

**UNDERSTANDING SAPS EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF SUCCESSION
PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE: DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED
SUCCESSION AND PERFORMANCE STRATEGY**

by

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DECLARATION

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The exact wording of the title of the dissertation as appearing on the electronic copy submitted for examination:

Understanding SAPS Employees' Perceptions of Succession Planning and Performance: Developing an Integrated Succession and Performance Strategy

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



SIGNATURE

2026-07-02

DATE

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This has been a long journey for me and my family but it was definitely worth all the sacrifices. It helped me grow, not only academically, but also personally and emotionally. I had to go out of my comfort zone and interact with people and colleagues on different levels. It was not always easy yet it was an interesting journey. I thank God for the privilege He has given me and for making it possible for me to reach this stage in my Master of Commerce in Business Management journey.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family. A special feeling of gratitude to my mother, Sarah Margaret Booysen, and my children, Buhle Boikokobetso Dhlangisa and Mbalenhle Mabotle Dhlangisa, whose support, words of encouragement and resilience have kept me going.

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ABSTRACT

Managing succession and succession planning is of vital importance and has a substantial impact on employees, the organisation and organisational performance. The aim of the study was to gain insight into the perceptions of employees in the SAPS on succession planning and employee performance and, in the process, to develop a strategy for succession planning and employee performance.

The construction of a succession plan approach generally begins with the establishment of a strategic framework, followed by the identification and appraisal of critical roles, and ends with the acknowledgement of potential leaders. Developing a solid succession plan for SAPS leadership and other government departments whereby future leaders can be developed and enhanced through training, mentorship and better employee's performance is of vital importance.

The aim of this research was to explore how SAPS employees perceive succession planning and employee performance and to develop a succession planning and employee performance strategy for SAPS.

The identification of factors that influence the implementation or evaluation of succession planning adds value in ensuring that succession planning is implemented or applied correctly and that it benefits both the employee and the organisation. This study therefore exposes a potential gap in the lack of succession planning in the organisation and how the lack of succession planning affects employee performance.

A qualitative research design was applied in the study. Seventeen semi-structured interviews were conducted with management in the Free State, along with other SAPS commissioned and non-commissioned officers, who formed the primary source of data. Thematic data analysis steps were used to analyse the data, by closely examining data to identify common themes. This process was carried out by transcribing the data, selecting keywords from the data, coding, developing themes, then conceptualising the findings. The findings revealed that there are several factors that affect the implementation and facilitation of succession planning and employee performance in the organisation.

The study findings indicate that, participants view both the succession planning and employee performance as important and should be embedded as part of the organisational culture which can assist the organisation in organisational stability and sustained performance including serving delivery.

The study makes a useful and important contribution both academically and practically by showing that succession planning greatly improves employee performance by helping them learn new skills, boosts happiness at work, and makes career goals clearer. Structured succession planning and targeted mentoring enhance the efficiency of daily work and mitigate performance anxiety during organisational change. The study can have practical and scholarly contributions such as skill alignment and competency mapping, knowledge transfer and continuous learning, reduction of turnover intentions, and lastly by contributing to mediating psychological factors.

The recommendations include, the development of an integrated succession planning and employee performance strategy which will assist the SAPS with the strategic framework and governance, workforce planning and talent forecasting, talent identification and capability assessment and mentorship and development interventions.

KEY TERMS:

Employees' perceptions; employee performance; SAPS; succession planning; succession planning practice

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EP	-	Employee performance
HRM	-	Human Resource Management
IDP	-	Individualised development plan
OG	-	Organisational goals
RO	-	Research objectives
RQ	-	Research questions
SAPS	-	South African Police Service
SDT	-	Self-determination theory
SET	-	Social exchange theory
SP	-	Succession planning
SPP	-	Succession planning practice

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study, the researcher focused on exploring the South African Police Service (SAPS) employees' perceptions of succession planning and employee performance to develop an integrated succession planning and employee performance strategy. In this chapter, the focus is to provide the background and problem statement, research questions and objectives. I also briefly shared my journey and my research interest in succession planning in the SAPS. Following the research questions is the theoretical foundation of the study. Then the research design, methodology, significance of the study, strengths and limitations, chapter summary and an outline of the chapters are described.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Human resource management (HRM) is described by Armstrong and Taylor (2014) as a planned and logical tactic for the organisation's important resource management, which refers to human resources of the organisation, who are contributing and assisting the organisation towards the attainment of its strategic objectives, whether as an individual or as a collective and the organisation's responsibility is developing a clear and combined tactic for the employees' welfare and growth within the organisation. Furthermore, Opatha (2021) defined HRM as a discipline which involves the strategic and optimal deployment of human capital to fulfil the objectives of an organisation.

HRM is a discipline that has different functions, which are responsible for analysing jobs, designing jobs, recruiting and selecting, inducting employees, staffing internally, managing performance, succession planning, managing talent, developing and training employees, labour relations, employee performance and rewarding and compensating employees within the organisation. This means that employees are valuable human capital in the organisation (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

This study's focus is on succession planning and employee performance, which are discussed in the next section.

Succession planning was established as far back as the 17th century, when the conception of the separation of labour was dominant. It has expanded over the years because of skills declining frequently in many organisations' strategic positions (Lacerda, Spiegel & Neto, 2013). Succession planning is viewed as one function in the discipline of HRM, as organisations use succession planning as a process where they recognise that current incumbents of the posts will retire someday and prepare future managers and senior managers to take over when the current incumbent vacates the position (Sohu, Mirani, Dakhan & Junejo, 2020).

Organisations use training and development internally to enhance the employees' skills and train them as managers and senior managers to enable the organisation to handle the future leadership needs of the organisation. Meaning that succession planning is used by organisations to groom or train successors within their organisation for crucial posts that would be vacant in the future and managing employee careers (Sohu et al., 2020). Succession planning studies conducted by researchers' date as far back as the late 1960's and early 1970's, for example, Trow (1961) conducted research investigating executive succession in small companies and Ostrowski (1968) conducted a study about the prerequisites for effective succession planning in organisations. That is when official approaches to succession planning were implemented by innovative and creative organisations (Mehrabani & Mohamad, 2011). Studies on succession planning quickly increased in the 1970's, with the focus being on CEOs' succession planning (e.g. Kesner & Sabora, 1994).

Odiachi and Sulaimon (2023) confirm that maintaining an organisation's continuity and fundamental values in the midst of change is the cornerstone of succession planning. For succession planning to be a deliberate activity, it must be documented, brought to the attention of all management and employees and it requires a deliberate and conscientious effort to raise successors within the organisation. An organisation's future management and organisational structure must be described, along with how the transition would be managed within the organisation (Odiachi & Sulaimon, 2023).

Employee performance is also a key HRM function. Employee performance is defined as the outcome of employees' efforts that needs to be evaluated in terms of quality of work to be done and quantity of work to be done, based on work standards or goals set by the organisation (Sohu et al., 2020). A good organisation is one that pursues to improve the competencies of its human resources, as this is a key factor in improved employee performance (Yulius, 2022). According to Wolor, Kurnianti, Zahra and Martono (2020), employee performance is the outcome of an individual's fulfilling the responsibilities allocated to them and how much they contribute towards the achievement of organisational objectives. Employee performance is a way an employee is likely to perform the tasks allocated to them (Wolor et al., 2020). Kalogiannidis (2020) defines employee performance as the displayed conduct by an employee while performing specific duties/tasks assigned to him/her by the organisation. It also relates to the results produced by the employee in an organisation.

Research within the SAPS has been conducted; however, research on succession planning and employee performance is limited within this context. The following studies have been conducted within the SAPS:

- 1) The Effect of Succession Planning on Motivation Within the Kwazulu-Natal South African Police Services: A Doctoral dissertation, University of Johannesburg: (Mbele, 2020) conducted from a qualitative perspective;
- 2) Kruse (2004) used a mixed-methods approach to analyse the SAPS performance enhancement process (PEP) at Parow Police Station.
- 3) Research on the causes of employee turnover in the SAPS (Zethu, 2019) from a qualitative and quantitative perspective.
- 4) An analysis of the department's talent management practices (Machobane, Masela & Semanya 2020).
- 5) A review of the department's retention policies: Zamdela cluster, Free State Province, SAPS (Molupe, 2019), conducted from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective.

The focus of these studies was on performance enhancement, talent management, high labour turnover and staff retention policies within the SAPS. It is, therefore, evident that research on employees' perceptions of succession planning and performance

management in the SAPS is very limited. Thus, it is significant to determine and explore how employees of the SAPS perceive succession planning and employee performance.

1.2.1 Succession planning

Succession planning is well-thought-out as a crucial issue in the field of HRM. Succession planning intends to inspire employee growth through learning by enhancing knowledge, skills, talents and capabilities and maintaining an organisation's competitive advantage (Ahmad, Yusri & Chulan, 2019). Succession planning practice is explained as a tool that conserves delicate, neglected and valuable resources of the organisation, which are employees who are very skilled, experienced and have vast knowledge. Furthermore, succession planning practice is regarded as a process of systematically identifying vital or key managerial roles. Lastly, succession planning practices' key function is to assist the organisation with the attainment of performance of their employees (Abdullahi, Raman & Solarin, 2021).

According to Ali and Mehreen (2019), the development of leadership and human capital of the organisation is purely predicted by succession planning, which also contributes to the behaviour and conduct of employees and thereafter enhances the performance of the organisation and well as the individual employees.

To create a competitive advantage and achieve their goals, organisations have recently found it challenging to retain talented and skilled employees (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). For this to be achieved, multiple and diverse strategic plans are being adopted to ensure that employees who have the required skills are retained, which re-emphasises the significance of having readily available employees as and when the need arises. By adopting this type of framework, organisations appear more flexible and positively responsive by preparing those not in leadership roles to be groomed to be leaders of tomorrow. Succession planning within the organisation is an enabling systematic process which assists organisations in growing and developing their own identified pool of talented employees (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). Succession planning is

an important practice of human capital development because it assists the organisation to realise its long-term goals when the organisation identifies, recognises, prepares and establishes a set number of employees ready to serve and be used to respond to the organisation's future needs (Ali & Mehreen, 2019) and establishes a formal arrangement between a current leader and someone who could one day take over the position, with the goal of helping the latter develop their leadership skills of the potential successor in order to make him or her an effective leader in the future when it comes to steering the affairs of an organisation this will consequently enable the establishment of robust leadership aimed at ensuring effective succession (Sherrer & Rezania, 2020). Mentoring prospective leaders is essential due to their capacity to cultivate performance-oriented successors who possess an extensive understanding of the organisation and its operational frameworks, especially in a highly competitive landscape (LeCounte, 2022).

1.2.2 Employee performance

Performance is described as the work quality, work quantity, the cost involved and the time taken by employees to accomplish agreed functions aligned with organisational objectives. Performance management refers to all activities that are executed to enhance organisational performance, including individual and departmental groups of the company (Hermina & Yosepha, 2019).

