors that influence employee motivation, which is directly relevant to performance management systems.

The theory suggests that performance management should address both motivators and hygiene factors to effectively enhance employee performance. These factors are intrinsic to the job and contribute to higher levels of employee satisfaction and performance. In a performance management system, motivators can be integrated into goal setting, feedback, and recognition processes. For example, performance appraisals could emphasize achievements, provide opportunities for career advancement, and ensure that employees are recognised for their contributions. The goal-setting aspect of performance management aligns with Herzberg's motivators, as employees are more likely to be motivated to achieve organisational goals if they see that their work offers opportunities for growth, recognition, and personal fulfillment. Hygiene factors are extrinsic to the job and while they do not directly motivate employees,

their absence can lead to dissatisfaction and lower performance. In performance management systems, hygiene factors such as fair compensation, good working conditions, and supportive supervisory relationships should be ensured. Performance management should be designed to assess whether these factors are met, as dissatisfaction in these areas can significantly hinder an employee's performance. By addressing hygiene factors, organisations can create a foundation for stability and fairness, which allows employees to focus on achieving higher levels of performance.

### **2.1.2.2 Continuous Feedback and Agile Performance Management**

In contrary to the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the Continuous Feedback and Agile Performance Management theories emphasise employee engagement and empowerment (Wang & Li, 2024). In Agile organisations, employees are encouraged to take ownership of their performance. This makes employees feel more connected to their work and the organisation's mission (Green, 2024). The emergence of Agile methodologies that originates from the software development industry, has revolutionised the way organisations approach teamwork, goal setting and performance evaluation. This shift towards agility in business has compelled organisations to rethink how performance is managed, which leads to the rise of flexible, and a dynamic performance management system (Aguinis, 2019). In Continuous Feedback and Agile Performance Management, an ongoing conversation between managers and employees is encouraged that allows for a timely recognition of accomplishment and identification of areas for improvement. The frequency of feedback helps also in aligning employee performance with organisational goals. The modern organisation is moving away from annual performance reviews toward continuous feedback models. This shift supports real-time coaching, regular check-ins, and goal adjustments, helping to boost engagement and responsiveness (Kouatli, 2024).

In relation to Continuous Feedback and Agile Performance Management that allows continuous planning, execution and evaluation, the 'Objectives and Key Results' approach drives focus, alignment and success within the organisation (Zierock, Blatz & Karcher, 2024:24). This goal setting approach aims to create clarity, prioritize objectives and provide a structured method for tracking progress and ultimately lead to improved performance (Rajapakshe, 2024). There are three distinct approach types of 'Objectives and Key Results', namely: (i) the Exploratory that proves to be effective in early-stages of projects or innovation

teams seeking to chart unexplored territories; (ii) the Hypothesis type that formulates the hypotheses and acquires data to validate a strategy or identify the necessity for a pivot; and (iii) the Milestone type designed to assess whether ongoing efforts align with the intended direction and are likely to succeed (Zierock *et al.*, 2024). . The ‘Objectives and Key Results’ approach provides a general framework that promotes alignment and transparency within organisations. By encouraging measurable goals and frequent updates, ‘Objectives and Key Results’ improve individual and team accountability (Betterworks, 2023). In support of the ‘Objective and Key Results’ approach, an Algorithmic Management approach focuses on software algorithms defined as computer-programmed procedures for transforming input data into a desired output.

Algorithmic Management can be defined as “... a software algorithm that assumes managerial functions” (Kellog, Valentine & Christin, 2020:364). The Algorithmic Management approach is used to automatically allocate tasks to workers, schedule workforces, direct workers in the routes and time they should take in completing their work activity (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2023). The approach entails automated systems that simultaneously direct, evaluate and discipline the workforce, limiting the role of managers in these areas to respond appropriately to system requests for intervention. This approach uses Artificial Intelligence and data-driven tools to monitor, assess, and manage employee performance in real time.

The Agency-Driven Labour Theory, like the Algorithmic Management approach, presents how human workers create value by orchestrating complex systems that combine human and Artificial Intelligence (Ganuthula, 2024). This theory implies that job design, compensation structures, professional development and labour market dynamics can guide an organisation in managing the transition to Artificial Intelligence-augmented operations while maximizing human value creation. The work in Algorithmic Management and Agency-Driven Labor Theory is that they can provide both practical tools for policymakers and educational institutions because they tend to prepare workers for the labour market. This is where value creation increasingly centres on agency and direction rather than execution. As Artificial Intelligence becomes more integrated into work environments, Agency-Driven Labour Theory emphasises the growing value of human agency defined as judgment, oversight and contextual intelligence in performance (Jarrahi, 2024).

On the one hand, Giamos, Doucet and Leger (2023:195), confirm that performance feedback in organisations based on recent evidence shows that employees are mostly dissatisfied with

the feedback that they receive and that it is not always effective for improving future performance. It is suggested that these performance issues could be resolved by engaging and motivating employees to improve by promoting the continuous performance feedback. The organisation can promote the use of technology to assist managers in delivering feedback to employees in a timely fashion. The computer mediated feedback is more effective than person-mediated feedback. Concurrently the leadership that encourages employees to take ownership, control and responsibility for their own contribution can be productive for improving team performance effectiveness (Abson, Schofield & Kennell, 2024). In Distributed Leadership Theory, leadership can be shared among peers as well as from the top of the organisation down.

This supports that teams with this shared leadership experience less conflict, greater consensus and higher trust and cohesion than teams without shared leadership (Harris, Jones & Ismail, 2022). The Distributed Leadership theory, when compared to the Scenario-Based Performance Management Theory, the former comprises shared responsibilities that promote engagement between individuals, ethics and transparency as well as human capacity building and training. The latter encourages practicality or real scenarios, for example, expressing how smartphone-based audio, tracking systems and drones can assist in improving municipal service delivery (Schoeman & Chakwizira, 2023).

Performance management should not only focus on setting clear expectations, providing feedback, and measuring outcomes but also consider the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect employee satisfaction and engagement. By aligning the principles of these motivation theories with performance management practices, organisations can create an environment where employees are motivated to achieve both individual and organisational goals, leading to enhanced overall performance. The shift to technological use in performance management such as information technology, artificial intelligence, video conferencing and internet represents a significant adaptation to change in the performance management system environment. The combination of resources and human capabilities allows organisations to improve productivity and the welfare of their workforce. In the context of this study, a recurring finding across both public and private sector studies, was that even well-designed performance management system fails to achieve the desired outcomes when poorly communicated, inconsistently applied and inadequately understood by employees (Nuwanthika:2025). In Municipal Courts, these findings were particularly relevant due to the operational complexity, regulatory

environment and direct interface with the public. The studies indicated that where employees have limited understanding of performance expectations and evaluation criteria, there is a tendency toward confusion, reduced accountability and inconsistent performance (Williams & Shaw: 2025). This directly results in backlogs, administrative inefficiencies and delays in service delivery which are common challenges within Municipal Court systems.

### **2.1.3 The use of performance management system**

The use of a performance management system is to direct the attention of employees towards organisational goals rather than input or procedures. It is a process in which a manager and his employees work together to plan, monitor and review the objectives or work goals of his employees to make an overall contribution to the organisation (Lillis & Grafton, 2024).

The system assists in decision making and understanding progress towards meeting the outcomes of the Strategic Plan and Action Plans (Akpa *et al.*, 2021). A performance management system is vital in organisations as it enables public managers to measure the organisation's performance (Awan *et al.*, 2020).

The application of a balanced scorecard method is utilised in a performance management system to record and score the performance results of an organisation (Ekowati & Sierita, 2022). It is the intention of a performance management system to address challenges in an organisation by measuring, and comparing the standards achieved by different organisations, setting targets for future achievements and providing incentives to reach these targets (Mio, Constantini & Panfilo, 2021). This is done through a performance measurement process, which is an activity to measure the success of an organisation's work based on predetermined criteria so that the performance of an organisation will be improved (Ekowati & Sierita, 2022).

The purpose of performance measurement is to drive employees to achieve and adhere to set standards of conduct to produce the outcomes and behaviours required by the organisation, (Febriandika, Harun, Kurniawati & Ashfahan, 2023:347). The authors further elaborate that effective performance measurement requires transforming the organisation's vision, mission and strategy into operational goals and performance indicators. The balanced scorecard as indicated in 2.1.1 of this chapter, is a performance measurement tool which is associated with strategic planning and implementation to serve as management framework that helps to identify the critical goals that drive the organisation (Mio *et al.*, 2021). Herath & Cullum (2022:4), state

that Kaplan and Norton (1992), emphasized that the balanced scorecard was created to provide top managers with a set of performance measures that give a view of business alignment with strategy. Dahal, Ghimire and Rai (2022: 2), confirm that a balanced scorecard is a common performance measuring system that employs performance metrics from financial and non-financial aspects. It describes an organisation's current performance status and offers foundations for culture performance. These include performance measurements that measure performance using performance indicators indicated in a balanced scorecard (Horvathova & Mokrisova, 2023). "The results of the performance measurement, based on the balanced scorecard approach, are communicated to the executives to provide feedback about their performance so that they can make decisions on the work for which they are responsible" (Estiasih, 2021:185).

There are terms and benefits of performance indicators that give guidance while compiling a balanced scorecard to measure an individual or organisation's performance. The performance indicators can be measured objectively, both quantitatively and qualitatively, meaning that two or more measures of performance indicators can have the same conclusion.

The relevant performance indicators must address the relevant aspects of the object and must be useful to demonstrate the success of input, process output, results, benefits and impacts. The indicators must be flexible enough and sensitive to changes or adjustments in the implementation of activities. There must be effective, meaning that data or information relating to the relevant performance indicators can be collected, processed and analysed at the available cost (Estiasih, 2021). The benefits of performance indicators are to determine clarity of organisational goals and to develop measurement agreements in a balanced scorecard. This benefit includes the availability of setting target facilities for the assessment of the organisation and individual managers as part of the organisation's accountability to shareholders (Dipura & Soediantono, 2022). It can be assumed that when an organisation's performance is measured, monitored and evaluated on a regular basis, the organisation is likely to achieve its objectives and that would contribute to a good delivery service to the public.

It is important to note that performance measuring assists public managers to identify what works, what does not and the reasons thereof. The purpose of performance measurement is to assist in decision making and to understand progress towards meeting the outcomes of the

Strategic Plan and Action Plans (Akpa *et al.*, 2021). Performance measurement gives guidance to the fact that performance management can be a tool for top management to utilise for improved performance of an organisation.

#### **2.1.4 The importance of performance management system**

Ngoepe-Ntsoane (2021:10) made an analysis that the quality of the public sector depends on its employees' s ability to respond to the needs of the citizens as part of their responsibilities of providing quality services. This is where managers can monitor strategy progress and take relevant steps for further improvements in satisfying citizens or customers. The culture of employee's compliance to the needs of citizens promotes the strategies of corporate social responsibility in all employees of an organisation (Fatima & Elbana, 2023). It is critical to note that citizens are not referred to as passive actors who simply receive whatever burdensome rules or procedures that come their way in the interest of accessing state services (Mohapi, 2022). They have citizenship rights to challenge the authorities if they are not satisfied or there is no compliance from people who serve them. Compliance implies rules that demand specific behaviour or performance which should be monitored by the managers of an organisation (Mathebula & Barnard, 2020).

The managers or leaders in an institution may use financial incentives to foster motivation, compliance and innovation of their employees in satisfying the needs of the citizens or customers. The managers may contribute by clarifying organisational goals as part of the process of inspiring and motivating their employees (Ibrahim & Daniel, 2019:369). This will result in the employees having a better understanding of which tasks are critical, important and how they should be achieved. A leader will know how to bring out the best in employees and identify areas where development in others and of himself or herself is required. The aim of performance management system in an organisation is to develop the potential of staff and to improve their performance which automatically improves the organisation's performance (Yawson & Paros, 2023).

The South African government needs to be consistent in implementing the performance management system in all spheres of government and their departments for the benefit of an improved service- delivery to its public. The services include the provision of housing,

education, health care, public works, utilities, infrastructure, human resources and equal treatment of citizens (Engen, Fransson, Quist & Skalen, 2020). The mentioned services provided by the local government must pursue good public governance as best as they can to indicate effectiveness and accountability by the government. This can be achieved by the government that focuses on improved productivity and sustainable solutions to service delivery (Ovitz & Johnson, 2019). The aim of performance management, if applied effectively and responsibly by government officials, may be a solution to improved services towards the communities (Malemane & Nel-Sanders, 2021). The performance management system proves to be a system that brings governance to government departments and can be used also by private companies because of its effectiveness (Atmaja, Fachrurazi, Abdullah, Fauziah, Zaroni, & Yusuf, 2022).

In European countries, a European Foundation for Quality Management model is used as a framework to identify or assess areas that need improvement in an organisation and the criteria to be used to achieve the desired outcome (Gonzi, 2019:45). In local government, performance management systems may contribute to promoting the employees' s positive attitudes and behaviours towards social, economic and environmental factors (Mies & Gold, 2021). In contrast, using power for pure personal gains in the third sphere of government or organisations will devalue the intended mission of the sector and its performance (Duty, 2022).

The experience of performance management systems in an organisation is that there should be a willingness to commit to selflessness or to serve others/citizens (Matloko, 2021). Armstrong (2022:9), affirms that a fully developed performance management system will include formal arrangements for concluding performance agreements, setting objectives using the “SMART” formula (S-specific, M-measurable, A-agreed, R-realistic and T-time related). This will provide a means for public institutions to become competitive, efficient, effective and accountable (Mofolo & Novukela, 2024). The following table is an example of a developed SMART matrix tool for Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) of a company (Sokolov, Hossain, Albarran & Merrill, 2023).

**Table 2:** Methodology to develop a SMART matrix for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs	Production Output	Manufacturing Headcount	Productivity
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Specific	Increase production output by 15% with reduction of lines downtimes.	Add 100 people in headcount to boost 24/7 operations by reducing overtime with 20%	Improve productivity by 10% after removing waste in process flow.
Measurable	Measuring lines downtimes and tracking the good unit count at the end of the manufacturing line will give the baseline for the improvement.	Manufacturing headcounts shift by shift with the required employees per line achieve targeted production.	Performing time study between station and units through the process.
Attainable/Agreed	Since the bottleneck of the line is the final station, a data collection tool will provide hour by hour the line output.	While the manufacturing floor is expanding operations and requires more people, intense recruitment is needed.	With the analysis of cycle times and task times, Engineering should be able to improve bottleneck times.
Resources/Realistic	By having the line leaders collect the data and reporting downtime, the top 5 reasons for wasting time will be given.	After staffing goal is requested from operations to Human Resources, the goal of 25 people per month should be started.	The evaluation of technical data from equipment could be adjusted to reduce waste of time.
Time-bound/Related	At the end of Q3 for example.	4 months after the request is placed.	By the end of the current year.

**Source:** *Integrating Performance Indicators into tract production (Solokov et al., 2023)*

Table 2 elaborates the SMART matrix as a communication and planning tool utilised to identify the specifics of actions or tasks. The implementation of the actions is reviewed around various attributes. The performance management system (PMS) should be practical and familiar, and workshops provided to educate the operational level of employees to be productive and user-friendly. According to Nkadimeng (2023:34), the experience of learning might have a positive impact on employees. Armstrong (2022:7), supports that performance management arose when

scholars began talking about performance appraisal from an event to a process (Armstrong, 2022). Organisations should make sure that employees are regularly developed, so that the objectives of the organisations can be achieved (Sewela, 2023). Trained employees could deliver effective municipal services in a professional way and customers could benefit quality services, thus emphasising the importance of performance management system within an organisation (Cutu, 2021).

## **2.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (as amended) provides that the national and provincial governments and other measures must support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their own affairs, to exercise their powers and to perform their functions. In the local sphere of government, political leaders come and go due to their term of office, but the administrators are expected to continue managing the organisation successfully. In the local government, the Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000), Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001), Municipal Finance Management Act (2003), White Paper on Local Government (1998), Municipal Staff Regulations (2021), Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers Directly Accountable to Municipal Managers (2006), Skills Development Act (1998) and Labour Relations Act (1995) were made to, among others, provide guidance to performance management policies of municipalities in the Republic of South Africa.

Thobejane and Ngoepe-Ntsoane (2023:223), compounded that it is the responsibility and legislative requirement for the municipality to provide services in an efficient and sustainable manner without disadvantaging other sectors of the population. It is in this regard that ministers as politicians may be engaged in the passing of the legislation to regulate functions and processes. The Municipal Systems Act mandates the local government organisations to establish a comprehensive performance management system. This system must encompass planning, reporting, and accountability regarding performance on the Integrated Development Plan (2001), Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (2001), all of which must be communicated quarterly and annually to both the Council and the public (Municipal Regulations and Guidelines, 2021). According to the Municipal Regulations and Guidelines 2021, a municipality must adopt the performance management and development system excluding the following staff members, namely (i) those appointed on a fixed contract that is

less than twelve months, (ii) those serving notice of termination of contract of employment or retire on reaching the statutory retirement age, and (iii) those appointed on an internship program or participating in the national public works programmes. The municipal performance reports are subject to auditing, as stipulated by the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000), with the audit conducted by the Auditor-General of South Africa.

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The audit is risk-based, meaning that the Auditor-General identifies risk areas through various means and determines the scope and extent of the audit, in accordance with the Municipal Finance Management Act (2003). It is important to note that not all organisational targets can, or should, be directly translated into individual performance scorecards, especially at the junior levels. Administrative tasks, which may be repetitive and not project-focused, are typically measured differently, often for efficiency and for adherence to established standards. In contrast, more specific or professional standards may require translation into scorecards at the project, operations, or even individual levels, as outlined in the Performance Management Guidelines for Municipalities (2001). Despite the widespread knowledge of the theory behind such processes, many leaders in local government struggle with their practical implementation.

In South Africa, both the Presidency and Premier's offices have a direct interest in all aspects of performance information management (National Treasury framework, 2007).

Thokoa, Naidoo, and Herbst (2022:1) explain that the National Treasury of South Africa plays a central role as the nation's treasury, serving all organs of state in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act of South Africa (1999).

The National Treasury assists the government in managing and promoting transparency regarding public expenditure, with departments throughout the country. Furthermore, Mamokhere, Musitha, and Netshidzivhani (2021:1) highlight that, "... while the National Treasury manages budgets and spending, the Department of Public Service and Administration is responsible for regulating all areas related to public sector employees, including those in local government. Municipalities, in turn, are required to respond to electoral queries and provide written feedback continuously" (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997:14). Public officials play a critical role in utilising information generated by various departments and reporting this to the Presidency for monitoring, evaluation, and for overall government performance reporting (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2007).

The performance information gathered from different departments enables the Department of Public Service and Administration to monitor, evaluate, and report on the overall performance of the government (National Treasury Framework, 2007).

This framework serves as an example of inter-organisational relations within a democratic government, where the formulation of policy intentions leads to the process of implementation (National Treasury Framework, 2007). The input-processing-output model at each stage may provide an organisational perspective, from identifying customer needs to delivering outcomes. Employees at all levels, regardless of rank or decision-making authority, can understand how their work contributes to the achievement of organisational goals, provided there is effective leadership. The focus within performance management systems is often placed on training, planning, goal setting, monitoring, feedback, performance assessment, and interventions that prioritise people over the systems used. The effectiveness of a performance management system is thus contingent upon having the right context that is understood by the organisation, supported by its design, culture, and best practices (Mathebula & Barnard, 2020).

The level of success achieved by local governments could be determined by a harmony between the senior management and the operational level of employees in understanding what is expected from them. This effective performance management administration could promote the achievement of positive outcomes for the institution and influence its mechanisms to reach its goals and mitigate adverse impacts or potential shortcomings (Grazino, Mostacero & Riofrio, 2024).

### **2.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided a comprehensive exploration of how employee motivation can drive effective results within the South African government context. A theory of motivation, namely, Herzberg's two-factor theory were applied to highlight the significance of addressing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors to enhance employee satisfaction and performance. A consistent finding was that when employees lack clarity on performance expectations, they perceive the system as poorly communicated. This makes the performance management system to fail in achieving its intended objectives. In the context of Municipal Courts, these challenges are pronounced due to the high-pressure environment, procedural complexity and critical role these institutions play in service delivery and governance. This literature confirms that gaps in performance management system communication and understanding contribute directly to low employee morale and inconsistent performance which in turn manifest as operational inefficiencies. The legislative framework, including the Municipal Systems Act and the South African Constitution, has been examined to demonstrate how government departments are regulated, ensuring transparency, accountability, and alignment with national priorities. These frameworks and theories serve as the foundation for understanding the role of performance management systems in fostering a culture of accountability and efficiency within local government structures. Moving forward, the next chapter delved into the research methodology, outlining the approach to investigate the practical application of these concepts within the South African government and how the concepts impacted the understanding and perception of the 'performance management system'.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGIES AND ANALYSIS**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the theoretical and legislative frameworks surrounding performance management systems (PMS), with a particular focus on the contributions of key theorists and scholars who emphasize the critical role of performance management in enhancing employee productivity and organisational efficiency. It highlighted the importance of equipping employees with the necessary tools, feedback mechanisms, and motivation strategies to optimise performance within the public sector, particularly in the context of municipal courts. Building on that foundation, this chapter outlined the research methodology employed in this study. It began by discussing the chosen research paradigm, offering a detailed justification for the adoption of the interpretivist paradigm, which is most appropriate for exploring subjective experiences and perceptions. This paradigm supported the study's objective of understanding how administrative officials interpreted and engaged with the implementation of PMS in their work environment.

The chapter also defined and elaborated on the research design, detailing the qualitative, quantitative and mixed research method approaches adopted for the study and explained why these methods were best suited for addressing the research questions. The utilised semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method were introduced, and the process of data analysis was outlined, with emphasis on the thematic analysis technique used to identify patterns and insights from participants' narratives. In addition, the sampling strategy was discussed to clarify how participants were selected for the study, including the criteria for inclusion and the rationale behind the sampling method. The data collection procedures were described, covering the interview protocol, the role of the researcher, and the measures taken to ensure the credibility and reliability of the data.

Finally, the chapter addressed the ethical considerations that guided the research process, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

These considerations are crucial in ensuring that the research adheres to accepted ethical standards and respects the rights and dignity of all participants. This chapter concludes with a summary of the methodological approaches discussed, reinforcing their relevance to the research objectives and laying the groundwork for the analysis of findings that were presented and discussed in chapter 4.

## **3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

A paradigm is a worldview that forms the basis for understanding or interpreting a particular subject, phenomenon or discipline. The word paradigm can be used to mean either approach or design (Gihar, 2022). It represents a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that shape how people think or view a given subject. In the research context, a paradigm provides a lens through which researchers view the world, conceptualise their research questions, select an appropriate method and interpret their findings (Ostern, Jusslin & Bjorkoy, 2021). It makes provision for a framework for organising knowledge, conducting research and solving problems within a specific field or discipline. This is a foundation that helps researchers make sense of their research and determine what knowledge is valid and valuable within their field (Omodan, 2024). Consequently, a research paradigm pertains to the application of a paradigmatic framework within the field of research. By identifying the importance of the research paradigms, researchers can create a zealous interest towards navigating the complexities of social research more effectively (Pabel, Pryce & Anderson, A, 2021). Researchers use different paradigms depending on the purpose of the research and the positions they carry in their research. The following are the major research paradigms:

### **➤ Positivism Paradigm**

The ‘positivist’ paradigm is rooted in the belief that knowledge can be acquired through direct observation, measurement and the application of scientific methods. It emphasises objectivity, causality and the search for universal laws. The aim of this paradigm is to test hypotheses, employ quantitative methods and gather empirical evidence to explain and predict social phenomena. The researchers in this worldview strive for generalisability and value replicable findings (Omodan, 2024).

### **➤ Interpretivism/Constructivism Paradigm**

The ‘interpretive’ or constructivist paradigm, serves importantly on understanding the subjective meanings and social contexts in which individuals experience the world. Researchers adopting this paradigm believe that reality is socially constructed and that interactions negotiate meanings (Kouam & William, 2024). They use qualitative methods such as interviews, participant observation and textual analysis to explore the complexity of human experiences. The interpretive researchers seek to capture the richness of social phenomena, highlighting multiple perspectives and put emphasis on context and individual agency.

Consequently, this paradigm is founded on the assumption that people's perceptions, ideas, thinking and the meaning that are important to them can be understood through researching their culture (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). The qualitative research method was also the preferred approach in this work as an interpretivism that utilises the existing knowledge with appropriate methodology towards a specific objective which brings a resolution to a practical problem.

#### ➤ **Critical/Transformative Paradigm**

The 'critical' or transformative paradigm concentrates on power structures, social inequality and emancipation. Researchers adopting this paradigm aim to uncover hidden power dynamics, challenge oppressive systems and work towards social change. This paradigm draws from critical theory and employs interdisciplinary approaches to illuminate structural inequalities and encourages reflexivity, actively involving participants and fostering collaboration with communities impacted by social injustices (Tabron & Thomas, 2023).

#### ➤ **Postcolonial Indigenous Paradigm**

The 'postcolonial indigenous' paradigm comes from the experiences of colonised people and the recognition of the need to decolonise knowledge production (Ngoepe, Jacobs & Geyer, 2022). It centres indigenous community perspectives, voices and knowledge, challenging the Western dominance in research. Postcolonial indigenous researchers prioritise cultural revitalisation, self-determination and recognising diverse ways of knowing. They engage in collaborative and community-based research, acknowledging indigenous knowledge systems and advocating for the rights and well-being of indigenous people (Aryal, 2023).

#### ➤ **Pragmatism Paradigm**

The 'pragmatism' paradigm focuses on practicality and integrating methods that best answer the research question (Dube, Nkomo & Apadile-Thokweng, 2024). The 'pragmatism' paradigm allows for the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This paradigm recognises that different types of data can provide complementary insights and is more concerned with the problem to be solved than the methods used to solve it. The pragmatic researcher is flexible, adapting to the needs of the research rather than adhering to strict philosophical positions. In pragmatism, the emphasis is on finding what works to answer specific questions and to solve problems, reflecting a practical, real-world orientation that is willing to use any available methods, techniques or theories (Hampson & McKinley, 2023).

Consequently, the choice of a paradigm by the researcher depends on the research questions, the nature of the phenomena under investigation and the researcher's philosophical and methodological orientations (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). The understanding of the distinctions and compatibilities between these paradigms enables researchers to make informed choices and select appropriate methods that align with their research goals. In this research project, the 'interpretivism' method is the preferred paradigm as it is based on the notion that social reality is shaped by way of human experience and social background (Kouam & William, 2024). This makes it well suited to do research on human behaviours which are related in the context of its socio-cultural issues. The interpretive researcher sees social truth as rooted in the social surroundings and the fact that this explains truth through a method of understanding in place of a hypothesis trying to use or integrate participants' subjective experiences (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022).