Ali et al. (2019) define employee performance as the results achieved by an employee from the set goals and how well these goals are executed. Training and development can be used as a succession planning practice for improving employees' performance. It is of vital importance to note that the elements such as employee job satisfaction, level of compensation, a healthy work environment, skills, abilities and personal traits can influence the performance of an employee (Hermina & Yosepha, 2019).

In order to help the organisation achieve its goals, employee performance refers to the efficiency and effectiveness of their attitude, actions, and outcomes (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). Performance is the behaviour demonstrated by every employee in accomplishing their work, which is related to the cost efficiency, quality, time and quantity completed by an employee in executing their duties in accordance with the

responsibilities given to them (Pribadi, Effendi & Suryani, 2020). Pribadi et al., (2020) indicate that there are numerous indicators, which can be used to assess employee performance, namely:

- 1) Quality – refers to the quality of work done by the employee being measured by how employees perceive the quality of work they produce and the excellence of the employee's duty skills and abilities.
- 2) Quantity – refers to the quantity produced demonstrated in terms of several units and the number of completed activity cycles compared to the targets that were set.
- 3) Timeliness – refers to the completion of activities within the given duration.
- 4) Effectiveness – represents the maximised use of organisational resources with the intent to increase the output.
- 5) Independence – refers to the employee's ability to execute their work duties and commitments.

According to Kalogiannidis (2020) the overall dynamics of how each individual employee performs his/her tasks (employees' performance) is evident in all individual employee's skills and capabilities the organisation. In this case, the majority of knowledgeable and talented employees typically exhibit a high degree of dedication and competence on the job, which improves worker performance in comparison to those with less training and experience. Apart from skills, capability and professionalism, employee performance levels can be influenced by other factors such as effective communication in an organisation, as it is among the most essential factors that influence employee performance and productivity levels (Kalogiannidis, 2020). Employee satisfaction with performance stems from creating high-quality and higher performance standard, which indicates the necessity of outstanding employee performance (Fuertes, Alfaro, Vargas, Gutierrez, Ternero & Sabattin, 2020). These benefits of enhanced employee performance are inclined to lead to sustainable performance and business continuity overall.

When employees or managers in the organisation are striving to perform their jobs effectively, that normally improves the enthusiasm and dedication within the organisation. The nature in which the organisation engages in interactions or communication with its workers is of importance for enhancing their performance because it serves as a source of inspiration and fresh information or abilities (Kalogiannidis, 2020).

The link between employee performance and succession was highly pertinent to the study's goal of examining employee performance and succession planning perceptions in order to create an integrated succession planning strategy for SAPS.

1.2.3 The link between employee performance and succession planning

Ali, Mahmood and Mehreen (2019) maintain that employee performance can be improved by succession planning. For organisations to be successful, succession planning's concentration is placed on high-potential employees to attain the best performance and being coached for future leadership roles in the organisation. It is argued by Rotich and Kiiru (2021) that efforts to plan for succession have a favourable effect on employee performance. This is because it enhances job satisfaction and opportunities for employee advancement, which leads to better performance from employees. This can be accomplished through a variety of initiatives, including coaching, learning, work rotation and mentoring. Employee satisfaction at work motivates people to perform better since they can realise their full potential due to a variety of internal organisational strategies used in various organisations. When employees are motivated to take part in development activities within the company, it means they are positive about their performance, which can subsequently improve individual performance (Ali et al., 2019).

According to Ali and Mehreen (2018), it is often very difficult for organisations to retain employees with talent and those possessing greater ambition to assist the organisation in achieving its goals. Organisations create strategies and plans to retain their employees.

Ali, Mehmood, Ejaz and Ashraf (2014) state that succession can improve employee performance when looking at the significantly reduced employees' propensity to change jobs voluntarily. Mwangi and Kibiru (2025) are of the view that employees engagement may decrease as a result of being overlooked for leadership positions, which can result in diminished performance, when they are not provided with obvious advancement opportunities and Yadav (2025) indicates that this is because succession has a direct impact on employee performance and, via the mediating variable of organisational commitment, it also has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. According to Patidar, Gupta, Azbik and Weech-Maldonado (2016), succession planning concentrates on high-potential employees in order to maximise their performance and get them ready for leadership positions in the organisation in the future.

The conceptual framework depicted in Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship and the possible influence of succession planning on employee performance.

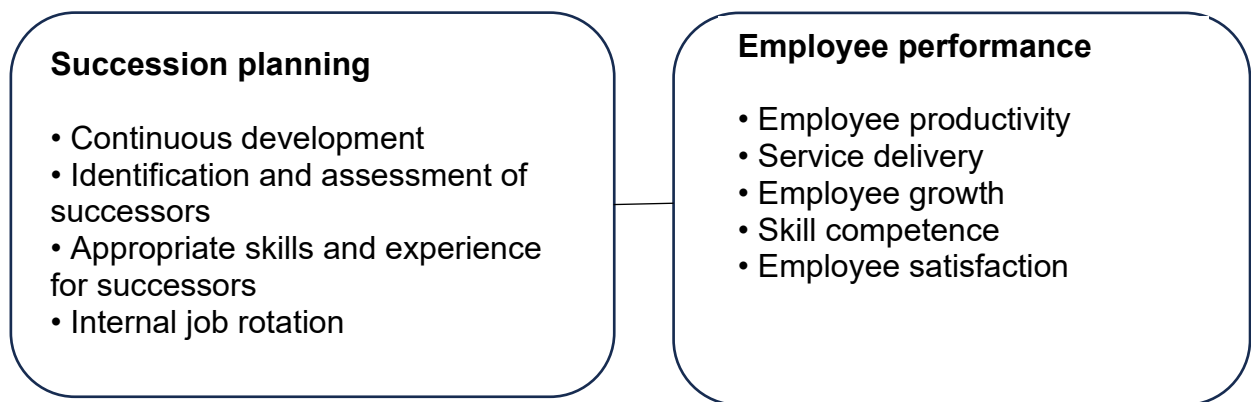


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework: link between employee performance and succession planning

Source: Rotich and Kiiru (2021)

The most important aspects/ elements of succession planning are depicted in Figure 1.1 as follows:

- Continuous development
- Identification and assessment of successors

- Appropriate skills and experience for successors
- Internal job rotation

It is indicated that these aspects of succession planning have an influence on employee performance, which can be quantified using a variety of measures, including the following:

- Employee productivity
- Service delivery
- Employee growth
- Skill competence
- Employee satisfaction

According to the framework, good succession planning has the potential to have a positive impact on several aspects of employee performance, which will eventually contribute to the organisation's future success.

1.2.4 My personal journey towards my research interest in succession planning and employee performance

I work for the SAPS. From my personal observation, the practical problem within the SAPS is that positions are only filled when vacant and that also takes time. You will sometimes find that three to four strategic or leadership positions are vacant at one police station at once, for example, Station Commander, Detective Commander, Visible Policing Commander and Support Head. The size of a police station often indicates a lack of effective management. Typically, a constable or sergeant is appointed to act in management role, frequently without the requisite expertise. This situation compromises service delivery, community relations, and overall performance, which points out the importance of succession planning within the SAPS.

Currently, there is no succession planning policy in place in the SAPS, but there is a draft policy. The draft policy was supposed to be piloted in two provinces, namely Gauteng and the Free State and to date, there has not been a clear indication of the results or outcome of the pilot projects. My discussions with colleagues from time to time have revealed that most people are sceptical about succession planning and think

that succession planning will not work in the organisation, as it will just be a pure tool used for favouritism and it will give false hope to people; however, I see it differently.

Mwangi and Kibiru (2025) see succession planning as a tool that can assist the organisation in not losing employees. HR practitioners in the workplace have an opportunity to engage with employees who are resigning, applying for transfers or moving out of the organisation and or going to other government departments due to a lack of growth or recognition within the organisation. Employees normally become aggrieved after filling out the post that was advertised for promotion purposes. Every time posts are filled there are always applications for access to information to interrogate the suitability of the appointed candidate or interrogate why the applicant himself/herself was not appointed in that particular post, especially if a person appointed is not from the same province or environment. That leads to low morale and negativity in employees, which also affects employee performance because they feel that their dedication is not recognised by management in the organisation.

I am of the view that having a succession planning policy in place will assist the organisation in alleviating grievances and turnover intentions as it will enable the SAPS to retain skilled and experienced employees. Succession planning will also assist with business continuity and stabilise employee performance without compromising the services to the community.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

When managers or employees in critical positions at the SAPS have been promoted, transferred, resigned, discharged/dismissed or have passed away, management temporarily appoints someone to act in the role for functional continuity and operational purposes. Employees who are sometimes appointed to act temporarily in the position, act for too long and end up having hope of being appointed permanently in the position. However, if not appointed, those members become aggrieved and their performance also declines, because they feel like the SAPS does not care for them. When the person is acting in a position for too long, it starts to create an expectation and the feeling of entitlement to the position he/she is acting in. It takes approximately six months or more to permanently appoint members to those critical posts. Therefore,

it is important to find out what needs to be done to fill the gaps that have been created by unexpected retirements, deaths, promotions, dismissals, transfers and employees resigning with well-developed, competent employees within a reasonable time. Succession planning will assist in creating a pool of skilled and competent employees and will also assist in alleviating the problem of selecting inappropriate individuals (Ali et al., 2019).

Succession planning helps improve the professional development of employees, which ultimately improves their performance. Although acting in a vacant position does not mean that the person would be appointed, it, however, gives the person appointed in an acting capacity the hope of being appointed. This can lead to employees being demotivated, disgruntled and reducing their performance if they are not appointed permanently in that position. The importance of succession planning should not be underestimated as it focuses on transparency, enhances maintainable organisational performance, improves talent management and develops individuals for future leadership positions (Ali et al., 2019). As a result, Mwangi and Kibiru (2025) emphasise the fact that succession planning is both a process and a system. Businesses or organisations need to ensure that it is carried out in the appropriate manner, just like any other human resource task. This is corroborated by Hudiyah, Sutarto, Marthalia, Prayudo and Prihatini (2025) when they indicate that the active role that HRM plays is the single most important factor in determining the success of succession planning. Within the realm of succession planning, HRM covers a number of essential duties, including the establishment of clear selection criteria, the implementation of structured leadership development programmes and the alignment of these efforts with long-term organisational plans. When viewed through the lens of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), succession planning is not only an operational process; rather, it is a strategic process that enhances the competence of leadership to face the future.

The SAPS is facing a number of grievances that are lodged after the positions are filled within the organisation, because other employees feel that they are more suitable than the candidate who was appointed to the post, which leads to low morale and declining employee performance. The organisation is also faced with leaders who are struggling after being appointed, because they were not groomed or prepared for leadership

positions. The impact on organisational performance results in a decline in morale among members reporting to that specific leader.

Positioned from this problem statement, my research objectives are described next.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of qualitative research is to hear from experienced employees about their perceptions related to specific constructs and, in this way, have an opportunity to report in detail the insights and contextual explanations for succession planning challenges that are currently not addressed in the SAPS (Lanka, Lanka, Rostron & Singh, 2021). Hence, in this section, the primary and secondary research objectives are addressed.

The primary objective of this study was to explore how the SAPS employees perceive succession planning and employee performance and to develop a succession planning and employee performance strategy for the SAPS.

The secondary research objectives were:

- To explore the importance of succession planning and employee performance for SAPS employees;
- To explore SAPS employees' perceptions of succession planning and employee performance in the SAPS;
- To develop an integrated succession planning and employee performance strategy in the SAPS.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions were formulated as follows:

- What is the importance of succession planning and employee performance for SAPS employees?
- How do SAPS employees perceive succession planning and employee performance?

- Which themes should be considered in developing a succession planning and employee performance strategy in the SAPS?

1.6 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY

In this section, the researcher will discuss various meta theories and these meta-theories were conceptualised in this study.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), meta-theoretical assumptions signify a dedication to the authenticity of a given paradigm's ideas and laws. When discussing the potential outcomes of a qualitative study, its techniques of data collection, analysis and knowledge translation, not to mention the impact on participants' perceptions of the phenomena under study, the term theory is often employed (Allana & Clark, 2018). Meta-theories theoretically support research and practices and address essential views about the world, which guides individual's responses (Allana & Clark, 2018). Abdullahi et al., (2021) suggest that succession planning practice encourages and changes employee attitudes towards performance accomplishment with the assistance of social exchange theory (SET) and self-determination theory (SDT).

The first meta-theory discussed is the SDT, which is linked to employee performance. SDT examines how social context and culture affect whether or not people's basic emotional competencies, such as personality, achievement and well-being are satisfied (Marcus, 2018; Ryan, Deci, Vansteenkiste & Soenens, 2021). It appears that SDT emphasises how crucial it is for individuals to fulfil the three emotional needs and objectives being connection, freedom and competency, which are essential for successful employee performance (Ntoumanis, Prestwich, Quested, Hancox, Thøgersen-Ntoumani & Williams, 2021). SDT is presented to distinguish critically between individual behaviours, namely, which are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. SDT is founded on the important humanistic assumption that individuals naturally and enthusiastically place themselves toward growth and self-organisation. People get to know themselves better when they connect with other people and when they move out of their comfort zone and socialise in the outside world. People can become restricted, divided and alienated if their essential psychological requirements for autonomy, competence and relatedness are disrupted by an inadequate social

environment and SDT confirms that this normal growth tendency cannot be sustained (Deci & Ryan, 2000). SDT suggests that workers are likely to participate in programmes of development within the organisation to such an extent that the three needs are achieved (Ryan & Deci, 2012).

Forner, Jones, Berry and Eidenfalk (2020) state that SDT research in businesses has shown that basic psychological need satisfaction is associated with many positive employee outcomes, going beyond autonomous motivation. Positive job attitudes, increased job satisfaction, better well-being and decreased turnover have all been linked to meeting basic psychological needs. Higher levels of affective attachment, engagement and job satisfaction are also linked to these fundamental psychological needs. With that being said and self-determination principles defined as the concepts which refer to individuals' choices and privileges to formulate own decisions and in managing individual pathways (Deci & Ryan, 2000), this means that when organisation have employees with positive work attitudes and satisfaction, the organisation would be able to retain employees with vast experience and will not struggle with succession planning as they will have employees who are conversant with the culture and ways of work of the organisation. According to Deci and Ryan (2024), SDT has grown to be a very significant theory of human motivation and well-being. It provides a framework for comprehending the motivating underpinnings of social behaviour and personality in addition to the correlation between essential psychological requirements and psychological flourishing, well-being and a high quality of life. When individuals are intrinsically or successfully driven by extrinsic factors, they exhibit greater interest, enthusiasm, vigour and confidence, leading to enhanced performance, creativity, perseverance and general health. Thus, better performance, such as creativity, and persistence will make management of the organisation to notice employee, which will put the employee in a better position to be developed or mentored for future leadership positions within the organisation (Deci & Ryan, 2024).

SDT encourages a person to develop themselves without external influences. There has been an argument that the responsibility of succession planning lies on both the employee and the organisation and it is aligned with the future of the organisation, which will produce organisational future leaders. SDT emphasises the function which

an individual needs to play towards their own development to obtain inner desires, such as independence, feeling of being capable and affiliation and being very important for perfect or required employee performance (Ali et al., 2019). SDT encourages employees to strive towards their own growth and self-improvement, in order to accomplish or reach possible leadership positions within the organisation.

SDT handles how the cultural and social environment can either support or undermine people's basic psychological needs, including the assumed concepts of self-direction, success and well-being. Each individual is permitted by SDT to presume that they are in control of the decisions they take, which makes them more driven and because they believe what they do will have an effect on the outcome, they are inspired to take action (Abdullahi et al., 2021). SDT is described as a universal concept of human character and inspiration that deliberates how each person relates and depends on their social environment (Abdullahi et al., 2021). Figure 1.2 depicts the relationship between SDT and employee performance, which ultimately leads to succession planning.

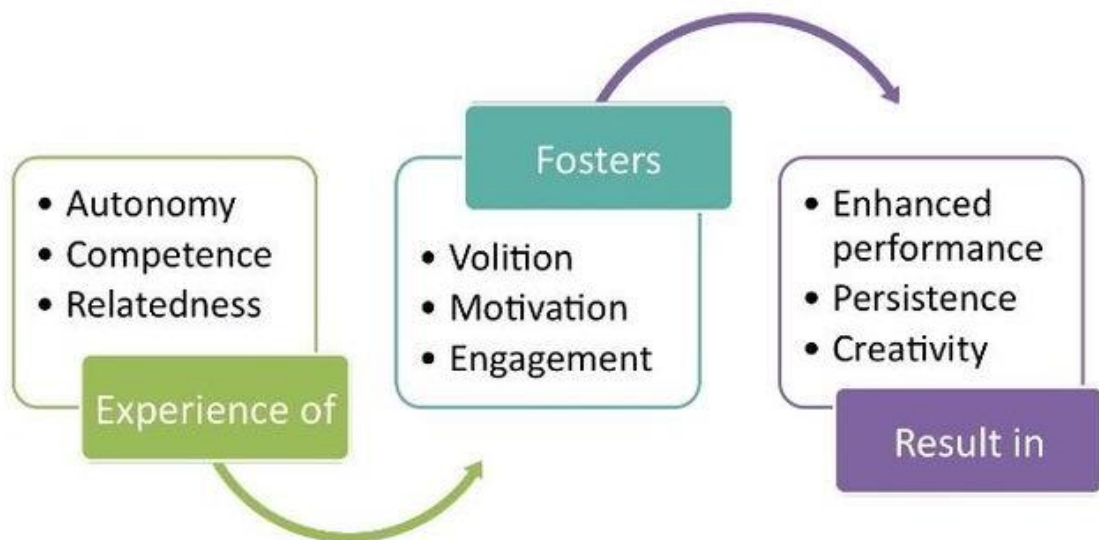


Figure 1.2 Self-determination theory

Source: Ryan and Deci (2000)

AUTONOMY

Autonomy refers to the necessity for employees to feel empowered in their position, have the autonomy to decide, voice their opinions and participate in the process of

determining how their work is completed. Instead of being controlled and guided by others, autonomy focuses primarily on people's need to be volitional and self-initiate their own acts (Forner et al., 2020).

COMPETENCE

Competence signifies employees' need to feel successful, productive and competent in their jobs. When employees are given the chance to apply their abilities and gain task mastery, the requirement for competence is met (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

RELATEDNESS

Deci and Ryan (2017) define relatedness as the need to feel like you belong and that other people care about you, longing for affiliation or connection to other people, meaning being loved and cared for, while loving and caring for others.

According to Legault (2017), there are six basic components of SDT. In other words, six mini-theories are combined to give an indication of human behaviour across the board in a variety of contexts, including the workplace, personal relationships, academics, faith, wellness, athletics and even bias and prejudice. The fundamental psychological requirements form the basis of any mini-theory. In order to thrive and develop, every single person has three basic needs: autonomy (the want to be free and self-directed), capability (the desire to feel effective) and affiliation (the need to have strong relationships with other people). The mini theories are explained as follows:

- 1) **The first mini-theory: cognitive evaluation theory (CET)** talks to perceived autonomy and competence being shaped by intrinsic motivation factors.
- 2) **The second mini-theory: organismic integration theory (OIT)** refers to the process of internalising external motivation.
- 3) **The third mini-theory: causality orientations theory (COT)** describes personality dispositions. It is believed that causality orientations evolve with time and serve as the foundation for motivation at the general personality level.

According to COT, a person's independent reasoning perspective or a trait of independent behaviour is likely to be shaped by their growth and social past of events that are in line with their independence. This means that an individual typically tends to regulate their behaviour based on personal interests and values, which can be motivated by both intrinsic and autonomous forms of extrinsic factors.

- 4) **The fourth mini-theory is the basic psychological need theory** emphasising the significance of fundamental psychological needs for overall health and happiness, while specifically detailing methods to fulfil these needs, as well as the consequences of neglecting or obstructing them within social environments.
- 5) **Goal content theory is the fifth mini-theory**, which is concerned with how intrinsic and extrinsic goals affect health and wellness.
- 6) **The final mini-theory is the relationship motivation theory.** This theory's focus is on the development and sustenance of close relationships.

In contrast, people with a controlled orientation are mostly concerned with the way they behave, which must comply with demands, expectations and other external consequences. They have a dispositional propensity to look toward environmental controls and prompts to govern behaviour. Then there is also:

- Those who lack intentionality in their actions, generally feeling detached and helpless, are characterised by impersonal orientation.
- The increased daily well-being, the fulfilment of fundamental psychological needs, independent participation in daily activities, present everyday social communications, self-actualisation and self-esteem, are positively linked with an autonomy orientation.

In contrast, when one's orientation is controlled, they tend to be more self-conscious, more easily influenced by external evaluations and pressures and more defensive in social situations.

It has been established that the impersonal orientation approach is linked to self-handicapping, poor performance, identity disturbance, self-deprecation, sadness and anxiety (Legault, 2017).