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design is considered as the glue that holds the research project together. It determines how participants are selected, what variables are included, how data is collected and analysed so that the overall research problem can be addressed (Dannels, 2018). The design for this project should indicate the purpose of the study and demonstrate that the plan will answer the research questions and its consistency with the study's purpose (Takona, 2023). The research designs are consequently the types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design (Gihar, 2022).

### **3.4 RESEARCH METHODS**

Research methodology involves the systematic approach used to address research problems, serving as a science for understanding how research is conducted in a rigorous manner (Kumar & Praveenakumar, 2025). "Research methodology incorporates the methods, techniques and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing the research design. This procedure involves planning, selecting and developing specific techniques for both data collection and data analysis" (Chu, 2024:3). The mixed research methods are a range of tools that were employed for a wide range of subjects such as natural sciences, social sciences, politics, healthcare, nursing studies, education, sport, hospitality and humanities (Walliman, 2022) hence its adoption for the study.

### **3.4.1 Qualitative research method**

The aim in applying the ‘qualitative’ research method was to address society’s scientific and practical issues and incorporates the naturalistic and interpretive approaches to different subject matter. The method was useful in that it discovered new insights, ideas and generated new theories (Taherdoost, 2022:54). In qualitative studies, there may be extensive field work where the researcher goes to where cases are located and thus obtains information on them in their natural setting. “Researchers engaging in qualitative research do not reserve the writing for the end of the project, instead they write all the way through the process of collecting data, analysing, reflecting and inquiring” (Tracy, 2025:5). The purpose was based on the response from two criteria, namely, the way to do things and the outcome of tasks (Taherdoost, 2022). “Researcher that applies the ‘qualitative’ research method make it possible for the qualitative research design to interpret and understand the complex reality of a given situation, event, phenomena or the case” (Jha, 2024:24). The ‘qualitative’ research method further considers reality to be constructed and bound to the person considering it. The reality is, therefore, a moving target and the more inductive the approach the more the researcher seeks to understand with an open book perspective assuming no previous hypothesis (Jando & Dionne, 2024). The characteristics of a ‘qualitative’ research method includes an in-depth exploration, subjectivity and control, emergent design and small sample sizes (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2023:10).

### **3.4.2 Quantitative research method**

Contrary to a qualitative research method, the ‘quantitative’ research method employs the numerical values derived from observations to explain and describe the phenomena that the observations can reflect on them. This method comprehends both the empirical statements as descriptive statements about the meaning of the cases in real words, not about the thought of cases and methods (Jando & Dionne, 2024). The collected numerical data is analysed using mathematical methods. Whilst quantitative research designs are important, these designs are not useful for obtaining detailed information about the context in which events or behaviours occur, nor do they allow flexibility in the type of data obtained from case to case in the same study (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2023).

Table 3: below shows a summary of the mayor differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches to research paradigms.

**Table 3:** Differences between quantitative and qualitative research approaches

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Quantitative Approach</b>	<b>Qualitative Approach</b>
Paradigm/Worldview. (assumption about world)	Positivism/Realism.	Interpretivism/Idealism.
Research Purpose (rationale)	Numerical description Causal Prediction.	Subjective description Empathetic understanding Exploration.
Epistemology. (theory of knowledge)	Dualistic/Objectivist.	Subjectivist.
Research Methods. (techniques and tools)	Empirical examination. Measurement testing. Randomisation Blinding. Structured Protocols. Questionnaires.	Ethnographies Case studies. Narrative Research. Interviews. Focus group discussion. Observations. Field notes. Recordings and films.
Scientific Method. (role of theory)	Deductive approach, testing of theory.	Inductive approach, generation of theory.
Nature of Data Instruments.	Variables Structured and Validated-data collection instruments.	Words, Images, categories In-depth interviews, participant observation, field notes and open-ended questions.
Data analysis.	Identify statistical relationships among variables.	Use descriptive data, search for patterns, themes ad holistic features and appreciate variables.
Results.	Generalizable findings.	Particularistic findings, provision of insider viewpoint.
Final Report	Formal statistical report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correlations.</li> <li>• Comparisons of means.</li> <li>• Reporting of statistical significance of findings.</li> </ul>	Informal narrative report.

**Source:** *Differences between quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Gihar, 2022)*

Table 3 described the research approaches and their systematic strategies utilised to collect, analyse and interpret data to answer the research questions. They provide a structured approach to investigate and ensure that findings are valid and reliable.

The 'qualitative' research method, also known as socio-anthropological research paradigm, is utilised because of its naturalistic, interpretive approach concerned with understanding to the meanings which people attach to phenomena (Gihar, 2022). The paradigm in quantitative and qualitative research is that the two methods share the same patterns, structures, steps, procedures, principles, methods, techniques and are used synonymously. The social scientists may choose between quantitative and qualitative designs because they seek to explain events from different perspectives. These methodologies represent two distinct worldviews or paradigms. The way the researcher decides to collect, analyse and interpret the data determines either research is quantitative or qualitative format (Dube, Nkomo & Apadile-Thokweng, 2024).

In qualitative research method, a case study, according to Northouse and Lee (2025:6), is an active learning method, they do not give simple answers, rather they provoke participants to employ critical thinking skills to apply the use of theoretical concepts to practical problems. In case studies, the researcher utilises fieldwork investigation and this is conducted on the spot under natural circumstances of the specific case. The qualitative approach is taken when the objective is to formulate a theory that is supposed to explain a phenomenon that is currently being observed or experienced in the past by either observing or describing reality (Yong, Husin & Kamarudin, 2021). It was the purpose of this study to conduct research using a case study platform or natural setting, where the participants were interviewed conveniently in their working environment with no unusual pressures or activities. The research methods aligned with both pragmatism paradigm and interpretivism paradigm as it employs interviews, observations and focus groups to capture in-depth data on subjective experiences and meanings (Kouam & William, 2024).

### **3.5 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

Sampling methods in qualitative research contributes towards the selection of correctly informing a population for a study. These methods are termed: convenience, purposive, snowball and quota sampling (Muzari, Shava & Shonhiwa, 2022).

In this case, a non-probability sampling (purposive sampling) method was applied. Purposive sampling relies on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units (e.g. people, cases/organisations, events, or pieces of data) that are to be studied (Thomas, 2021). The main aim was to focus on characteristics of a population that are of interest, which would best enable the researcher to answer the research questions.

The sample that was investigated was small, especially when compared with probability sampling techniques. In this project, the case study being the Municipal Courts Administrative Officers Division comprises 120 staff members including satellite/extended Courts that are situated in Mamelodi, Soshanguve and Hammanskraal. However, for the purpose of this research, three main Municipal Courts were targeted. In the Pretoria Central Municipal Court, 15 participants were selected from a total of 20. In the Wonderboom Municipal Court, 10 participants were selected from a total of 14, and in Centurion Municipal Courts 5 participants were selected from a total of 6. The following table indicates the population and sample used in this research:

**Table 4:** Population and sample distribution per Municipal and Satellite Courts

Municipal or Satellite Court	Population Size per Municipal or Satellite Court	Sample Size selected per Municipal Court	% Sampling Rate per Municipal Court	% Population proportion per Municipal or Satellite Court	% Sample Proportion per Municipal Court
Mamelodi	80	0	0	67%	0
Soshanguve		0	0		0
Hammanskraal		0	0		0
Pretoria Central	20	15	75%	17%	50%
Wonderboom	14	10	71%	12%	33%
Centurion	6	5	83%	5%	17%
Total	120	30	25%	100%	100%

**Source:** *Municipal Courts Division (City of Tshwane, 2019)*

Table 4 reflects the distribution of the population studied and distribution of total sample size per Municipal or Satellite Court. From this table, 67% of the population of municipal courts administration officials were excluded from the study and only 33% were included in the study. Of the 33% sampled administrative officials, 17% are from Pretoria Central, 12% from Wonderboom, and 5% from Centurion. The sample allocation was proportional to the size of the Municipal Courts. The allocation meant that 50% of the sample is represented by Pretoria

Central, 33% by Wonderboom, and 17% by Centurion administrative officials. Should the researcher decide to weight the estimates, then each administrative official will represent  $30/15 = 2.0$  administrative officials in Pretoria Central,  $30/10 = 3.0$  administrative officials in Wonderboom, and  $30/5 = 6$  administrative officials in Centurion. The participants were sampled according to the preferred number from three administrative offices of the Courts by the researcher.

### 3.5.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria of participants

The study included participants who had a minimum of 5 years of experience working within Municipal Courts. This ensured a sufficient depth of understanding Court processes, challenges and organisational dynamics. Participants were required to be currently employed within the Municipal Courts. The excluded participants from the interviews were those that did not have over 5 years of experience nor were being employed within Municipal Courts. The participants were excluded to ensure that respondents have sufficient exposure and experience with performance management system within Municipal Courts. Participants that had been promoted or seconded/transferred to other departments within the City of Tshwane are excluded as the individuals may still be adjusting to the new roles, responsibilities and new performance expectations. The selected age group was assumed by the researcher to represent administrative officials with adequate maturity, work experience and organisational exposure. This reduces variability in perceptions that may be influenced by generational differences. The following table indicates the length of service per respondents per Municipal Courts:

**Table 5:** Descriptive statistics of years of service of administrative officials of Municipal Courts

Municipal Court	Average of Years of service	StdDev of Years of service	Maximum Years of service	Minimum Years of service	Range
Centurion	18	10	35	10	25
Pretoria Central	12	5	20	5	15
Wonderboom	12	5	22	6	16
Grand Total	13	6	35	5	30

*Source: Municipal Courts Division (City of Tshwane, 2019)*

The table above shows descriptive statistics of length of service in years of administrative officials per Municipal Court.

On average, Centurion has officials with the longest length of service (18 years), whilst Wonderboom and Pretoria Central have the shortest length of service (12 years). Centurion had the highest level of dispersion with a standard deviation of 10 compared to 5 for Wonderboom and Pretoria Central. This high level of dispersion means that there was a big difference in the length of service of administrative officials in Centurion Municipal Court. An administrative official with the longest length of service of 35 years was found in Centurion.

The administrative official with the least number of years of service (5 years) was found in Pretoria Central. The specific strategies were employed to strengthen each of the following components within the context of assessing employee perception and understanding of the performance management system in Municipal Courts.

a. Credibility (Internal Validity)

Credibility refers to the extent to which the findings accurately represent the participants' experiences and perceptions (Gumbayi: 2024). Credibility was achieved by ensuring that the findings accurately reflected the lived experiences and perspectives of participants involved in Municipal Courts. This was accomplished through triangulation of multiple data sources that included interviews with Municipal Courts administrative officials, analysis of relevant legislative and policy documents. The checking of data by participants was allowed by the researcher to verify accuracy of the data and interpretations.

b. Transferability (External Validity)

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other similar contexts (Ahmed: 2024). Transferability was addressed by providing a detailed description of the research context that included the operational environment of Municipal Courts within the City of Tshwane. This included outlining the organisation's performance management policies, applicable legislative frameworks and the role of participants, that is the administrative officials in Municipal Courts.

c. Dependability (Reliability)

Dependability refers to the consistency and stability of the research process over time (Ahmed: 2004). Dependability was ensured by maintaining a comprehensive audit trail that documented all stages of the research process that included the research design, data collection and

analytical decisions. The use of consistent data collection methods such as semi-structured interview guides to the participants, supported the reliability of the study.

d. Confirmability (Objectivity)

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings are shaped by participants' responses rather than researcher's bias (Gumbayi: 2024). Confirmability was achieved by ensuring that the findings were grounded in the data and not influenced by researcher bias or subjective interpretations. This was supported through the maintenance of detailed field notes, verbatim transcripts and a record of analytical decisions. Reflexive journaling was utilised to acknowledge and manage the researcher's assumptions and positionality. The independent review of the data and findings was constantly done by the researcher's supervisor to enhance objectivity and neutrality throughout the study.

The systematic application of the strategies in this study ensured that the findings on administrative officials' perception and understanding of the performance management system in Municipal Courts are credible, consistent and grounded in actual participant experiences. This enhanced the overall transparency and reliability of the research making the results to be both trustworthy and valuable for informing performance policies within the City of Tshwane and the practice thereof.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

According to the research question in this study, the perceptions and understanding of the term 'performance management system' by administrative officers in the City of Tshwane was of a concern.

The intention was on establishing how administrative officials understood and perceived the term 'performance management system' in the City, and whether a performance management system was communicated to the administrative officials by their senior managers. The data collection method or procedure was aligned with the interpretivism paradigm where an in-depth exploration of respondents' subjective experiences and interpretations were prioritised (Kouam & William, 2024). In this project, data was collected through semi-structured interviews where a purposive sampling procedure were conducted.

A purposive sample comprising of administrative officials from the three Municipal Courts were employed in this research project. The administrative officials were requested to answer

seven open-ended questions. The semi-structured questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and closed questions to provide a greater depth than is otherwise possible with only a structured questionnaire (Kakilla, 2021). The groups of Municipal Courts administrative officers were interviewed on different days by means of semi-structured interviews in their working environment. The intention of this approach was to ensure that each respondent was presented with same open-ended questions and in the same order. This procedure ensures that answers can be reliably aggregated and that comparisons can be made between participant's responses. Answers to open-ended questions provide the rich detail that puts a mass of collected data into context (Robinson & Leonard, 2024). What was crucial for a successful interview was that the questions fit the interviewee's frame of reference. One aspect of this was that the questions match the researcher's topic exactly as it was introduced by the interviewer and to which the participant has agreed to participate (Robinson & Leonard, 2024).