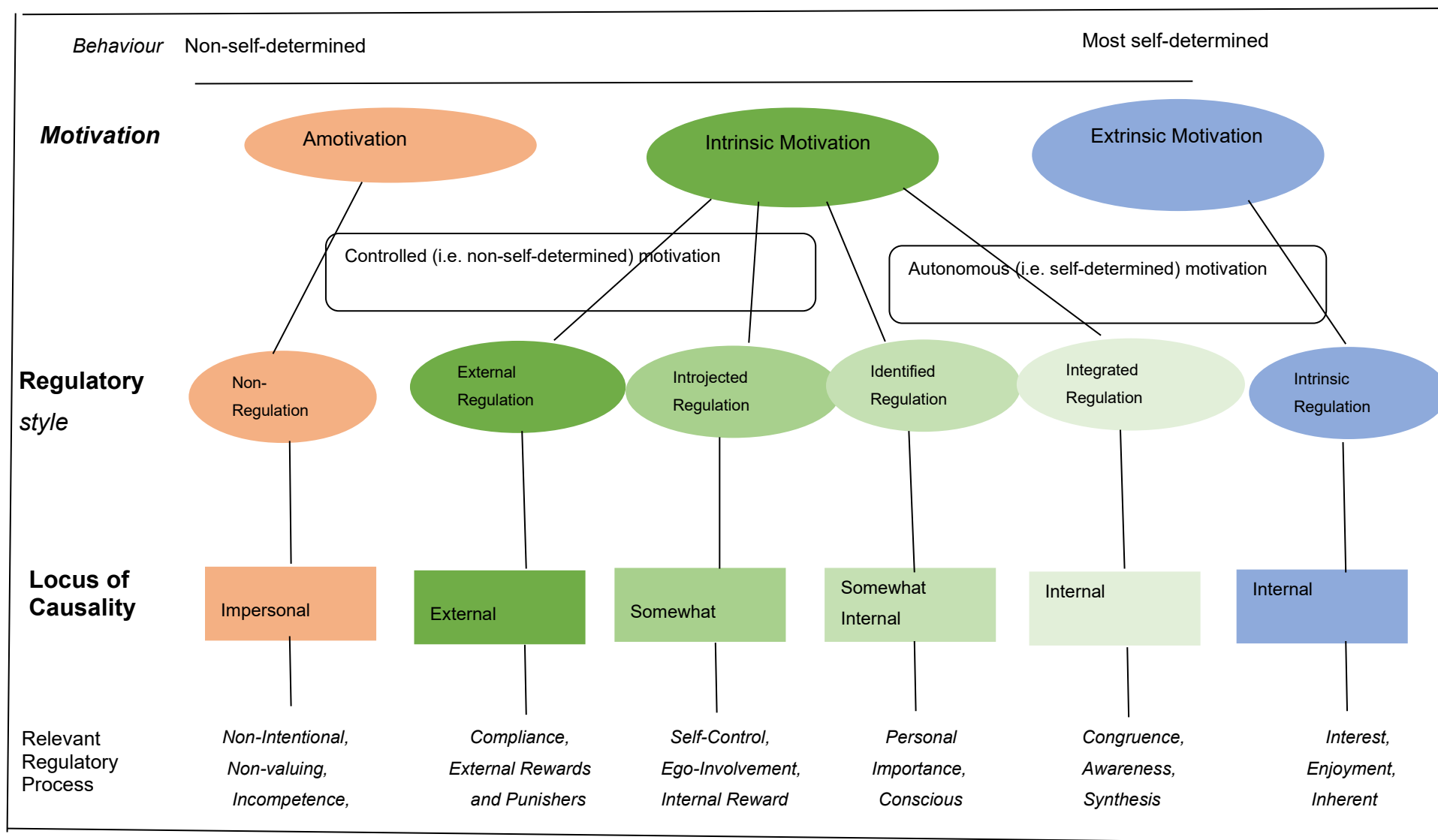


Figure 1.3: Self-determination theory: The internalisation continuum: types of motivation according to self-determination theory Source: Legault (2017).

The second meta-theory is the social exchange theory (SET), which is described as a procedure where collaborative exchanges between two parties are strongly entrenched in managerial psychology (Blau, 2017). SET offers a justification for explaining the relationship, impact or how it is linked to employee performance. According to the SET theory, people are more inclined to counter favours when they receive them from the other side. Mutual trust, responsibility and dedication between employees and organisations define social interaction. Employees who have a high level of social interaction with the organisation are more likely to return the favour by acting in ways that the organisation values, such as the way they carry out their duties, according to SET. The way that employees show their trust, appreciation and investment is an expression of a social exchange relationship between them and the organisation (Zhang, Bal, Akhtar, Long, Zhang & Ma, 2019). SET is established through the prescriptive rules of engagement inside cooperative relationships (Blau, 2017). SET has been extensively employed as a theoretical base connecting leadership influences on employees' behaviour (Zhang et al., 2019). When organisations spend more towards their employees' well-being and growth, the expectation is that employees' respond positively towards that gesture of support (Ali et al., 2019). Furthermore, organisational investment is expected to bridge the gap in enhancing succession opportunities and organisational relationships, which will influence the organisational set objectives equally. SET worker's perception about their development as a social exchange is influenced by succession planning, which in turn will influence behaviour of other workers particularly their performance (Ali et al., 2019).

SET changes when employers are taking care of their employees, which triggers reciprocity from the employees. Hence, the social exchange relationship is a mediating variable, beneficial and mutual exchange between strong relationships and these relationships produce optimised work behaviour and productive employee attitudes (Chukwuma, Alaefule, Jideofor & Egbosionu, 2020).

The SET theory is significant for this study because it demonstrates how regular communication among employees in the SAPS can boost their involvement and commitment within the organisation. Additionally, by speaking with other

employees/colleagues, the SAPS as an organisation can identify the best applicant for key positions within the organisation, thus guaranteeing a smooth transfer or handing over of power from one leader to the other.

SET is the theory applicable to this study, due to the reasons mentioned above; it specifically characterises the process of social interaction between material and immaterial things. To improve everyday circumstances and behaviours, SET is applied to clarify the behaviour of employees, job performance, inter-organisational exchanges, trust, and the dynamics between leaders and fellow workers. The central premise is that social exchanges occur among individuals throughout the duration of the relationship, facilitating the development of trust, emotional connections, and loyalty (Wang, Fang & Fu, 2019).

Ali et al., (2019) suggest that when organisations invest in their employees, employees will respond and the return on investment would be employees' efforts to attain organisational goals. This means that when organisations suggest succession planning to their employees, employees will grow within the organisation and that will lead to better individual and organisational performance. The theory is that succession planning directly and/or indirectly is related to the performance of an individual as a social exchange process. The contribution by the researcher in this study is the integration of the literature, meaning integrating SET with succession planning and employee performance.

According to Thomas and Gupta (2023), SET assists organisations and managers' in creating employee responsibilities and positive work attitudes. The term social exchange refers to an organisation's use of ongoing communication and positive actions to serve its employees, with the expectation that the same would be reciprocated.

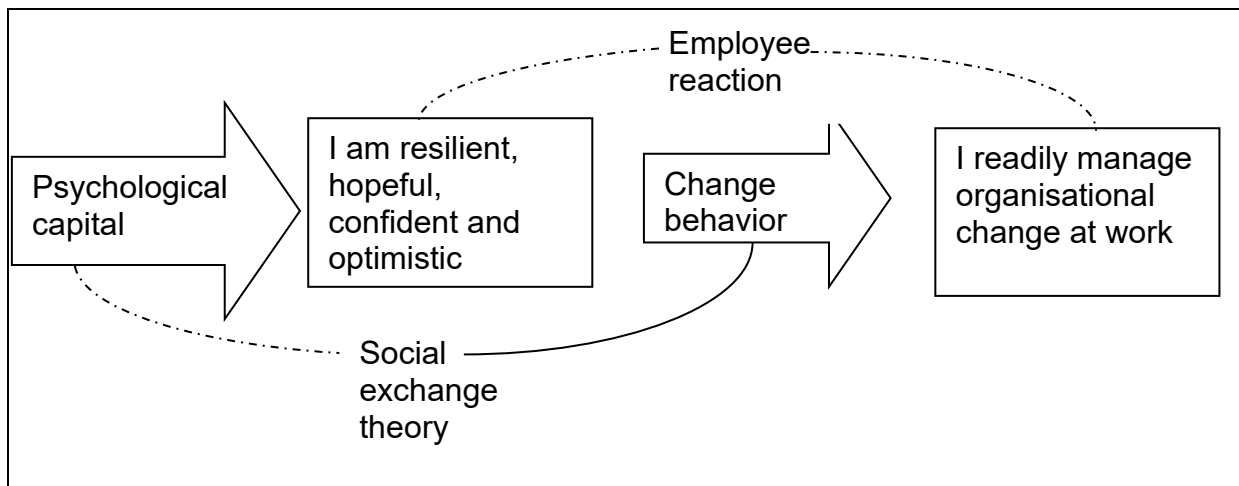


Figure 1.4: The social exchange theory at work in the organisation

Source: Beal, Stavros and Cole (2013)

Social Exchange Elements

According to Wang et al., (2019), the process of social exchange can either start with positive or negative treatment by an organisation of an individual employee. The individual employee may then retaliate against any negative treatment through attitude and behaviour. In the social exchange process, it is necessary for people to align themselves with the norms of social exchange, for the maintenance of stable social relationships. Elements of social exchange (which are reciprocity, negotiation and information sharing) put emphasis on the volunteer actions of exchange parties driven by the goals they are likely to achieve, and are discussed next.

Reciprocity

According to Wang et al., (2019), the basic social exchange norm is referred to as reciprocity. Its definition is in terms of three aspects: (a) a sense that a reasonable balance over time is reached by all exchanges; (b) punishing the ones being uncooperative; and (c) in future assisting the ones being cooperative. The discourse centred on the notion that reciprocity constitutes a fundamental attribute of enduring transactions, positing that relationships characterised by a balance of power serve as

the definition of ongoing exchanges. Wang et al., (2019) and Cattlin and Given (2025) consider reciprocity as a key element of the rules and principles of social exchange, describing it as a general belief, a social norm, or an individual orientation. It seems that the connections we build, the friendships we nurture and the warm feelings that come from giving and receiving are even more valuable than the actual economic gains.

Negotiation

Negotiation is a significant element of social exchange. To accomplish the anticipated objectives, the participants will negotiate the specifics of the terms and conditions. Terms of exchange are negotiated when more than one person is participating in a social exchange, which ensures the satisfaction of the results by both parties. When negotiating, there must be an agreement, as it is a give-and-take process (Wang et al., 2019), whereas Kakyo, Xiao and Chamberlain (2025) are of the view that negotiation highlights an individual's inclination to engage in open discussions and negotiate the terms of exchange in their workplace interactions with colleagues.

Information sharing

Information sharing must not be confused with reciprocity. Reciprocity involves ethics, where a quantity exchange between partners is equal, this type of behaviour (reciprocal) can generate the same amount of financial interest to both parties. However, the extent of information sharing is difficult to quantify, because as a kind of abstract exchange, it must be balanced, open, prompt and in an effective manner. The level of trust in interpersonal relationships can be endorsed by information sharing. Information sharing with one another is not difficult when people are working towards the same goal and therefore creating an improved inclination to share or exchange (Wang et al., 2019).

Social Exchange Theory principles

According to Tran, Gorton and Lemke (2022), SET is built on four principles:

- 1) The first principle being that human beings avoid sadness and look for happiness and those are phenomena that are all agreed on not only by the individual themselves, but also by members of society.

- 2) The second principle is that a person who is part of society has the will and power to choose what is best for him based on what he has learnt.
- 3) The third principle indicates that people act in terms of what is preferred. In the midst of a conflict of interest, a person attempts to focus on his own profit with the first principle, social acceptance.
- 4) The fourth principle which is the last principle deals with the persistent conflict of interest that exists between individuals and small groups in society; that is, a worker expects to be compensated for the work he does and society recognises this societal contract.

However, there could be a conflict of interest between society and certain segments of society fails to recognise the legal interests of a person or group, which will incite resentment and disobedience (Tran et al., 2022).

Social Exchange Criticism

According to Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels and Hall (2017), the SET is significantly criticised on its lack for adequate theoretical precision and as a result has inadequate utility. Cropanzano et al., (2017) also indicate that academics who make use of SET are able to explain numerous social phenomena in a post hoc manner but they are severely restricted in their capability to make valuable estimates about workplace behaviour. Though researchers are thrilled with the extensive applicability of SET, the argument is that this extensiveness is costly. Accordingly, there are at least three big problems with SET and they all contribute to a fourth.

The social exchange paradigm permits additional consideration and there are some constructs that overlap and need to be visibly differentiated, namely counterproductive work behaviour, aggression and antisocial behaviours. Secondly, people do not fully understand how some of the concepts used in social exchange studies are hedonically positive (like supervisor support and helping) and how hedonically negative (like abusive supervision and rudeness). Social exchange researchers would improve from having the ability to distinguish better between these constructs. Thirdly, SET fails to express completely and differentiate between behavioural action and inaction.

Cropanzano et al., (2017) indicate that the third flaw in SET is that it does not adequately describe the difference between behavioural action and inaction. SET assumes that the absence of something that is hedonistically good (such as trust or justice) is practically the same as the presence of something that is hedonistically negative (such as injustice or distrust). Lastly, because of the preceding three concerns, an additional critical issue emerges and indicates that the behavioural predictions offered by SET have become too general and vague (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

Integration of self-determination and social exchange theories

According to Abdullahi et al., (2021), the SET is built on the normative and coordinated rules of mutual trust and fairness in working relationships. Similar to this, SDT delves at the ways in which people's social environments impact and shape their personalities and motivations. While SDT centres on the basic psychological needs of independence, competence, and connectedness and how they contribute to self-determined motivation, wellbeing, and development, SET has been used extensively as a theoretical basis for linking the impact of leadership on employee behaviour. This study examines the perspectives of SAPS employees concerning succession planning and employee performance, grounded in Social Exchange Theory (SET). It is believed that when companies invest their resources their workers, those workers will respond positively to the company's interests, which will make them more invested in their work and more likely to go above and beyond to achieve those goals. Furthermore, Self-Determination Theory highlights the significant role of cultural and social contexts in either supporting or obstructing the essential psychological needs of individuals, alongside the underlying principles of independence, accomplishment, and overall well-being. Ryan and Deci (2012) indicate that organisations invest in employee connections through initiatives including succession planning and coaching, as stated by SET. Employees exert their utmost diligence to achieve the objectives of the organisation. SDT has been instituted to cultivate the notion of succession planning, promoting individuals to strive for their own personal growth and development. When employees participate in organisational employment collaborations, they have a moral obligation to reimburse the organisation for its investment while also encouraging the

attainment of the organisation's aims. SDT emphasises the importance of individuals in meeting three psychosomatic needs and wants (connectedness, autonomy, and competence) that are critical to good employee performance. A key focus is to enhance employee performance through the cultivation of a suitable level of skills, abilities, and knowledge among the workforce (Abdullahi et al., 2021).

It has been established by both SDT and SET that the concept of need satisfaction is an essential component of their different structural frameworks. SDT and SET, when used together, provide the opportunity to gain an understanding not only of the perspective that employees of the South African Police Service (SAPS) have on succession planning and employee performance, but also of the connection that exists between succession planning and employee performance (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This research methodology section, which is the exposition of the total strategy for the study provides the methods that were used in the research and the research design outlines a plan for the research (Van Wyk, 2015). A qualitative research method was followed.

A qualitative research approach assisted with understanding the perspective of the SAPS employees about succession planning and employee performance. The qualitative approach helped in seeking to comprehend people's experiences and circumstances, as well as the underlying meanings from people's perspectives. Qualitative research accepts that peoples' experiences are different and personal and acknowledges the feelings of both present and future leaders and realises that succession planning has a significant influence on the careers of the existing leaders who are in charge of its achievement. Qualitative research value rests in its ability to bring in various perspectives' (Lanka et al., 2021).

1.7.1 Research approach

Research can be conducted in two ways, namely from a deductive or an inductive research approach. A deductive approach is suitable when the researcher's focus is on theory development, hypothesis and designing strategy for hypothesis testing. The inductive approach is more appropriate for data collection, theory creation as well as data analysis, which is why it is necessary to align research approaches and research philosophies. The deductive approach leans more towards the positivist philosophy and the inductive approach leans more to the interpretivist philosophy (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Fife & Gossner, 2024). As a result of the aforementioned literature, a deductive approach was chosen in this study by analysing data (semi-structured interviews) using deductive thematic analysis to generate themes using a well-established six-stage approach, the steps of which can be summarised as: data familiarisation, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and final analysis (Galanis, 2018; Pearse, 2019; Proudfoot, 2023).

Kiger and Varpio (2020) indicates that several researchers have published descriptions and guides of how to conduct different versions of thematic analysis (Aronson 1995; Attride-Stirling 2001; Boyatzis 1998; Joffe 2011). According to Naeem, Ozuem, Howell and Ranfagni (2023), thematic analysis is used by qualitative researchers who are reasoning inductively and who are looking to generate patterns when analysing data, to uncover meanings, ideas concepts and also provide insight to the perspective and experiences of research participants.

The researcher adopted the deductive research approach for this study. The researcher adopted the deductive research approach in order to evaluate the feasibility of conducting a comprehensive study and to obtain a better understanding of the perception of SAPS employees regarding employee performance and succession planning, the researcher conducted an exploratory research. This exploratory investigation is particularly valuable given there is little prior research undertaken on the subject for SAPS. The researcher selected exploratory work to find adequate data gathering methods, effective ways of approaching research participants, or relevant

research subjects. Exploratory research is frequently a first step in satisfying the researcher's curiosity and understanding the phenomenon being studied and insights into the research participants, all of which contribute to the design of a following larger study. Interpretivists adopt a relativist paradigm, with an understanding that instead of being a single phenomenon, the same phenomenon can have more than one interpretation, rather than a single truth that can be confirmed through the measurement process. This is the foundation of the interpretivist paradigm, which maintains that approaches that are used in comprehending information in the social and human sciences cannot be the same as those utilised in the physical sciences because humans' interpretation of their world and then their behaviour will be based on such interpretation. Instead of trying to take a broad view the foundation of knowledge for the entire population, researchers that adopt an interpretivist perspective almost always obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and the complexity thereof in its particular context (Pham, 2018).

1.7.2 Research method

According to Maree (2016), the term "research method" refers to the instruments or tools that are utilised by the researcher in the course of an investigation for the purpose of data collection. According to Nieuwenhuis (2016), the research topic, the theoretical framework, and the objectives of the study all have an impact on the ways in which research methodologies are utilised. To Creswell and Creswell (2018), the term "research methods" refers to specific procedures that are utilised in the process of data gathering, analysis, and interpretation with regard to a research study.

It outlines the methodology a researcher intends to employ in addressing the research problem, encompassing the characterisation of research subjects, the process of data collection, the compilation of a sample, the procedures for sampling, and the analysis of data pertinent to the study, which in short is to lay out the researcher's strategy for solving the research problem (Graustein, 2014). Their job is to simplify the process of gathering useful information while requiring the least amount of work, time, and money

(Goundar, 2019). Consequently Thus, the research procedures are seen by the researcher as the tools that enable the research study to be carried out.

In research, a group of individuals whose characteristics and features are the same, are referred to as a population (Willie, 2023), which means that a population represents the larger, or comprehensive group that is used for a research study or analysis. In research, the population is the total set of individuals from which a sample is drawn to make inferences or generalisations. Sampling refers to only individuals that will take part in the study. Zickar and Keith (2023), describes purposive sampling as a method that takes into consideration that researchers make decisions based on their own discretion and expertise when choosing participants. The population of this study were SAPS employees' (commissioned and non-commissioned officers). Commissioned officers being employees from the rank of a captain and non-commissioned officers being employees on the sergeant and warrant officer ranks and reason for including non-commissioned officers is because within the organisation we have small stations where either the Visible Policing Commander, Detective Commander or the Support Services Head will be a Warrant Officer and the Sergeant will normally be appointed in an acting position on absentia of the commander. Purposive sampling was used for this study to choose participants who were most likely to provide pertinent and helpful data (Zickar & Keith, 2023).

Data collection was accomplished via the use of semi-structured interviews and data analysis was carried out through the use of the thematic analysis approach. According to Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017), thematic analysis is a method of qualitative research that has the potential to be utilised in a wide range of contexts and may be applied to a significant number of different epistemologies and research concerns and it involves identifying, analysing, categorising, describing and summarising themes from the data that was gathered.

1.7.3 Research paradigm

The researcher adopted the interpretivist paradigm for this study. Interpretivists adopt a relativist paradigm, with an understanding that instead of being a single phenomenon, the same phenomenon can have more than one interpretation, rather

than a single truth that can be confirmed through the measurement process. This is the foundation of the interpretivist paradigm, which maintains that approaches that are used in comprehending information in the social and human sciences cannot be the same as those utilised in the physical sciences because humans' interpretation of their world and then their behaviour will be based on such interpretation. Instead of trying to take a broad view the foundation of knowledge for the entire population, researchers that adopt an interpretivist perspective almost always obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and the complexity thereof in its particular context (Pham, 2018).

1.7.4 Trustworthiness and quality of the data

According to Van Zyl (2014), testing the same thing and getting the same outcome indicates reliability. For qualitative research reliability involves trustworthiness of the data. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) emphasise that the data collected must meet the following trustworthiness criteria:

- Credibility refers to whether the research outcome is worthy of acceptance. Building trust with participants and spending enough time in the field allowed the researcher to fully understand their perspective, by acknowledging personal biases and assumptions every step of the way while conducting the study.
- Transferability relates to research results being able to be used in a setting or context for which it was initially planned. The researcher applied this concept by clearly stating the sampling criteria and procedure and also by supporting the possible transferability of the findings and by providing comprehensive background information to enable readers findings' transferability evaluation.
- Dependability talks to the consistency and suitability of the research over a period of time. The researcher applied this concept by detailing the research procedure and by also detailing the decisions made during the research.
- Confirmability checks whether research findings are free from researcher bias. This concept was applied by thorough and meticulous documentation of the complete research process (data collection, coding, etc.), allowing for the conclusions to be traced back to their origins and ensuring that the findings are firmly rooted in the raw data (interviews, observations, documents).