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative and quantitative analysis aim at deriving meaning from the data. Data analysis was the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials accumulated to increase an understanding enabling the researcher to present what has been discovered to others (Sallis, Gripsrud, Olsson & Silkoset, 2021). Analysis involves working with data, organising it, breaking this into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what to communicate to others. This means that when a researcher wants to study people in real life, then he/she must study them in the context of the way they operate (Mwita, 2024).

In this research project, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with Municipal Courts administrative staff members. The intention of this approach ensured that each respondent was presented with the same questions in the same order (Belina, 2023). A 'Word Cloud', also known as tag cloud or word art, was created to visualize and summarize the data. 'Word Cloud' was utilised to visualize and summarize data from the voice of the customer to academic papers and everything in-between (Giannoulakis & Tsapatsoulis, 2021). The qualitative method enables the researcher to get to the bottom of a group or organisation to find out what really happens. This method is described as "... a type of study in which the researcher will select one or more subjects or sites to make an in-depth analysis of a process, organisation or other event" (Bentalha & Alla, 2024). The researcher's observations were based on data collected.

Researchers may include their observations in a report; however, they should clearly separate observations based on data and on judgement (Mwita, 2024). The data collected is analysed and compared according to a set of categories, for example, the length of service or the age of participants. The development of a set of categories allows data to be organised through a variety of different distinctions (Sallis *et al.*, 2021).

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

A basic concept in qualitative research is trust (Torelli, 2021). As a researcher, a consideration of moral accuracy of research activities should be observed in relation to people that a researcher meets along the way such as participants that would be affected by the research conducted. The research should not put any people or participants in danger. In this research, permission was asked and granted from the City of Tshwane to use their documents as reference to the research project to enable the researcher to interview selected employee participants for the project.

The Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Public Administration and Management of the College of Economic and Management Sciences within the University of South Africa granted the researcher an ethical clearance certificate permitting the researcher to continue with the study. Participants were given informed consent forms to complete signalling if they agree to participate in the study. The informed consent form contained the following important details:

- You have been chosen by the researcher to participate as you are an employee in Municipal Courts Administration Division.
- The study contains questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.
- There are no negative consequences that may happen to you.
- Please consider that participation is voluntary and there is no penalty or loss of benefit for not participating.
- Your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect the answers you provide.
- Hard copies of your answers will be kept for five years by the researcher in a locked cupboard for future academic references.
- There will be no payment or incentive given in participating in the study.

- A final research copy, approved by the University of South Africa, will be available in their Library.
- Approval has been given to conduct the study by the Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter outlined the investigative procedures undertaken by the researcher that guided the selected research paradigm and appropriate research methodology for the study.

The research design, methodologies, data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical consideration that applied to the study guided the focus in this chapter to try to gain evidence for the topic of this research project. The elaboration of research population and sampling selection techniques were covered. The statistical numbers selected comprising the research population were explained in detail. These indicated the accuracy of the numbers of participants selected for this research project. The next chapter covered the research results and findings.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter explained different research methods and covered the rationale for the design and selected research methods for this investigative study. The discussions in this chapter were based on the data analysis and findings of this study. The ‘qualitative’ analysis of the data was selected for the systematic reduction and description of textual data with the aim of identifying meaningful patterns (Nicmanis, 2024). This method analysed the deep underlying meanings of texts. The quantitative analysis assisted in validating qualitative findings and provided measurable evidence to support conclusions. The results in this work were presented in a logical pattern using tables, graphs, percentages and frequencies. A ‘purposive’ sampling method was applied to collect the data, the aim was to focus on characteristics of a population that was of interest which enabled the researcher to best answer the research questions. The research questions and objectives were based on how administrative officials understood / perceived the concept ‘performance management system’ and its application in their organisation and whether the system was communicated to them. The researcher has attempted to extract as much information from the explanations provided by respondents. A ‘Word Cloud’ was effected as a text visualisation technique in which an input document is summarised into a compact visualisation of its most important words (Huber, Nollenburg & Villedieu, 2023). The responses were analysed against the literature review that was presented in chapter two of this work. The data analysis and findings were presented in detail to reveal the differences and similarities in opinions that were drawn from respondents to answer the objectives of this investigation.

### **4.2 DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.2.1 Discussion of interview responses**

The research question for this study was about how administrative officials of the City of Tshwane (CoT) Metropolitan Municipality Courts understood the term “performance management system” and the functioning thereof in their workplace. The study graded into three strata, namely Centurion, Pretoria Central, and Wonderboom. The respondents were categorised by their length of service restricted to 5 years and above. There were three key questions that were analysed in addition to descriptive analysis of length of service, which were to understand the extent, purpose, objectives and the importance of performance management

system by administrative officials (Q5). The level of perception of performance management by administrative officials (Q6) and if there was a sufficient communication platforms (meetings, systems or circulars) to support performance management system (Q7).

These three questions formed the nucleus of this study. There are some shortcomings with these questions though, which needed to be highlighted as follows:

- Question 5 solicits a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ answer. There are instances where respondents gave the dichotomous answer but proceeded to furnish reasons for their answer. This question needed further instruction or guidance to be given to the respondents to explain their response.
- Question 6 was about what ‘performance management’ was, while Question 7 was about the communication of ‘performance management system’ to the employee. It should be made clear to respondents what the difference was.

Question 5 solicits a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ answer. For a qualitative study it is important to encourage the respondents to explain their reasons behind the answers. As it is, it deprives the researcher of valuable information why a performance management system is or is not communicated to administrative officials.

Bazen, Barg & Takeshita (2021:1), indicate that the value of qualitative research lies in its ability to capture information about feelings, beliefs and values that motivate behaviours by eliciting answers to questions that ask, ‘how’, ‘what’ and ‘why’. Consequently, closed-ended questions soliciting ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ responses do not enable or provide the researcher a platform to explore social phenomenon to find empirical patterns, especially with a total sample size of 30 respondents. The researcher started by looking at the percentage distribution of the respondents per Municipal Court. This was important because the sample was purposive and thus dependent on the researcher. The selected sample shown in Table 4 in chapter 3 was carried over again in this chapter to guide the reader in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Population and sample distribution per Municipal and Satellite Court

Municipal or Satellite Court	Population. size per Municipal or Satellite	Sample Size number per Municipal Court	% Sampling Rate per Municipal Court	% Population proportion per	% Sample Proportion per Municipal
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	Court			Municipal or Satellite Court	Court
Mamelodi	80	0	0	67%	0
Soshanguve		0	0		0
Hammaskraal		0	0		0
Pretoria Central	20	15	75%	17%	50%
Wonderboom	14	10	71%	12%	33%
Centurion	6	5	83%	5%	17%
Total	120	30	25%	100%	100%

**Source:** *Municipal Courts (City of Tshwane, 2019)*

Table 6 above shows the distribution of the population of the study universe, and the distribution of the total sample size per Municipal or Satellite Court. From this Table, 67% of the population of Municipal Court administrative officials were excluded from the study and only 33% included in the study.

Of the 33% sampled administrative officials, 17% are from Pretoria Central, 12% from Wonderboom, and 5% from Centurion. This sample allocation was proportional to the size of the Municipal Courts. This allocation means that 50% of the sample was represented by Pretoria Central, 33% by Wonderboom, and 17% by Centurion administrative officials.

Should a weighting be applied to the estimates, then each administrative official represented  $30/15 = 2.0$  administrative officials in Pretoria Central,  $30/10 = 3.0$  administrative officials in Wonderboom, and  $30/5 = 6$  administrative officials in Centurion. Table 4 from chapter 3 was duplicated in table 7 reflecting the length of service per respondents per Municipal Court.

**Table 7:** Descriptive statistics of years of service of administrative officials of Municipal Courts

Municipal Court	Average of Years of service	StdDev of Years of service	Max of Years of service	Min of Years of service	Range
Centurion	18	10	35	10	25
Pretoria Central	12	5	20	5	15

Wonderboom	12	5	22	6	16
Grand Total	13	6	35	5	30

*Source: Municipal Courts (City of Tshwane, 2019)*

The Table7 above showed descriptive statistics of length of service in years of administrative officials per municipal court.

On average, Centurion had officials with the longest length of service of 18 years, whilst Wonderboom and Pretoria Central had the shortest length of service at 12 years. Centurion had the highest level of dispersion with a standard deviation of 10 compared to 5 for Wonderboom and Pretoria Central. This high level of dispersion means that there was a big difference in the length of service of administrative officials in the Centurion Municipal Court. Administrative officials with the longest length of service of 35 years were encountered in Centurion, and the administrative official with the least number of years of service of 5 years were found in Pretoria Central.

The following tables reflected the levels of understanding of the term ‘performance management system’ by administrative officials in Municipal Courts.

**Table 8:** Understanding of the concept “performance management system”

Length of service	Centurion	Pretoria	Wonderboom
05		100.00%	
06		100.00%	
08		100.00%	
09		100.00%	
10	100.00%		
12		100.00%	
13		100.00%	
14			100.00%
15	50.00%		50.00%
16		50.00%	50.00%
17	100.00%		
20		100.00%	

<b>22</b>			100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.67%</b>	<b>55.56%</b>	<b>27.78%</b>

*Source: Author`s compilation of distribution of understanding the PMS*

**Table 9:** Do not understand the concept “performance management system”

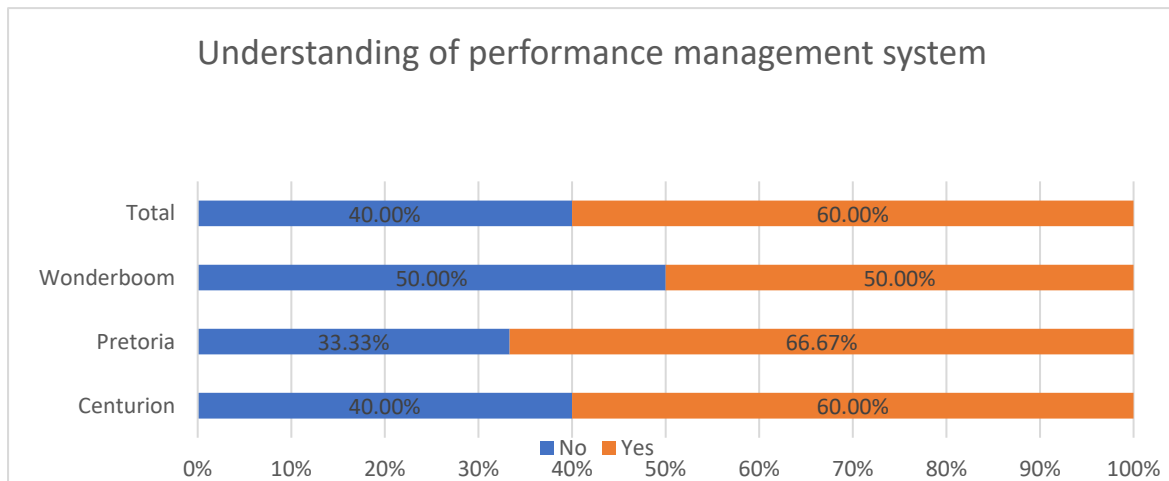
<b>Length of service</b>	<b>Centurion</b>	<b>Pretoria</b>	<b>Wonderboom</b>
<b>06</b>			100.00%
<b>08</b>			100.00%
<b>10</b>		33.33%	66.67%
<b>15</b>	33.33%	66.67%	
<b>16</b>		100.00%	
<b>35</b>	100.00%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.67%</b>	<b>41.67%</b>	<b>41.67%</b>

*Source: Author`s compilation of distribution of not understanding the PMS*

The Tables 8 and 9 above showed the distribution of understanding of ‘performance management system’ by length of service and municipality. All the respondents with length of service nine years or less in Pretoria Central Municipal Court said they understood individual ‘performance management system’, whilst those in Wonderboom Municipal Court said they did not. All those that are fourteen years and older in Wonderboom Municipal Court stated that they understood individual performance management system, which indicated that the length of service in Wonderboom Municipal Court may reflect some relationship with the understanding of individual performance management system, even though this could have happened by chance.