1.7.5 Ethical considerations

Van Zyl (2014) states that despite the excitement and the expected enthusiasm from researchers, they need to be conscious and bear in mind that the volunteers participating in their research study are people with feelings. Henceforth, they need to be always handled and treated with respect for the preservation of their dignity irrespective of the study results. All possible sources of harm were taken into consideration and were always avoided and the study was conducted carefully while adhering to the University of South Africa's research ethics guidelines. Throughout the whole research process, the institution's ethics protocols were adhered to. Taking part in research was voluntary and no remuneration was given to the participants during the research process. Confidentiality was always upheld. Furthermore, each participant signed a consent form before participating in the study. Ethical clearance was granted by the university's Departmental Research and Ethics Committee (DREC). More information regarding the ethical considerations that were adopted in this study are provided in chapter 4 (see section 4.14). Permission to conduct the study within the SAPS was requested by the researcher and approved by the SAPS Research Office.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to make SAPS employees aware of the importance of succession planning and employee performance. My intention with this study was to explore the participants' views on two concepts, namely succession planning and employee performance, a theoretical consolidation and to develop from this a succession planning and employee performance strategy that HR practitioners within SAPS can use. In this way, other scholars can use the strategy in a quantifiable survey and it could assist SAPS practically to obtain buy-in from SAPS employees.

Succession planning in the organisation can assist in saving time and costs of external recruitment and can encourage employees internally to aspire for future leadership positions within the organisation, succession planning practice also involves talented and qualified employees of the organisation who fill the urgent vacant positions for the organisational function's continuity (Abdullahi et al., 2021).

Based on theoretical and empirical support, this study can inform policymakers or HR practitioners at SAPS by providing empirical insights into the perception of employees on succession planning and employee performance. Understanding the challenges, such as grievances and long-term acting appointments faced by the organisation when the position becomes vacant. Additionally, the study offers a succession planning and employee performance strategy for implementation at the SAPS.

This study can be beneficial to the SAPS because it will assist the organisation in:

- understanding the link or relationship between succession planning and employee performance
- understanding the importance of succession planning and how succession planning affects employee performance
- understanding the perception of employees on succession planning and employee performance.

The study's significance will be relevant to SAPS, policy makers and/or government. Having policies in place will maintain leadership continuity, conserve institutional knowledge, and improve public service performance. By linking performance management with talent development, government will be able to reduce turnover and professionalise the public sector. Policy makers and government will have planned succession which will help reduce interruptions in vital government services during personnel turnover or retirements. There will be protection against the loss of precious technical expertise and policy knowledge in the civil service. Employee morale, engagement and productivity through integration of career pathing and performance frameworks will be enhanced. The professionalisation of the public sector will be through robust workforce planning strategies that will replace seniority-based promotions with merit-based talent management.

1.9 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

Succession planning enables organisations to focus on developing future leadership which will in turn improve employee performance in the organisation. Succession

planning ensures a hassle-free leadership changeover within the organisation while safeguarding that all participating employees are groomed for the changes and also to protect the organisation from uncertainty (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). The study helped the employees to see that succession planning protects the organisations from the dysfunction or chaos of uncertainty when a leader is expected to go on retirement or sudden resignations, be dismissal or ill health affecting a leader and also how succession planning affects employee performance, either positively or negatively. The succession planning process helps the organisation with sustained employee performance, because when the employees are groomed for future leadership roles within the organisation, the departure of the incumbent from the organisation does not disrupt employee performance, but instead there is smooth transition from one leader to the other (Gabriel, Biriowu & Dagogo, 2020).

Since the study was limited to participants who are employed in the SAPS, but under the South African Police Act 68 of 1995 and excluded employees who are employed in the police service, under the Public Service Act 103 of 1994 and the study was only conducted in the Free State, the outcome cannot be generalised across the whole SAPS, other provinces or divisions within the SAPS. The research restricted its focus to exploring the perception of SAPS employees on succession planning and employee performance and developing a succession planning and employee performance strategy. When such a link or relationship is identified, the foundation data could be beneficial to the organisation the aim could be to address issues of filling of vacant posts and to alleviate grievances. This study, however, only focused on succession planning and its influence on employee performance and not on any other factors.

1.10 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Introduction and background

Chapter one presents the background and motivation of the study, problem statement, research questions and the significance of the study, a background discussion on succession planning and employee performance, my journey, interest on succession planning, how is succession planning linked to employee performance and why a qualitative method was used to achieve the objectives of this study. The researcher

then moved to discussing the theoretical foundation of the study. The meta-theories, research design and methodology, were discussed, which involved explaining and discussing the population and sampling, research approach, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, the significance, strengths and limitations of the study were discussed last in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Succession Planning

This chapter presents the relevant literature involving the definition of succession planning, the need for succession planning within the SAPS, the difference between replacement and succession planning, a step-by-step guide on succession planning and factors influencing succession planning.

Chapter 3: Employee Performance

This chapter presents the relevant literature involving the definition of employee performance, the concept, the need, the theoretical model and a step-by-step guide on employee performance.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

Chapter four presents information on the exploratory qualitative research design, research paradigm used for this study, the population and sampling for this research, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study, quality of the study, as well as ethical considerations.

Chapter 5: Research findings

The findings of the data analysis, along with figures, tables and interpretation of the research findings, are presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations

Significant findings and conclusions from the study are presented in Chapter 6, along with the study's ramifications. The limits and suggestions that arose from the research findings followed.

1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In Chapter 1, a layout is provided about what can be expected in this dissertation. In this chapter, the background to the study was given. The researcher then had a look at the link between succession planning and employee performance. The researcher highlighted her personal journey towards the research and why the interest in succession planning and employee performance. The researcher then moved to illustrating the problem statement, research objectives, research questions and discussing the theoretical foundation of the study. The meta-theories, research design and methodology, were discussed, which involved explaining and discussing the population and sampling, research approach, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, the significance, strengths and limitations of the study. Next follows two theoretical chapters, Chapter 2, which is about succession planning and Chapter 3, which is about employee performance.

CHAPTER 2: SUCCESSION PLANNING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to report on the review of the existing literature on succession planning and to conceptualise its theoretical foundation. This chapter explores the significance, the need for and the elements related to succession planning.

2.2 SUCCESSION PLANNING

Okeah (2024) is of the opinion that a succession plan is pushed by the objectives, vision and mission of the organisation, in addition to the policies, guidelines, strategies and systems put in place within the organisation. Succession planning will give guidance on how to determine a more suitable process for the career paths of employees within the organisation, so that suitable development plans can be implemented. Even though organisations need to have a suitable successor to occupy critical positions in the organisation, organisations' top management personnel run away from paying the needed and necessary attention to this all-important task.

In order for organisations to be able to accomplish improved performance, be resilient and for the organisation to survive, highly effective succession planning must be implemented to steer the organisation towards success. The leadership style of an organisation also significantly influences its success or failure (Okeah, 2024).

According to Okeah (2024), effective succession planning is centred around three major areas, namely:

- Succession planning deals with organisational needs which results or stems from the retirement or resignation of senior leadership within the organisation,
- It is a helping tool, which prepares for filling the vacant post in case of unforeseen or unpredictable circumstances like the death or sudden illness of a staff occupying a major leadership role,
- Succession planning ensures that suitable employees within the organisation are ready to work and perform efficiently in future vacant positions, should the incumbent of the post vacate the post either by retiring or resigning. Succession

planning also serves as a strategy that is used by organisations to fill the gaps in an organisation by guaranteeing the current employees and the leadership positions forecasted to be filled.

In identifying employees within the organisation with high prospects, who are talented and who are capable of performing in next or higher positions, organisations use succession planning to manage talented employees, as it involves planning for future needs and training and development of identified employees, so that the organisation has a wide variety of skills, especially leadership and enable the organisation to supply the demand should the need arise (Okeah, 2024). Furthermore, Ugoani (2020) and Gabriel et al., (2020) assert that the continuity of leadership is crucial for preserving organisational stability, implementing long-term strategies, and achieving a sustainable competitive edge. They emphasise that succession planning is aimed at recognising and nurturing high-potential employees for pivotal leadership positions, thereby guaranteeing continuity even amidst unexpected transitions. However, in the absence of a strong leadership development pipeline, succession planning is likely to be inadequate, as organisations may lack adequately trained and prepared leaders poised to assume essential roles. Siambi (2022) and Allam, Farhan, Kommineni, Deming and Boinapalli (2024) noted that organisations failing to properly strategise for leadership transitions may face significant disruptions, a loss of critical institutional knowledge, leadership gap, and a decline in operational effectiveness. Training and development should incorporate ethical and leadership training to prepare successors in understanding organisational values, ethical codes, and culture (Tamunomiebi & Orianzi, 2019).

To ensure continuity in leadership, culture and excellence, organisations use human resource succession planning in ensuring that intellectual assets (talented identified employees) of the organisation are effectively developed so that they can occupy leadership positions when the need arises. Because a good leader guides the company to excellence regardless of the constant turbulence that occurs in the organisation, effective succession planning results in corporate performance, corporate resilience and corporate survival (Okeah, 2024).

There are several definitions for succession planning by numerous writers. Tamunomiebi and Okwakpam (2019), Bano, Omar and Ismail (2022) and Rothwell (2010) define succession planning as a procedure in which organisations can make sure that employees are being hired and continuously enhance their skills to fill the competent key positions in the organisation, which is viewed as a process and also as an opportunity to encourage leadership to identify a talented employee within and outside of the organisation before anyone in a leadership position steps down. They describe it as a tool that can be used by organisations who have accurately capable people and as a catalyst that can move an organisation from point A to B. Atairet, Mark and Mbon (2024), Estedadi and Hamidi (2015) and Al Awadhi and Muslim (2023) add to their definition by defining succession planning as an effort by the organisation to deliberately and systematically ensure continuity in key leadership positions, retaining and developing employees with knowledge for future positions, which also encourages advancement of the individuals within the organisation, the process of succeeding another person in possession of authority, rank, office and functions, or as the passing on of a title to one who is legally entitled for it and ready to succeed and also as a method that is proactive and used by organisations to continuously develop leadership and ensure that the critical and vacant positions are filled in case of retirements or unplanned employees service termination in the organisation. These authors even go as far as linking succession planning with words such as proactive and systematic.

Succession planning commonly includes three major steps, the first step is understanding the organisation's long-term goals and objectives, the second step is identifying staff members' growth areas in the organisation and the final step is determining staff trends and forecasts in direct relation to the type of organisation and the skills or talent required by the organisation (Bano et al., 2022).

Succession planning is important as organisations are facing challenges in replacing talented or skilled employees and also as an important component of an efficient strategy for managing the talent of employees and ensuring that an organisation is successful in achieving its strategic aim. True succession planning involves the process whereby organisations identify and develop employees within the

organisation, who will be future leaders in the organisation, either formally or informally (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023 & Bano et al., 2021).

The evaluation of succession planning practices in certain organisation depends on its management, where the existing management or leaders must first understand succession planning, then assist the organisation in determining the current policies' gaps. A change in leadership, the decision of the current leader to leave their position and the actions taken by the leader to leave the organisation should all be addressed by the management strategy as soon as possible. This includes the hiring process, the interim period and, finally, the appointment of the new leader. The current leadership of the organisation should establish the components of the proposed strategy and the individuals or groups responsible for overseeing or managing each step (Ritchie, 2020).

Succession planning extends beyond replacing key senior managers and involves strategic talent management to ensure a capable and competent workforce that can help the organisation to endlessly continue to adapt, respond and prosper to changing business environments. Succession planning emphasises enabling organisations to cultivate broad skills and the ability to lead at all levels of the company for career advancement and existence. For organisations to continue surviving and exceling in today's extremely competitive corporate environment, they must have an active and high potential group of employees at all levels in the organisational (Gabriel et al., 2020).The determination is that succession planning is not only limited to top leadership (Bano et al., 2022).