In Pretoria Central Municipal Court, those that stated that they do not understand individual ‘performance management system’ were ten years and older. This can be interpreted that length of service does not show that it may improve understanding of individual ‘performance management system’, even though this could be by chance. The following figure shows the distribution of understanding of ‘performance management system’ by administrative officials per Municipal Court:

**Figure 2:** Understanding of performance management system.



**Source:** Author's compilation of distribution of understanding the PMS

The Figure 2 above reflected that the Pretoria Central Municipal Court had the highest proportions of administrative officials who understood 'performance management system' at 66.67%, followed by Centurion at 60.00%. Wonderboom Municipal Court had the least proportions of administrative officials with understanding of 'performance management system'. Generally, 60.00% of the administrative officials in the three municipalities that participated in the study understood 'performance management system'. The following table reflected that it is not possible to test for statistical significance of the results as the condition of at least 5 counts per cell was not met. The researcher applied the Fisher's exact test, which indicated that the result was not statistically significant:

**Table 10:** Chi-Square test of understanding and perception of the concept 'performance management system'

Do you understand the concept 'performance management system'?					Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
		No	Yes	Total				
<b>Court</b>					Chi-Square	2	0.6944	0.7066
<b>Centurion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	2	3	5	Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square	2	0.6922	0.7074
	<b>Row Pct</b>	40.00	60.00		Mantel-Haenszel Chi-Square	1	0.2843	0.5939
	<b>Col Pct</b>	16.67	16.67					

		7			Square			
<b>Pretoria</b>	<b>Frequen cy</b>	5	10	15	Phi Coefficient		0.1521	
	<b>Row Pct</b>	33.3 3	66.67		Contingency Coefficient		0.1504	
	<b>Col Pct</b>	41.6 7	55.56		Cramer's V		0.1521	
<b>Wonder boom</b>	<b>Frequen cy</b>	5	5	10	<b>WARNING: 50% of the cells have expected counts less than 5. (Asymptotic) Chi-Square may not be a valid test.</b>			
	<b>Row Pct</b>	50.0 0	50.00					
	<b>Col Pct</b>	41.6 7	27.78					
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequen cy</b>	12	18	30				

<b>Fisher's Exact Test</b>	
Table Probability (P)	0.0875
Pr <= P	0.7892

**Sample Size = 30**

*Source: Author's compilation of Chi-Square test for statistics*

The Table 10 above showed the relationship between understanding the concept of 'performance management system' and its definition by Court administrative officials in City of Tshwane:

**Table 11:** Chi-Square test of the relationship between understanding of 'performance management system' and defining performance management by administrative officials

<b>Cross-tabulation of understanding of performance management system and defining performance management</b>					<b>Statistic</b>	<b>D F</b>	<b>Val ue</b>	<b>Prob</b>
		<b>Understanding of performance management system</b>			Chi-Square	1	7.2 321	0.007 2
					Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square	1	7.7 274	0.005 4
		<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Tota l</b>	Continuity Adj. Chi-Square	1	5.3 627	0.020 6

<b>Definition of performance management</b>				
<b>No</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	10	6	16
	<b>Row Pct</b>	62.50	37.50	
	<b>Col Pct</b>	83.33	33.33	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	2	12	14
	<b>Row Pct</b>	14.29	85.71	
	<b>Col Pct</b>	16.67	66.67	
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	12	18	30

Mantel-Haenszel	1	6.9	0.008
Chi-Square		911	2
Phi Coefficient		0.4	
		910	
Contingency Coefficient		0.4	
		407	
Cramer's V		0.4	
		910	

<b>Cross-tabulation of understanding of performance management system and communication of the concept of individual performance management system to administrative officials</b>				
		<b>Understanding of performance management system</b>		
		<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Communication of the concept of individual performance management system to administrative officials</b>				
<b>No</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	10	10	20
	<b>Row Pct</b>	50.0	50.00	

<b>Statistic</b>	<b>D F</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Prob</b>
Chi-Square	1	1.9744	0.1600
Likelihood Ratio	1	2.0755	0.1497
Continuity Adj. Chi-Square	1	0.9953	0.3185
Mantel-Haenszel	1	1.9063	0.1674
Phi Coefficient		0.2609	
Contingency Coefficient		0.2525	
Cramer's V		0.2609	
<b>WARNING: 25% of the cells have expected counts less than 5.</b>			

		0			<b>(Asymptotic) Chi-Square may not be a valid test.</b>
	<b>Col Pct</b>	83.3			
		3	58.82		
	<b>Frequency</b>	2	7	9	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>Row Pct</b>	22.2			
		2	77.78		
	<b>Col Pct</b>	16.6			
		7	41.18		
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	12	17	29	
<b>Frequency Missing = 1</b>					

*Source: Author`s compilation of Chi-Square test for statistics*

The Table 11 above reflected the Chi-Square test for statistical significance at 95% confidence level that showed that the relationship between understanding and defining performance management was statistically significant at 95% confidence level. This was seen with the p-value of less than 5%. However, the relationship between understanding ‘performance management system’ and communicating individual management to administrative officials was not statistically significant at 95% confidence level.

#### **4.2.1.1 Performance management system and performance management**

The difference between question 5 and 6 was the word “system”. According to the Oxford dictionary (2023), a system is defined as, “A group or a set of related or associated material or abstract forming a unity or complex whole”. This means that ‘performance management system’ is a set of related or associated material like performance agreements, key performance areas, grading scales, weights, activities, etc., inter-related in a particular order intended to measure performance management of administrative officials in the context of this study. In this study, the researcher focused on specific words that reflected understanding of performance management and its function and purpose. Words like measure, monitor, system, and period given in terms of months or years will be specifically isolated to determine the number of times they are utilised in the responses during an interview.

The intention was to estimate the understanding of the respondents with the aim of making a general inference from this study. The researcher looked at what those respondents with

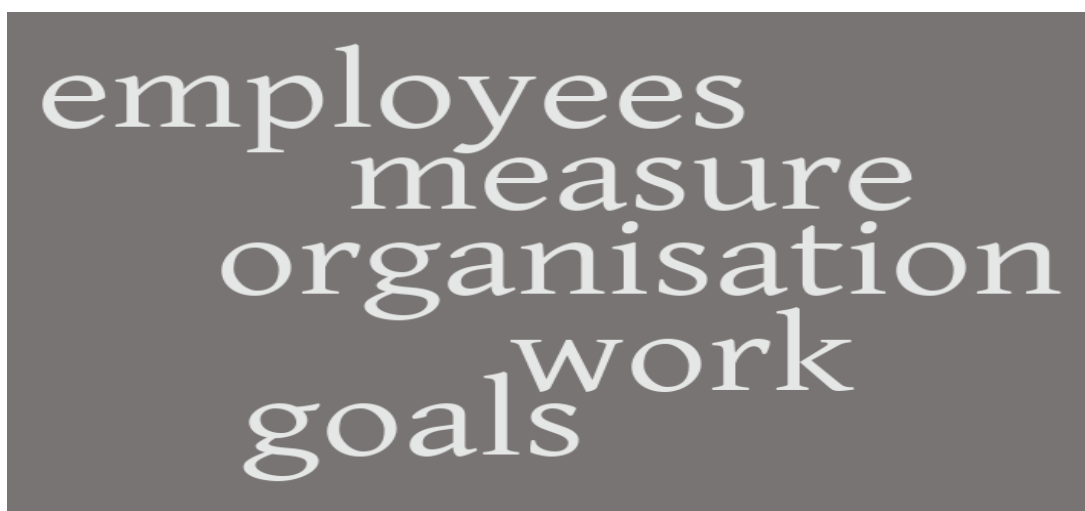
understanding of performance management system said.

**4.2.1.2 Word Cloud** Word Cloud (also known as tag cloud or word art) is used to visualize and summarize all sorts of data, from voice of the customer feedback to academic papers, and everything in-between (Giannoulakis & Tsapatsoulis, 2021). It displays the frequency of words within a dataset. The words that appear more frequently are displayed in larger and bolder fonts while less frequent words appear smaller. This provides a quick, intuitive overview of dominant themes, patterns or concepts emerging from the data. As illustrated in the first chapter, a word cloud .... The researcher created a Word Cloud for each of the three questions as listed in section 1.4 in Chapter 1. To create a more informative and less cluttered Word Cloud for each question, the researcher excluded the words – “performance”, “management,” and “system”, - because these are words found in the questions themselves. Some respondents may repeat these words without saying anything new. The words “Yes” and “No” are common because they are dichotomous responses solicited by the questions, so they are excluded by default from questions 5 and 6, as they were always more frequent than other words. The most frequent word was always at the centre of the Word Cloud and was the one with the biggest font.

#### **4.2.1.3 Understanding performance management system**

The following figure showed that organisation appears more frequent than other words; however, in terms of font size, they are all the same size, which could mean that these words are almost equally distributed.

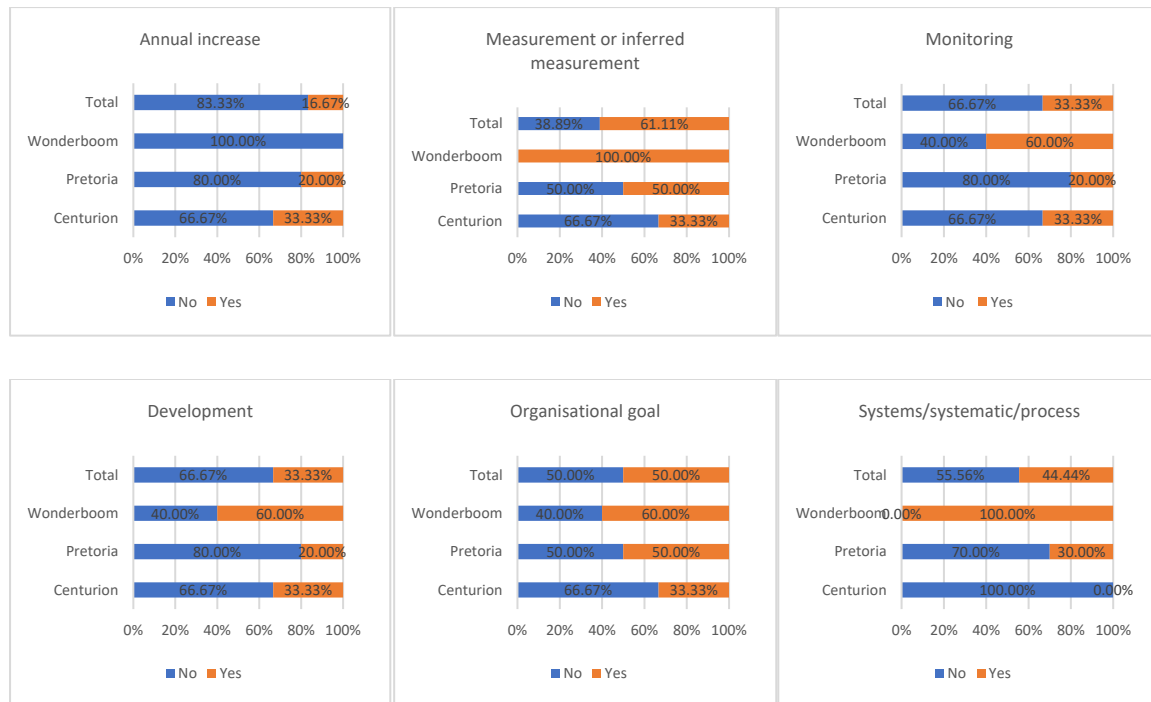
**Figure 3:** Understanding performance management system



*Source:* Author's creation using freely available WordItOut application on the internet

In Figure 3, note that words or phrases like “annual increase,” “development,” “monitoring,” and “systematic or process” are included in the following analysis but excluded in the Word Cloud because they are inferred.

**Figure 4:** Distribution of frequently used words and phrases in responding to the question on understanding performance management system.



*Source: Author’s compilation of distribution of frequently used words and phrases*

The above Figure 4 responded to question 5, which requires a “Yes” or “No” response, respondents went on to give further explanation of what ‘performance management system’ was. In their explanation, 16.67% of respondents used the word “annual increase”, which was very low indeed and the Word Cloud above excluded it. Those that used this phrase view ‘performance management system’ as a tool to determine their annual increase, because they know that obtaining a certain score from the performance management system qualifies them for an award. Majority of those that effected this phrase was found in Centurion Municipal Court at 33.33% and was followed by Pretoria Central at 20.00%. No one in Wonderboom Municipal Court used this phrase. Another word that was utilised a lot in explaining the response to the question of understanding ‘performance management system’ was "measure/measurement" and the Word Cloud as shown above picked it.

This meant that respondents associate ‘performance management system’ with measurement of either employees or organisations. All the respondents in Wonderboom Municipal Court

used or inferred this word. In total, about 61.11% of respondents utilised this word and in Pretoria Central its use was split in half with 50.00% not using it. The municipality with the minimum proportion of administrative officials using this word was Centurion with 33.33% of the respondents not using it. Another word that was identified for analysis was “monitoring” because of its closeness to measurement even though in total only 33.33% of the respondents used it. The majority proportion at 60.00% utilising "monitoring" was found in Wonderboom Municipal Court.

Pretoria Central Municipal Court has the least proportion of administrative officials that used “monitoring” in their response to the understanding of ‘performance management system’. The effect of the word "development" had the same distribution as monitoring. The word "Organisational goal" was another phrase effected in the explanation of the understanding of ‘performance management system’ with 60.00% of the respondents found in Wonderboom Municipal Court, 50.00% in Pretoria Central and in total. The word "system/systematic/process" was also utilised to explain ‘performance management system’ where every respondent in Wonderboom used it and only 44.44% in total and no one in Centurion used it. All the administrative officials in Centurion did not utilise this word.

#### **4.2.1.4 Definition of performance management**

The Word Cloud picked more key words in this section than in the previous section. The word “Employees” appears to be used frequently than any other word. The frequency in using this word was followed by the frequency of using “process,” “work”, and “goals.”

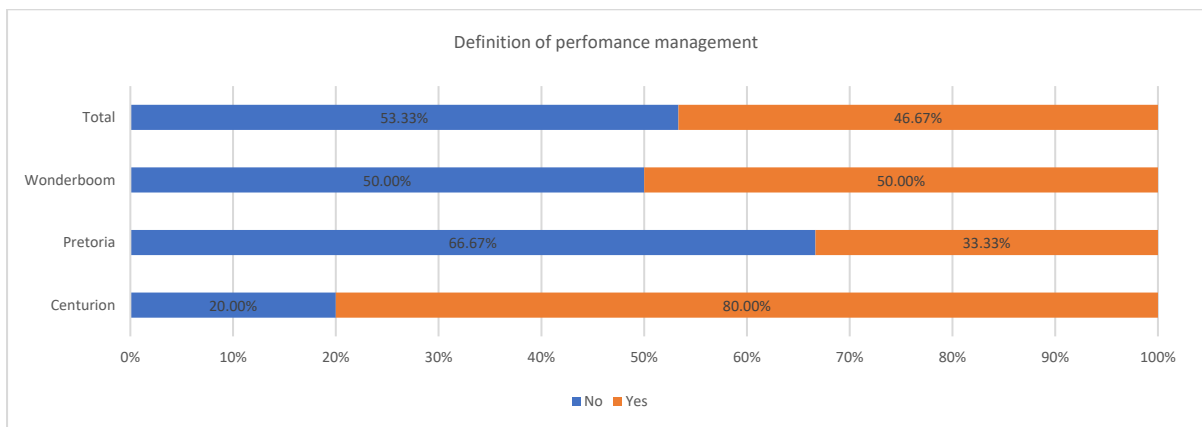
**Figure 5:** Definition of performance management

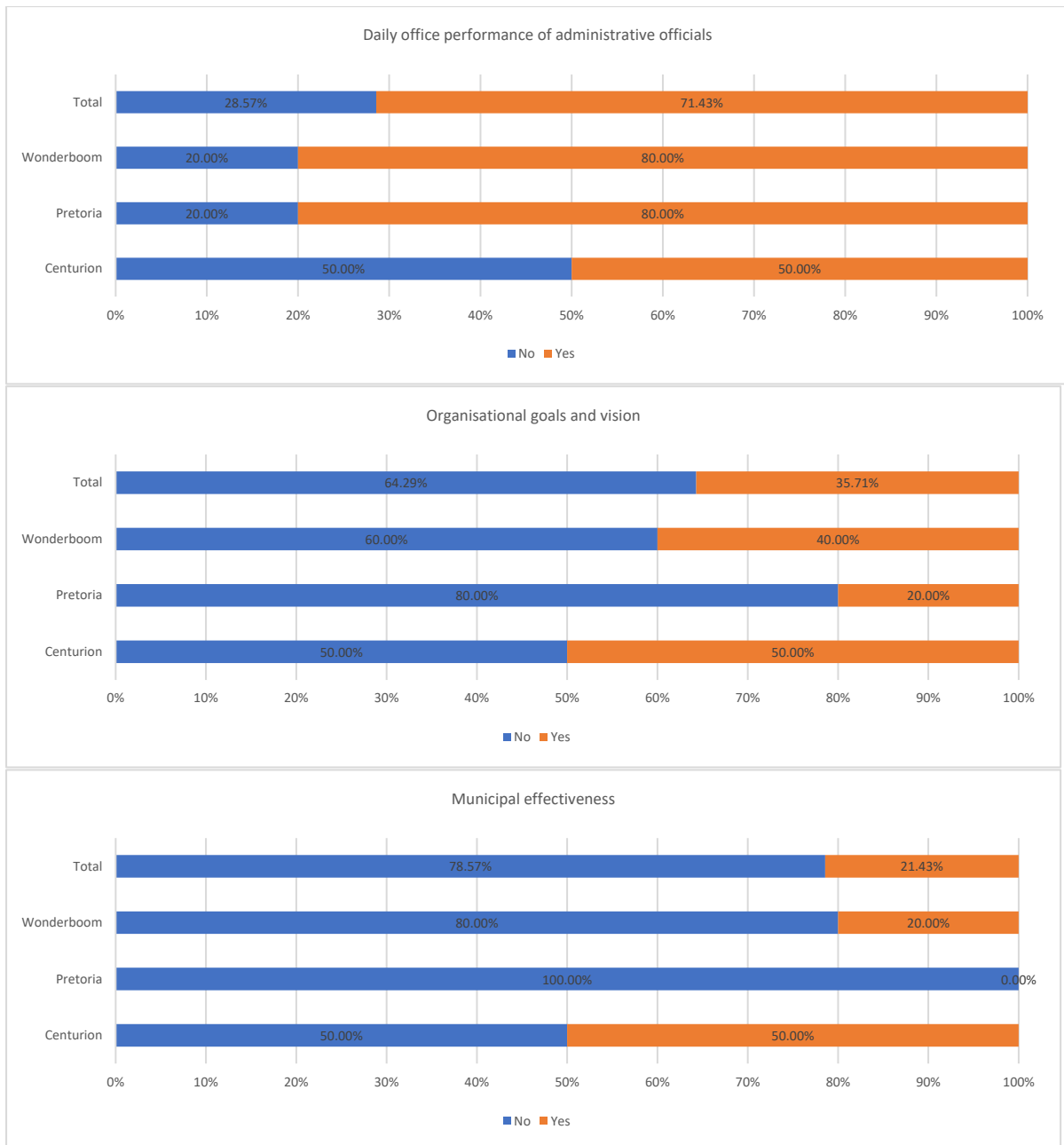


**Source:** Author’s creation using freely available WordItOut application on the internet

The following list of figures reflected the distribution of respondents who said they know the definition of performance management.

**Figure 6:** Distribution of responses to the definition of performance management and of frequently used words and phrases in responding to the question on definition of performance management.





**Source:** Author`s compilation of distribution of responses

The above Figure 6 reflected that in total, 46.67% of respondents knew how to define performance management, about 80% of this proportion was from Centurion Municipal Court and 50.00% from Wonderboom Municipal Court. Pretoria Central Municipal Court had the least of the respondents who could define performance management at 33.33% of the respondents and about 71.43% of those that said they could define performance management touched on "daily office performance of administrative officials". That is, performance management was about/concerns the daily performance of administrative officials. Of this proportion, about 80.00% were from Wonderboom and 80% from Pretoria Central.

Others mentioned "organisational goals and vision" in their explanation of what was meant by performance management. It is indeed true that performance management was also driven by organisational goals and vision of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. However, an estimated 35.71% of the those that said they could define performance management touched on organisational goals and vision.

The highest proportion that touched on organisational goals and vision when explaining performance management was 50.00% in Centurion Municipal Court, followed by Wonderboom Municipal Court at 40.00% and then Pretoria Central at 20.00%. Some respondents mentioned municipal effectiveness in their explanation with 50.00% in Centurion, 20.00% in Wonderboom and 21.43% in the metro. No one in Pretoria Central mentioned municipal effectiveness in their explanation of performance management.

The following figure reflected the distribution of officials who said performance management was communicated to officials at their workplace.

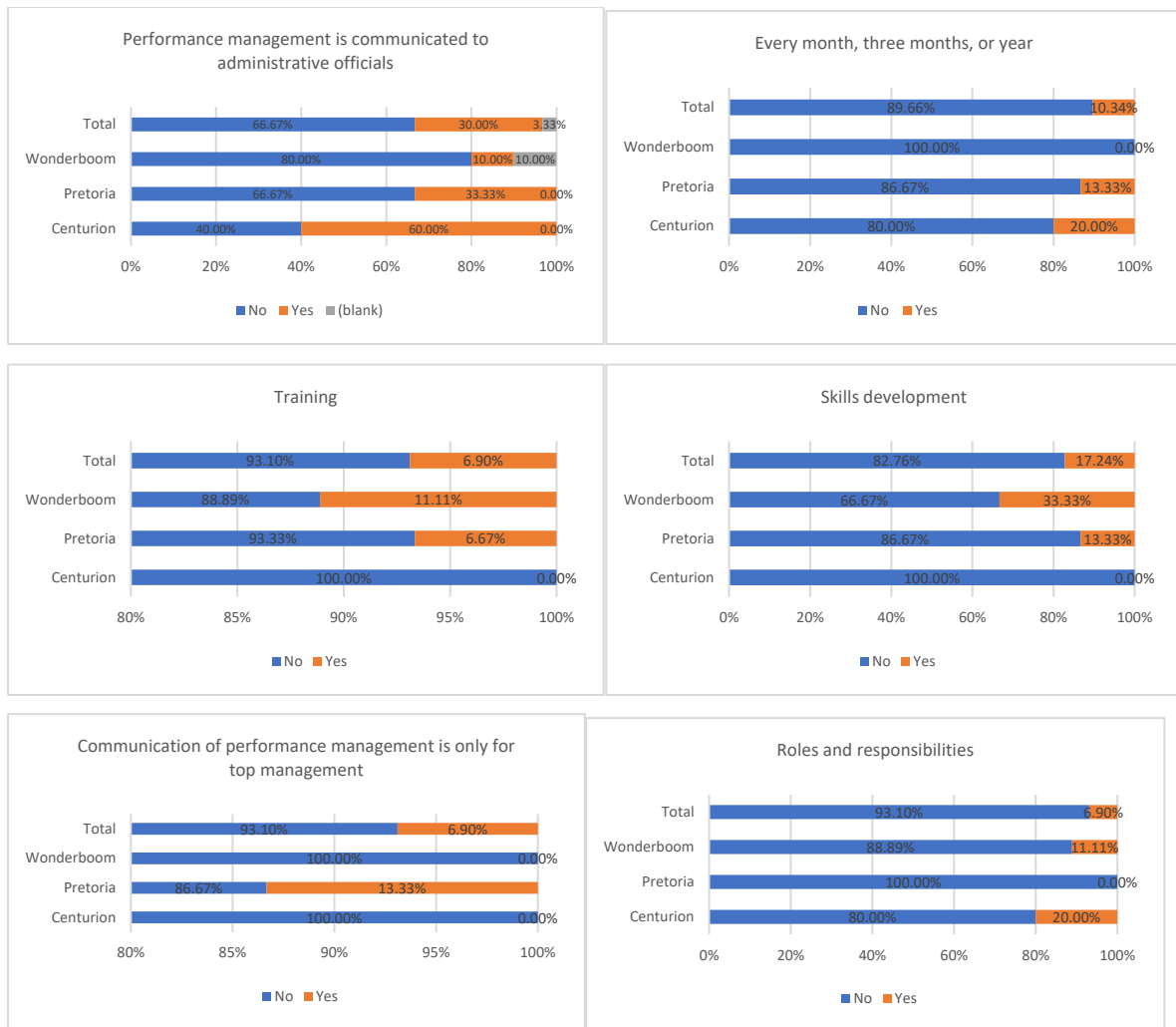
#### 4.2.1.5 Communication of performance management

**Figure 7:** Communicating performance management.



*Source: Author`s interpretation of WorkItOut sourced freely on Internet*

**Figure 8:** Communication of performance management



**Source:** Author's compilation of indicating communication of performance management

The above Figure 8 reflected that generally, only 30.00% said performance management was communicated, about 60.00% of the officials in Centurion agreed with the notion that performance management was communicated at their workplace. Wonderboom has only 10.00% who agree with the notion that performance management was communicated at their workplace, very few officials who agreed that performance management was communicated at their workplace gave timeframe or frequency performance management was communicated. Similarly, when performance management was communicated, the word "training" was least used, especially in Centurion where it was never used. Only about 11.11% at Wonderboom used the word "training". The word training was expected to be used especially where there was underperformance resulting from performance management.

In this context, the word "training" was not effected in Centurion, however 33.33% in Wonderboom mentioned that it has been used. Some in Pretoria Central complained about

performance management communication being the preserve of senior/top management only. Issues of roles and responsibilities were least touched during performance management communication with administrative officials.

### **4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

This study effected responses to specific questions posed to selected administrative officials from three Municipal Courts in CoT to answer the following research question:

How do Court administrative officials understand and perceive ‘performance management system’ and performance management at their workplace? To achieve this, the following three key questions were posed to administrative officials from Centurion, Pretoria Central, and Wonderboom Municipality Courts, which are in CoT: Which were to understand the extent,, objectives and the importance of performance management system by administrative officials (Q5). The level of perception of performance management by administrative officials (Q6) and if there was a sufficient communication platforms (meetings, systems or circulars) to support performance management system (Q7).

In addition to these three questions, the question on the length of service in terms of number of years of service was asked.

The national sampling rate of 25% was significant enough to give reliable estimates based on the population and sample distribution per municipal and Satellite Court tabled in Table 6 (referred from table 4). This means that the population of study was well represented and the estimates were relied upon in terms of sample size.

About 60.00% of the respondents said they understood the term ‘performance management system’. About 66.67% of the respondents in Pretoria Central understood ‘performance management system’, followed by Centurion with 60.00% and then Wonderboom with 50.00%. The researcher thus concluded that the majority of the administrative officials in the Municipal Courts of City of Tshwane did understand ‘performance management system’ according to the breakdown of their responses to the question testing their understanding of ‘performance management system’.

It however cannot be stated that this conclusion was statistically significant since the sample size of Centurion was five with two respondents saying they do not understand ‘performance management system’ and three saying they did. One condition for testing statistical

significance of research findings was that each cell count be at least 5 and variables under study be categorical. In this study the condition of at least 5 counts was not met in Centurion but the condition of categorical data items was met. The researcher takes the result as they are without any commitment about their statistical significance.

The response to the question on how the respondents would define *performance management* was viewed as a 'Yes' and 'No' response question. Respondents who attempted to respond to this question were considered as those that said they could define performance management as opposed to those that could not.