According to Al Awadhi and Muslim (2023), succession planning entails determining critical positions and levels of employment, so that an alternative plan can be created for their successful replacements. Non-existence of future leaders and the successful employees that are going to replace them is an on-going thought in the mind of management of the organisation. Business continuity can be affected by the gap created, which will result in the urgent need for succession planning policy development. Succession planning's significance cannot be over emphasised, as it is the efficient method that can be used by the organisation to have competent

employees, developing careers and promoting employees in the organisation and because succession planning is used to mostly for consideration of elements which include employees that are replaced of an individual with an appropriate and competent successor, successor's training and development needs which must also be considered.

Not only are organisations dependent on leaders, but they also depend on the need for skilful employees that are knowledgeable or experienced to prove their leadership, which puts emphasis on the need for an organisation to have succession planning in place for each and every employee and not just top managers and leadership only. Development and training and promotional succession are part of succession planning, the requirement being the list of vacant positions available so that decision makers can familiarise themselves with the nature of those positions. Succession planning management is seen as a structured controlled method that is used in an organisation equally for planned roles and the leadership positions development to guarantee an alternative or required back-up for leadership positions that tare vacant and to determine the correct possible employee that will be provided when those vacant posts are to be advertised (Al Awadhi & Muslim, 2023).

When it comes to effective succession planning in any organisation, management and organisational leadership play a very essential role to alleviate transition risks and strengthen lasting strategic objectives. Succession planning effectively mitigates the potential disruptions that may arise from unforeseen leadership transitions, thus safeguarding the stability and performance of the organisation and it is most effective when it is a methodical endeavour that is intentionally designed and guided by a documented, organisation-wide declaration of intent and a set of policies, as it gives employees within the organisation an opportunity to work on skills needed for the future position (Estedadi & Hamidi, 2015; Rothwell, 2001; Bano et al., 2021). As a result, succession planning is closely related to management and leadership. In order for an organisation to be successful, its employees need to advance in their positions and as they leave their positions, others need take up the responsibilities that they left behind. There are some employees who have a great deal of expertise and who are interested in advancing their careers. It is the role of management to ensure that a smooth

transition takes place so that these employees are encouraged to remain with the organisation. Succession planning, guided by principles of Social Learning Theory, highlights the importance of immersing high-potential employees in authentic leadership experiences, engaging in executive mentorship, and participating in leadership simulations (Anos, 2025).

According to Atairet et al., (2024), a well-developed succession plan has some benefits as identified and they are:

- the organisation will have the right people in the right place at the right time,
- a pool of qualified candidates who are to fill the critical posts is developed,
- employees are assisted to realise their career plans and aspirations,
- improvement on the ability of the employees' response to change in the workplace,
- more opportunities are created for the transfer of knowledge at the corporate level timeously.

Succession planning is often confused with replacement planning. Succession planning and replacement planning are not the same and as a result they should not be confused and be used interchangeably (Bano et al., 2022). With succession planning defined by different authors in section 2.2, replacement planning is defined by Gabriel et al., (2020) as a process that is used to identify temporary or permanent backups for organisations to have ready employees who can assume responsibility for critical roles in case of emergencies.

Replacement planning and succession planning differ as indicated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Differences between replacement and succession planning

Replacement planning	Succession planning
Identifies replacements	Train and develop
Reactive	Pro-active
Focus on positions	Focus on level
Risk management	Future development
Tactical	Structured
Stand in for a leader	Reintroducing a new leader
Narrow approach	Wide-ranging opportunities and organised
Limited	Adjustable / Adaptable / Flexible

Source: Gabriel et al., (2020)

Both succession and replacement planning are very important strategies within the organisation for the organisation's sustainability. However, although they are not the same, both have been used by organisations over the years (Gabriel et al., 2020).

With succession planning in place, it means the following; it means that organisations are prioritising training and development of employees for career growth within the organisation. It shows that management is being pro-active in preparing future leaders by grooming and training emerging talent. Instead of focusing solely on positions, organisational leadership looks to the leadership level. When companies invest in developing new leaders rather than just replacing old ones, it shows that they aren't set in their ways and can easily adapt to new situations. That will assist the organisation in improving the organisational and employee performance as there will not be major disruption to the operations or functioning of the organisation. The organisation will not have to hire externally; they will have a pool of their own employees to choose from (Anos, 2025; Gabriel et al., 2020).

When an organisation is looking for someone whom they believe has the potential to be a leader, they should clearly define the traits or qualities that guide that potential. It is ideal to look for all employees with strong leadership characteristics. However, it

should be kept in mind that no one person can be expected to possess all the required qualities. If not, the identified employees with potential could be coached and instructed to develop the qualities required. Nonetheless, there are always a few traits that individuals are born with and are impossible to be taught or be instilled in a person. It turns out that it is essential to have them. For someone to be chosen for succession planning, it is important that they possess the right combination of traits required for the target position (Zafar & Akhtar, 2020).

According to Estedadi and Hamidi (2015), succession planning is continuous and it is normally encouraged to be done at least five years before retirement. The description of succession planning goals highlights the importance of transferring knowledge and information from the current post holder to their successor within the organisation. This process involves the current incumbent mentoring the successor in the daily operations of the organisation, ensuring business continuity in the event of the founder's retirement or passing. Succession planning guides management on the decisions regarding the process or when the knowledge should be transferred to the successor. Each organisation defines succession planning uniquely and the questions remaining would be related to the impetus, stages, length of time, participants, support, results and success measurement of the process.

The aim is to minimise the impact which comes from the sudden loss of an incumbent in the post. Organisations and industries now place more emphasis on effective succession planning and management thereof (Estedadi & Hamidi, 2015; Rothwell, 2001).

2.3 THE NEED FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING

This section's focus will be on the consideration and the importance on the need for developing a succession plan in organisations.

According to Tamunomiebi and Okwakpam (2019), to understand why succession planning is needed and its significance to organisations and researchers, there is a need to understand the essence of succession planning. Globalisation has created changes in organisations, such as technological advances, a talent war and the on-

going competitive advantage struggle. Succession planning is seen as an essential process for organisations to nurture the right talent to meet the challenges they face and ensure sustainability. Succession planning assists organisations to retain their top performing employees, increase the morale and confidence of employees, develop an internal talent pool that is diverse, contain costs on external outsourcing and minimise the impact of losing employees. A pool of well-developed employees, who are also experienced, motivated and prepared enables employees to step into positions when the need arises within the organisation. Succession planning increases potential leadership and satisfaction of employees within the organisation as it becomes a positive goal for employees. It also assists in defining career paths for employees, which in turn helps the organisation to recruit and retain the best performing employees in the organisation.

Usually, succession planning within the organisation is believed to be assisting organisations with placing employees internally, workforce attrition reduction which caused by top performing employees and preparing qualified employees for promotion from junior to senior positions of management. Succession planning offers various advantages, but its main advantage is the development of an active strong talent pool for the future and that is, which is equally important for keeping its best and key employees and for attracting more people for the future growth of the organisation (Tamunomiebi & Okwakpam, 2019). Olubiyi, Lawal and Adeoye (2022) further indicate that it is often acknowledged that succession planning helps organisations with internal resourcing, lowers employee attrition from employees who frequently change jobs and who change jobs frequently and prepares competent applicants for senior management appointments. Succession planning is crucial not just for the organisations and its present employees but also for clients, the community and employees and their families.

While succession planning is known as a common practice within organisations, government institutions and parastatals also have to think about preparation for change that happens within their institutions. A change in leadership can be challenging not only for the departing employee, but also for the entire organisation, other employees, clients and the community. Management in the organisation cannot

afford to wait until the time arrives for the leader to leave and then find themselves vulnerable and unprepared to navigate this challenging transition. Management must consider succession planning well before the next possible leadership transition (Ritchie, 2020). This type of preparation is crucial for businesses aiming to maintain operational continuity during leadership transitions (Ritchie, 2020).

Employee retirement planning and timing have significant implications for all organisations. Unintended early or late retirement can have an impact on the human resources department of the organisation. Substituting a knowledgeable employee with an inexperienced employee can be problematic as it will affect business continuity. The typical retirement age for government workers is 65 to 66 years old. According to Boveda and Metz (2016), the age of mandatory retirement is generally set at or near 65. Retirement plans come in many forms, including traditional retirement, early retirement, delayed retirement and retirement among baby boomers. Next, posts can become vacant for reasons other than retirements, such as unexpected deaths, resignations, other crises or dismissals, therefore organisations must have a succession plan in place to be ready for any kind of exit in the organisation.

Succession planning within organisations is needed to put emphasis on leadership and create a back-up for the growth of high-potential leaders, by establishing a database that improves the staffing decisions for key positions in the organisation (Thakur, 2022).

By acknowledging the value of development, providing attention and time, the retention of employees in senior management roles is facilitated through a structured succession planning process. Organisations need to implement an effective succession planning model to identify critical positions. This approach will facilitate the future identification of these roles and ensure continuity in staffing (Thakur, 2022).

Organisational leadership understands the need for succession planning. An example would be senior candidates taking responsibility for emerging candidates, identifying and developing a talent pool early on for the future, identifying and using leadership skills for both selection and development and forming a partnership with human resources and teams committed to employees' own development. Any organisation's

long-term survival simply rests in its ability to handle the current situation and changes through effective succession planning. All employees must be aware of their career paths and the roles they are being developed in order to understand the changing demands of their workforce. Therefore, a smooth management transition must be a crucial component of an organisation (Thakur, 2022).

Figure 2.1 illustrates the value of succession planning within organisations.