This approach was adopted throughout irrespective of whether respondents stated they understood the term 'performance management system' or not but then also failed to either say something about their understanding of *performance management* or not.

Using Chi-Square and Fisher's exact test for r x c tables and exact p-values at 95% confidence level to test the statistical significance of the distribution of understanding and perception of term 'performance management system' by CoT municipal court administrative officials, despite the Centurion Court having cell counts with less than five, the finding of the test revealed that the distribution of the responses were not statistically significant and could have happened by chance (<https://worditout.com/word-cloud/create>. Accessed on 03 January 2022).

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

The above data analysis of the research findings (pertaining to the 3 research questions mentioned in chapter 1), confined to the Municipal Courts, were elaborated to provide an understanding and insight of respondents understanding and perceptions of the terminology and its communication thereof to others employed in the Municipal Court system. The details of how the results were analysed was illustrated through tables and figures for ease of reference. The data analysis provided an indication of how the researcher read/interpreted the various responses of the selected participants and came to conclude on findings of the study. The next chapter provided recommendations and draw conclusions based on the research.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH SUMMARY, CONTRIBUTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter dealt with data analysis and research findings in detail. A performance management system (PMS) comprises goal setting, feedback, development or training, performance evaluation, rewarding good performance and handling poor performance (Hill & Plimmer, 2024). PMS is aimed at developing staff. This study aimed at determining the perception and understanding of the term ‘performance management system’ by administration officials. The intension of this chapter was to provide the summary of findings, recommendations, contributions, implications and conclusion of the study. This research project was structured into five chapters and the synopsis was as follows:

- Chapter one, presented the general introduction of the research, focusing on the background and motivation for the study. The problem statement, research questionnaires, research methods and key concepts were explained. The outline of chapters and the limitations of scope were introduced to give clarity and direction towards the study.
- Chapter two covered the literature study, where different views of theorists were given to explore the concept of ‘performance management system’. The following theorists of motivation to employees were discussed in detail - the Hertzberg’s Two Factor Theory, Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and the Continuous Feedback and Agile Performance Management. The Objective and Key Results approach supported the Algorithmic Management approach. The use of performance and its importance and the legislative background to the project were specified in detail.
- Chapter three stretched out the research paradigm with the interpretivism as the preferred paradigm for this research, the research design, methodology and analysis of the study. The mixed methods selected was referred to as the preferred method because the study was based on a case study. Semi-questionnaires were administered to collect data from administrative officials of the Municipal Courts as a purposive sample for the research.
- Chapter four provided results and a discussion of the findings. Illustrations through tables and figures were used to demonstrate the analysis and findings to test the perception and understanding of the concept ‘performance management system’ within a local government environment.

- Chapter five concluded the study by summarising the research findings contributing to the objectives and questions of the research. The chapter included the recommendations, contributions, implications and limitations of the study.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS IN RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

This study investigated the perception and understanding of the ‘performance management system’ (PMS) by administrative officials in Municipal Courts within the City of Tshwane Municipality. The objectives were to establish the extent of understanding of PMS among administrative officials, to assess their perceptions of PMS, and to determine the degree of communication regarding PMS towards these officials.

### **5.2.1 Research objective 1**

To establish whether the concept of ‘performance management system’ was clearly understood in the environment by administrative officials in a local government. The administrative officials are at a lower level compared to senior managers in an institution but are included in the processes of administering a performance management system. For example, senior managers tend to utilise the same officials to compile evidence for the Key Performance Indicators that are part of the seniors’ s performance agreements. It becomes imperative that the administrative officials be equipped to first grasp what the ‘performance management system’ was to avoid malicious compliance.

In response to the first objective as mentioned above, results presented in chapter 4 indicated that the Pretoria Central Municipal Court had the highest proportion of administrative officials (66.67%) who understood what the concept ‘performance management system’ entailed, followed by the Centurion Municipal Court with 60.00%. Wonderboom Municipal Court had the lowest proportion of administrative officials understanding the concept of a ‘performance management system’. Generally, 60.00% of all the administrative officials sampled in the three Municipal Courts that participated in the study understood the concept ‘performance management system’. These findings revealed that, while some administrative officials demonstrated a basic understanding of PMS principles, there were notable gaps in comprehending the detailed processes and purpose of PMS within their operational contexts. This finding suggests the need for structured training and continuous awareness initiatives to be instituted to enhance officials' knowledge and practical understanding of the system.

### 5.2.2 Research objective 2

To find the general definition of *performance management* by the administrative officials in Municipal Courts that provided comfort at least to discover that the officials in question knew what they are doing. Instead of assuming that these officials can define what *performance management* was generally, it meant that they understood the concept 'performance management system'.

There are some senior managers that assume that the administrative officials within their departments have experience of the work they are doing, for example, compiling the performance evidence file for their senior managers. The senior managers do not make time to verify the credibility of their administrative officials or if they have been trained through workshops or not. They (seniors) only trust that the work would be done by experience rather than by continuous development of officials. This results in malicious compliance that destroys the goals of an institution. When there is a change in a system or introduction of a new concept in an organisation, for example a performance management system, instead of cascading the new development to the lower levels of employees productively, leaders tend to minimise costs by not educating their lower-level employees. The leaders would rather compromise the legacy on an institution rather than investing in developing their employees.

In response to the second objective as mentioned above, the results in chapter 4 of this work reflected that overall, 46.67% of respondents know how to define *performance management*, with approximately 80.00% of this proportion comprising the Centurion Municipal Court and 50.00% the Wonderboom Municipal Court. Pretoria Central Municipal Court had the least respondents who could define *performance management* at 33.33%, and of these respondents approximately 71.43% said they could define performance management by touching on "daily office performance of administrative officials". This implies that *performance management* was about the daily concerns of performance of administrative officials. In this proportion, about 80.00% are from Wonderboom and 80% from Pretoria Central. Other respondents mentioned "organisational goals and vision" in their explanation of what is meant by performance management. It is indeed true that performance management is also driven by organisational goals and vision of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

However, an estimated 35.71% of respondents that said they can define *performance management* explicated organisational goals and vision. Concurrently, in terms of perceptions,

the study found mixed sentiments among administrative officials. Some viewed PMS as a valuable tool for enhancing accountability and performance, while others perceived this as an administrative burden with limited personal or departmental benefit.

This indicated the importance of addressing negative perceptions through participatory workshops, clear communication of the benefits of PMS, and visible links between performance evaluations and professional development opportunities. These findings are an indication of the conceptions that the administrative officers have about performance management generally. It is the frustrations that the said officials find themselves in that contributes to the maladministration of an organisations that results in shortcomings as the end-product (the communities) suffers.

The service delivery protests in local government are the indications of the malpractices that transpire within the administration of the municipalities because the chain starts at senior management cascading down to the bottom of an institution. If senior management is not effective or getting things right at the top, the failure to invest in lower levels of institutional structures eventually becomes visible among employees at the bottom. In other words, the actions and behaviours of lower-level employees often reflect the management strategies and decisions made by those at the top.

### **5.2.3 Research objective 3**

To investigate if proper communication between senior management and lower-level employees or administrative officials (in this case) are in place regarding the individual performance management system in the Municipal Courts. The individual performance management system is acquired at senior employee level as per section 56 in local government environment. It is a system that is expected to be complied with by leaders of an organisation rather than administrative officials, but the latter are involved to assist seniors to compile performance evidence for their files as part of compliance. The challenge is that the administrative officials in Municipal Courts do not have their own signed performance agreements stipulating what they would be measured on according to the “SMART” Key Performance Indicators that align with their superiors. If the individual performance management system is not properly communicated to the administrative officials by the senior managers of the Division in Group Legal Department in the City of Tshwane, then a malicious compliance is practised.

Generally, only 30.00% performance management is communicated, about 60.00% of the officials in Centurion agreed with the notion that performance management was communicated at their workplace. Wonderboom revealed that only 10.00% agreed (with the notion) that performance management was communicated at their workplace; however, among these respondents very few officials who agreed that performance management was communicated at their workplace gave a timeframe or frequency in which performance management was actually being communicated. The results suggest that *communication* of the individual ‘performance management system’ is only partially being communicated in the three Municipal Courts. Poor communication leads to poor coordination or cooperation.

Senior management in an organisation may have good business plans but if they are not communicated, they are worthless. Communication in the organisation has two purposes - that is to provide information and understanding, and to provide motivation to shape the right attitude needed leading to improved job satisfaction (Rost, 2024). Regarding communication, the findings indicated that whilst information on PMS is shared, it is often inconsistent and sometimes lacks clarity, contributing to misunderstandings and negative perceptions among staff. There is therefore a need to improve the frequency, clarity, and method of communication regarding PMS to ensure that all administrative officials understand their roles within the system and its intended benefits for service delivery improvement.

In summary, the study underscores the critical role of effective training, transparent communication, and stakeholder involvement in enhancing the understanding and perception of the performance management system within Municipal Courts. Addressing these areas contribute to improving employee engagement with PMS, aligning it with the broader goals of accountability and improved service delivery within the City of Tshwane Municipality. Future studies may consider expanding this research to include the perspectives of supervisors and management to obtain a holistic understanding of PMS implementation challenges within Municipal Courts. Additionally, exploring the link between Performance Management System understanding and actual performance outcomes could provide further insights to strengthen performance management practices in the public sector.

## **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the understanding, perception and communication of the Performance Management System among administrative officials in Municipal Courts within the City of Tshwane Municipality.

### **5.3.1 Structured Training and Capacity Building**

To ensure the effective implementation and acceptance of the performance management system, structured training and capacity-building initiatives are essential. Many administrative officials may lack a full understanding of the Performance Management System framework, its objectives or how to use it as a tool for personal and organisational improvement. This gap in knowledge can lead to misperceptions, underutilisation or resistance to the system. The City of Tshwane needs to develop regular orientation sessions where new and existing officials would participate in orientation programs that explain the purpose, structure and processes of the Performance Management System in practical terms. The skills-based workshops should be organised to strengthen competencies in areas such as SMART goals, self-assessment, providing and receiving feedback and linking performance to strategic goals. Specific training modules should be developed for different levels of administration, ensuring that performance expectations and evaluation methods are relevant and clearly understood across roles. The digital literacy support training in digital tools and performance software should be included to enhance confidence and ease of use. This institutionalised structured training and continuous capacity development will contribute to administrative officials that can build a workforce that not only understands the mechanics of a Performance Management System but to embrace it as a strategic tool for growth, accountability and service delivery improvement.

### **5.3.2 Promoting Positive Perceptions of Performance Management System**

To foster positive perceptions of the performance management system, it is essential to communicate its purpose by clearly highlighting that it is a tool for growth, development and alignment with organisational goals rather than evaluation or discipline. Transparency and fairness should be at the core of the system with well-defined criteria and consistent across all levels to build trust. Managers must be equipped with skills to provide constructive and motivating feedback and regular check-ins should be encouraged to open lines of

communication. Actively involving employees in goal setting performance discussions promotes a sense of ownership and engagement. Recognising and rewarding achievements for both individual and team help reinforce the value of the system. The system should remain user friendly and accessible with adequate training provided. Sharing success stories and positioning the Performance Management System within a culture of continuous improvement will strengthen its credibility and embed it as a positive force within the organisation.

### **5.3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation of Performance Management System Understanding**

Monitoring and evaluation of Performance Management System are critical processes that ensure its effectiveness, fairness and alignment with organisational objectives. Monitoring involves the continuous tracking of performance data, processes and outcomes to identify trends, gaps and areas needing improvement. This includes reviewing how goals are set, how feedback is given and how performance data is recorded and used. Evaluation, on the other hand, is a more periodic, in-depth assessment that determines whether the Performance Management System is achieving its intended objectives such as employee productivity, supporting development and driving strategic alignment. Effective monitoring and evaluation, relies on clear metrics, stakeholder input and the ability to adapt based on findings. By monitoring and evaluating the PMS, organisations can identify best practises, address challenges and make data-driven decisions that enhance both individual and organisational performance. The introduction of periodic assessments to measure administrative officials understanding and perceptions of a Performance Management System, using the findings to inform targeted interventions. Encourage supervisors to engage in regular one-on-one discussions with staff to track comprehension and address concerns.

### **5.3.4 Management Support and Visibility**

Management and support visibility play a crucial role in the successful implementation and perception of a performance management system. When leaders actively champion the Performance Management System, it signals its importance to the entire organisation and reinforces that performance management is not just a Human Resource initiative but a strategic priority. Visible support from senior management through regular communication, participation in reviews and alignment of their own goal with the system, builds credibility and

encourages employee to buy-in. When management at all levels consistently apply the system, provide meaningful feedback and recognise achievements, it fosters a culture of accountability, trust and continuous improvement. Leadership commitment ensures that necessary resources, training and follow-through are in place to sustain the performance management system effectively. Ensure that management actively supports and champions Performance Management System implementation by demonstrating its practical value in improving service delivery and operational efficiency.

### **5.3.5 Recommended future research**

The following is recommended:

- Explore the long-term impact of a Performance Management System understanding on employee motivation, engagement and retention across different organisational contexts.
- Undertaking Comparative studies across industries and cultures can offer deeper insights into which practices are universally effective and which require customisation.
- Future research should examine the role of technology and digital platforms in enhancing the efficiency and fairness of Performance Management System processes.
- Research should explore how leadership behaviour, organisational culture and change management practices influence the adoption and perception of performance management systems.
- To offer practical guidance for implementation and improvement.
- To include the perspectives of supervisors and managers to gain a holistic view of the Performance Management System implementation environment within the City of Tshwane Municipality.
- Investigate comparative Performance Management System practices in other municipalities to identify best practices that can be adapted for the City of Tshwane.

The implementation of these recommendations will contribute to building a performance-driven culture within municipal courts by ensuring that administrative officials are well-informed, positively engaged, and supported in their roles within the performance management system, ultimately enhancing service delivery within the City of Tshwane Municipality. In addition, the implementation of the performance management system can improve the

performance outcomes of officials in an organisation from senior management to lower levels of employees. The practices that are goal orientated would be achieved in the most effect manner that would as well assist policymakers (Politicians) in designing optimal programs in the local government environment. In addition, to achieve an effective adaptation of performance management system, senior management should consider important aspects such as the resource capabilities (both human and material) and the values and preferences of local community members.

## **5.4 CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY**

In this study, the contributions of the research are in three parts, namely, the empirical, methodological, and theoretical.

### **5.4.1 Empirical contribution**

This study provided the empirical evidence of the contributions made by examining the concept ‘performance management system’ in improving the performance of an organisation. The uses of a performance management system mentioned in chapter 2 of this work is an indication that the performance management system if properly implemented, could benefit the organisation and its employees. The local communities would benefit in that the service delivery to them would improve.

### **5.4.2 Methodological contribution**

The research method adopted for this study was a mixed method. This methodology contributed as a roadmap of this study by guiding this work to follow each step of the research process. The process included the research design that gave the background of the research method. The semi-structured questions asked of the participants to provide the collected data. The Chi-Square test, Fisher’s exact test of statistical significance and WordItOut were the type of the statistical analyses applied to aid in analysis of the results of the research questions.

### **5.4.3 Theoretical contribution**

This study provided theoretical underpins that guided the discussion. The information gathered from these theories gave this work the ability to produce an advanced knowledge and to address loopholes or misunderstandings in some of the current existing literature. The Municipal Courts in Gauteng were never investigated before, this body of knowledge will assist other researchers to investigate further based on the current relevant information.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

The study was limited to Municipal Courts Administrative Officers in the City of Tshwane as the focus to this research. Selected participants for the project were limited /restricted to numbers of years employed in Municipal Courts and their age. The City of Tshwane gave permission to the researcher to collect data within the Municipal Courts (organisation) that contributed to the truthful reporting of this study and gave a balanced portrait of the research. The study was further limited to the following two segments.

### **5.5.1 Theoretical limitations**

The study discussed the context of performance management, the uses of performance management, theories of motivation to employees and the legislative background to the concept of performance management system. The theories gave an updated background that shaped this study approach to be a unique work that contributed with updated information obtained, similarly from the City of Tshwane, through their permission. The focus was limited to the City of Tshwane. This work will attract readers due to the new investigation of performance in Municipal Courts within the City of Tshwane.

### **5.5.2 Methodological limitations**

The use of a qualitative research approach was the preferred method. The semi-structured questionnaires were limited only to the Municipal Courts Administrative Officers within the City of Tshwane. The City had other departments to conduct research with by applying the same topic, but the Municipal Courts were targeted as they were the last new departments the City had established in 2004. The concept of establishing the Courts was new to the City of Tshwane in Gauteng. The Municipal Courts were found only in Western Cape Town. It was in the interest of the researcher to investigate the progress made since the introduction of a performance management system similarly in Municipal Courts. The City of Tshwane permitted the researcher to collect the updated desired data through their in-house Intranet attached documents.

## **5.6 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The researcher recommends that a further study in ‘performance management system’ within the City of Tshwane should be conducted. The investigation of the hypothesis should be

extended to the senior management level. The City of Tshwane is open for new insights and adaptation to new developments. The permissions to conduct the research further would be granted if properly and honestly motivated by the researcher. The City is still fraught to implement the performance management system from top to bottom or from senior management to lower levels of employees within the organisation. An updated performance management system policy is available for the City to continue with the process of implementation. Currently the performance agreements are signed by Group Heads to Deputy Directors and to cascade the process downward is in the besieged process. Labour Unions should be engaged in a process. The following are the two sections of recommendations,

### **5.6.1 Theoretical recommendations**

Chapter 2 of this work provided theories of ‘performance management system’ in detail but because research is growing and continuing differently, the researcher would prefer the system of performance management to be continually pursued. The researcher should consult local and international theorists to find updated insights. The persuasion should be to investigate performance at senior management level or the section 56 managers within the City of Tshwane. This would be a persuasive project that would push the City’s employees to the limits and ultimately have a successful implementation of a performance management system. Local communities would be the beneficiaries as the level of provision of service delivery would be improved.

### **5.6.2 Methodological recommendations**

The research method in this work is that of both qualitative and quantitative but that should not be a limit as specified in section 5.5 of this chapter. The mixed research methods can be utilised depending on the research design and the research objective thereof. This will enhance the validity and reliability of the research findings by providing the uniqueness of the results contributing to the research objective. The City of Tshwane is the capital city and the biggest municipality in South Africa as stated in the background of chapter 1 of this study.

## **5.7 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The research findings of this study mainly reflected the breaches in non-communications within a department in a local government setting. These breaches result in misunderstanding

of concepts within the working environment, for example, the way the participants in this study tried to define the concept 'performance management system'. The word "training" was mostly associated with a performance management system and aligned as an alternative to performance appraisal system when definition was provided. It is the intention and hope for this study to give truthful updates and insights that would contribute to decision making of leaders to have an informed decision strategy. The performance management system is a modern concept that is applied in private and public institution to improve performance of workers that would result in the successful performance of an institution. The modern technologies for example, the Artificial Intelligence can be a useful tool to conduct a performance management system in a large organisation that has access to large amounts of data but at the same time is regularly monitored (Varma, Pereira & Patel, 2024).

Public organisations should migrate from the old performance appraisal as the result is a system in which employees are compared against others on strengths such as their initiative, reliability and personality (Kalyan, 2024). Instead, organisations should move to the performance management system as the system ensures that the personnel work diligently in achieving the organisational vision, mission, core values and objectives (Ormilla, 2021). The performance appraisal system observed only the scoring of an individual's input rather than measuring the outcome of the individual's performance.

This body of work could have an impact in changing the negative assumptions taken when the concept "performance management system" is mentioned. Senior managers would realise the importance of engaging general operational workers in their strategic planning session when going through this work. This will benefit the organisation in a way that operational workers would have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the institution. The operational workers would not work for the sake of working or the senior managers engaging in malicious compliance if performance management system is clearly administered.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

The data analysis and research findings in chapter four of this work has given this study guidance to achieve informed and appropriate recommendations and conclusion to the investigation of this project. The researcher's view based on findings, is that the research questions have been answered. The aim of this research project was to find out how the term 'performance management system' in Municipal Courts was understood and perceived by

administrative officials. The researcher therefore engaged with Municipal Courts as a case study to measure this understanding. The responses were achieved by pursuing the research objectives which were, (i) to establish the extent of understanding the Performance Management System among administrative officials, (ii) to assess their perceptions of Performance Management System and, (iii) to determine the degree of communication regarding a Performance Management System towards these officials.

The response of administrative officials in Municipal Courts towards the first question was at 60.00% as illustrated in figure 8 of chapter 4 of this study. The response indicated the understanding of the concept 'performance management system' but not to the full satisfaction of this work. The administrative officials demonstrated a 46,67% in answering the second question, that reflected a partial understanding of the definition of performance management as measured by the Chi-Square test for statistical significance. The results are illustrated in Table 11 of chapter 4 of the study. The WordItOut sourced freely from the internet was used to measure the third question to the administrative officials and a general score of 30.00% was achieved. This indicates that there is a lack of communication within the line management within the department of Group Legal in clarifying what is 'performance management system'.

The above responses from administrative officials in Municipal Courts is an indication that a performance management system requires an urgent attention. The recommendations in this work could be utilised to make an informed decision in improving performance by the leaders in an institution. The researcher hopes that the findings, recommendations and conclusion of this study will provide guidance to the seniors within the City of Tshwane on how to properly introduce the performance management system. The seniors within the City of Tshwane would distinguish through this study on how the administrative officials understand and perceive a performance management system and take it further. The next research for the researcher to pursue, at doctoral level, will be to investigate "how the performance management system is perceived by senior management from its inception in 2006 in the City of Tshwane". According to Helmold (2021), performance is the actual work that is done to ensure that an organisation achieves its mission. The aim of a performance management system in an organisation is to develop the potential of staff and to improve their performance which automatically improves the organisation's performance (Yawson & Paros, 2023). In this view, all performance produces an output, tangible work in the form of a product or service that can be measured. The researcher believes that the senior managers in the City of Tshwane will be equipped and

informed by this study to review the application of performance management system. The review of performance management system and its implementation by senior managers will ensure that the organisation continually achieves its vision and mission, which is to satisfy its customers and improve its performance. Currently, the policy for the performance management system is in place in the City of Tshwane but to implement it from the senior management to the lower level of employees within the organisation is still a challenge but in a process at the same time. This study will be an indication and an education to the senior management within the City to realise the extent at which administrative officers understand the performance management system and how to improve. Performance management system is designed to enhance accountability, efficiency, and service delivery but it is constrained by weak implementation, limited institutional capacity and poor alignment with organisational goals. The persistent challenges such as lack of accountability and weak incentive structures continue to hinder performance outcomes. A consistent finding was that senior managers lack the technical skills, training and analytical ability required to implement performance management system effectively and to interpret performance data. In Municipal Courts, this manifests in limited ability to tract case flows and to evaluate efficiency. This misalignment of performance management system and the organisational goals, reduces the effectiveness of performance management system as a management tool. A major limitation in this area is the inherent difficulty of measuring qualitative outcomes like justice, accountability and public trust. The administrative officials do not fully understand how the system works and how their performance is evaluated. These leads to resistance, low morale and weak participation. In Municipal Courts, this can result in PMS being viewed as an administrative burden rather than a tool for improvement.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A: Semi-Structured Interview Questions**

**ANNEXURE ONE**

**SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:**

**MUNICIPAL COURTS ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS**

Dear Respondent

You are hereby invited to take part in a research project conducted by Mrs. Paulina Motlalepula Nthite, a master`s student in the Department of Public Administration and Management at University of South Africa. The aim of the research is to investigate the perception and understanding of performance management system by administrative officials in Municipal Courts. The responses from all respondents will be treated as confidential and not be revealed to the employer. The responses will be filed by the researcher and her supervisors for a five-year period.

The responses will assist the researcher to answer the research questions in Chapter one of this project and enable the researcher to make an informed analysis, conclusion and recommendations about the concept of performance management system. The respondents will receive a report on the findings. The interview questions for participants are designed as follows:

- A. Number 1 to 4 is the status information of the official.
- B. Number 5 to 7 is about the understanding of Performance Management System in Municipal Courts.

- 1. Position.....
- 2. Department.....
- 3. Division.....
- 4. Years of service of work.....

5. To what extent do administrative officials understand the purpose, objectives and importance of Performance Management System?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

6. What is the level of administrative officials' s perception of Performance Management System?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

7. Are there sufficient communication platforms (meetings, systems, circulars) to support Performance Management System?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

### CERTIFICATE OF EDIT

**Student Name:** Paulina Motlalepula Nthite

**DISSERTATION TITLE:**

The perception and understanding of Performance Management System by Administrative Officials in Municipal Courts: The City of Tshwane from 2015 to 2019

**Submitted for the Degree:** MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

---

As required by University of South Africa (UNISA) Business School Management, I hereby certify that the dissertation of **Paulina Motlalepula Nthite** received full linguistic attention by me and that grammar, spelling and syntax errors were rectified and that the dissertation is on standard.

Signed: **Wolfgang L Schmickl** .....  ..... Date: 27/08/2025  
(Majors: BA Psychology, English and German, UP)

Mobile 072-6010700

E-mail: [wolfieschmickl@gmail.com](mailto:wolfieschmickl@gmail.com)

## APPENDIX C: Turnitin Report

**Similarity Report**

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
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## APPENXIC D: Ethics Clearance Certificate

**UNISA**   
UNISA COLLEGE OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS  
REVIEW COMMITTEE

29 October 2019 (Date of issue)  
17 September 2025 (Date of amendment)

ERC Reference #: PAM/2019/032  
Name: Ms P Nthite  
Student Number #: 36488542

Dear Ms Nthite

**Decision: Ethics Amendment Approval and Approval Extended**

Title: Perceptions about the performance management system of the City of Tshwane

Researcher: Ms P Nthite  
Supervisor: Prof M Ngoepe-Ntsoane

**Qualification:** Master of Administration in Public Administration

Thank you for the application requesting amendments to the original research ethics certificate issued on **29 October 2019** by the CEMS Research Ethics Review Committee for the above-mentioned research. The approval of the requested amendment is granted until **16 September 2026**

The **low-risk application** was reviewed by the College Research Ethics Review Committee (CRERC) in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment, using the expedited method. The proposed research may now continue with the provisions that:

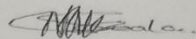
1. The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should

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*communicated in writing to the UNISA Research Ethics Review Committee. An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants.*

- 3. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.*

Kind regards,



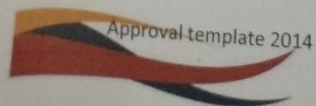
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**Dr Promise Raseala**

Chairperson: PAM CRERC

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