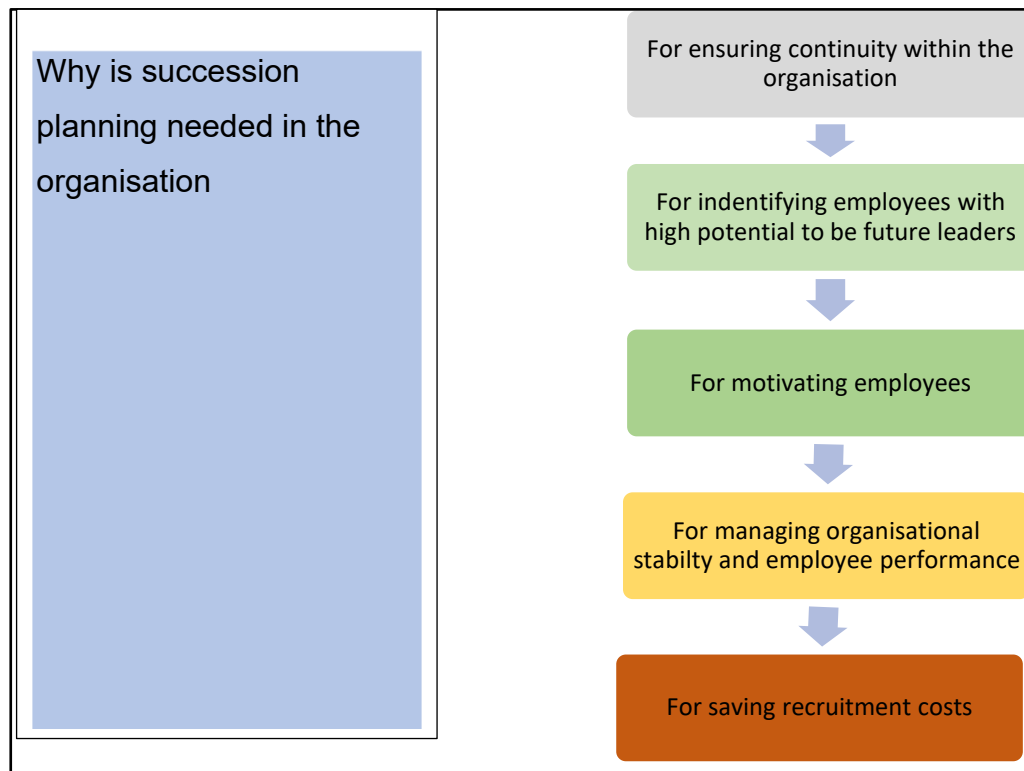


Figure 2.1 Value of succession planning

Source: Thakur (2022)

Ensuring continuity

The organisation's vision and mission can be upheld through a succession plan, which also helps to ensure that the continuity of the organisations' long-term objectives is maintained. Most organisations would like to preserve their culture and that can be accomplished through effective succession planning (Thakur, 2022).

Identifying high potential future leaders

Another rationale for the significance of succession planning lies in its capacity to enable the organisation to identify employees with high potential. This enables senior leadership to gain insight into their capabilities and areas for improvement. Individuals would demonstrate exceptional abilities and a readiness to embrace greater responsibility. Recognising the skill levels of employees equips the company for future challenges, which is essential in today's competitive landscape (Thakur, 2022).

Motivating employees

Another key reason for implementing succession planning is its capacity to inspire and engage employees. The awareness of being considered for higher roles motivates them to work harder. The recognition that the organisation holds them in high regard instils a profound sense of joy, which in turn inspires them to enhance their performance and acquire new competencies (Thakur, 2022).

Managing organisational stability

Within the context of a market that is highly competitive, businesses cannot afford to experience any disruptions in their operations. Plans within the organisation may be temporarily halted if a high-level employee decides to depart from their position. Such disruptions can significantly affect the organisation's ability to compete in the market. The importance of succession planning lies in the fact that it enables the organisation to have a capable individual to take over and carry on with the activities without any interruptions (Thakur, 2022).

Saving recruitment costs

It is widely acknowledged that the financial implication of hiring a new individual surpasses those associated with retaining a current employee. A succession plan guarantees the presence of qualified individuals ready to assume the roles of executives who depart from the organisation. This implies that the organisation can conserve both financial resources and effort by not needing to seek out appropriate candidates externally (Thakur, 2022).

2.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING SUCCESSION PLANNING

According to Seniwoliba (2015), the labour force might be replaced in a short time, but what the organisation is losing is a huge number of organisational official memory and vital skills. Succession planning within the organisation can be influenced internally and externally. Internal influences can be the organisational culture, commitment from the organisational leadership, and training and development. According to Kowo, Akinrinola and Akinbola (2021), organisations are very much concerned about skilled workers shortage and the challenge for human resources practitioners today is to develop new and fresh approaches to attract, lure, hire and retain a larger pool of prospective leaders. Human resource practitioners must also work at the intersection of external demographic shifts and internal organisational agendas in order to provide the organisation with an opportunity to compete in the future.

Seniwoliba (2015), describes the following as factors which influence succession planning:

- 1) **Training.** Training plans assist in helping personnel to learn new skills and improve their skills and knowledge. Consequently, they acquire new capabilities. Trained employees are more empowered; therefore, training programmes must be made available in the organisation for succession planning to be effective.
- 2) **Leadership support.** Effective succession planning requires strong commitment support from organisational leaders.
- 3) **Career path clarification.** Providing employees with a clear understanding of career goals supports the successful implementation of succession planning.
- 4) **Positive vision** helps generate a positive attitude towards succession planning programmes, alleviating concerns among employees who perceive succession planning as a potential risk to their roles within the organisation. Effective succession planning is influenced by the norms, values and ethics embedded in a strong organisational culture.

- 5) **Technological advancements** have an effect on how well employees are prepared for new positions and improvement in technology also makes it simpler for employees to seek other opportunities elsewhere.
- 6) **Flat structure** allows for an easier information exchange and improved communication within the organisation, where all of these factors would significantly help in the implementation of succession planning.
- 7) **Financial circumstances** have a negative impact on the effective implementation of succession planning. If an organisation does not have funds for training and development of their employees due to budget constraints or other financial limitations, it will affect the implementation of succession planning.

Kowo et al., (2021) elaborate on the internal influences on succession planning as follows:

- 1) **Organisational priorities.** Top management or executives' priority is the thought around succession planning because of the desire for sustainable business success. Many prosperous companies that have remained leaders in their industries for over 50 years have an inbuilt-to-last strategy, which is that organisations had a history of succession planning. Various organisational leaders have realised that it is better when organisations focus beyond replacement planning to succession planning for building a long-term lasting, sustainable and viable plan or strategy for the organisation. This is because of the awareness made of the relationship between succession planning and organisational goals.
- 2) **Employee expectations.** Employees are now expecting training and development opportunities from their employers, which makes it necessary for employers to have formal leadership programmes within the organisation. Formal leadership programmes will in turn assist the organisation to remain competitive in the environment where talent is minimal. The above shows that employees have now noted the value of succession planning as the strategy that is feasible for organisational success. The increased focus on training and development that

have been put in place by organisations; however, succession planning remains mostly elusive in most organisations. While succession planning originates back from the early 1900s, the changes in society, the economy, technology and the workforce have an impact on the implementation of succession planning in organisations today.

Progression of an all-inclusive talent management approach offers development or growth opportunities for employees to develop personal leadership competencies while at the same time the organisation is also benefiting from the overall talent increase. Succession planning enables organisations to recognise the importance of cultivating their employees into leaders who will uphold the mission of the organisation and mitigate the risks linked to focusing solely on a single successor (Mamun & Khan, 2020).

External influences on succession planning

According to Kowo et al., (2021), external influences include things such as disruptions in the market, changes in regulations like the recent change or amendment to the South African Employment Equity Act by the Department of Labour and the economy. Kowo et al., (2021) examine the external factors that affect succession planning, paying particular attention to the following six: 1. Social changes. 2. Developments in technology. 3. The state of the economy. 4. Political contexts. 5. The expansion of information and knowledge. 6. The workforce and demographics that are changing.

- 1) **Social changes.** An essential time in our history occurred between 1900 and the 1920s, characterised by substantial transformations in commerce, industry, and technological advancement. During this period, societal norms shifted away from the traditions established by dads and grandfathers in earlier generations. Consequently, a society once dominated by agriculture and farming transitioned to one dominated by factories and industrial industries, impacting enterprises and organisations. During this period, it was assumed that parents would either go or establish a legacy for their children, who would engage in labour without necessitating the extensive foresight that future decades would demand; thus, preparing for successors was comparatively uncomplicated. The emergence of

new technologies, like vehicles, fuel, and advanced farming equipment, enabled individuals to depart from family enterprises and pursue alternative economic options, which many subsequently did. This was made possible by the beginning of the use of technology, whether it was in the form of vehicles or new machinery for farming. There was a shift occurring in society and farmers and company owners started to become aware of the need of having good leadership.

2) Technological advances. In the 21st century, the internet is shaping society today just as the automobile shaped it in the 20th century. Technology influences numerous organisational productivity and business decisions, including succession planning and leadership development (Groves, 2007). Almost every business nowadays is influenced by technology, the overall economy is impacted by technology. Technology affects the business results or business performance and has an impact on organisations' preparation of the youth for the workforce. Movement of leadership talent has been enhanced by the internet, which makes it easy for employees to find other opportunities somewhere else. The models that have been created recently, also demonstrate how succession planning has been impacted by technology as well. Training and development of a single employee to assume a leadership role within an organisation is no longer adequate. Organisations are aware that in order for them to recruit and retain outstanding employees who have more options now than they did in the 1900s, they must provide leadership training and development.

3) State of the economy. Between 1950 and the turn of the century, economic conditions encouraged the continued growth of industries other than farming. The computer, health and service sectors are among these new businesses, which show the dramatic increase from 45 million to over 129 million workers globally. Organisations began to view the employment and development of leaders and talent as a means of increasing business profitability and maintaining competitiveness in the market during the 1980s and 1990s. The workforce had shifted to a sophisticated, international and interconnected economy, far from the thriving agriculture sector. The economy peaked in the early 20th century after recovering from a recession earlier in the decade.

The once robust economy enabled firms to shift their attention from cultivating successors for pivotal CEOs. However, the economy would not remain stable for an extended period, as demonstrated by the Great Depression from 1929 to 1940. The past two decades have demonstrated to American corporations that organisations cannot rely solely on a singular exceptional leader, as no company is impervious to external influences. Organisations began rethinking the employee development needs and allocated more time and money to training and developing employees. In the 1970s, organisations started to reduce the budget for human resources for the development of talent, as the economy shifted again and instead of succession planning, organisation opted for the direct replacement approach, as it became a cost-effective alternative to developing multiple leaders. This means that the investment in the development of employees was short-lived.

Modern authorities on leadership have articulated the relationship between effective leadership and sustained organisational productivity (Hanson, 2013). Similarly, succession planning professionals have also contributed to the development of the business case for assembling a strong leadership team as the main pointer in the sustainability of the business. According to Kowo et al., (2021) succession planning has contributed to the argument for cultivating a robust leadership pipeline as a critical factor in business sustainability. This has led to extensive literature connecting employee development with business profitability, prompting organisations to implement strategic and intentional succession plans that require the involvement of numerous individuals within the organisation.

- 4) **Political environment.** The direct replacement approach was commonly used when employees had limited options. During that time, employees' level of loyalty and tenure were high. The political environment influenced the selection of employees for leadership positions.

Nowadays, organisations maintain legal departments and employee relations to adhere to national regulations and facilitate succession planning, ensuring that

their recruitment and selection processes align with pertinent guidelines and that they remain insulated from legal enquiries. The South African Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 mandates that succession planning within the SAPS must conform to employment equity objectives, with the goal of cultivating a diverse and proficient workforce. Many organisations are starting to look at larger talent pools and move away from potentially political hotspots of direct replacements in succession planning as a result of this shift in the political landscape.

- 5) **Changing demographics and workforce.** The future workforce will inevitably change due to global demographic shifts. It is predicted that there will be a shortage of around 10 million workers in the coming decades as a result of 77 million baby boomers reaching retirement age. External influences have contributed to the move away from succession planning and focusing on obtaining replacements directly from the pool of talent in the organisation. The renewed attention on succession planning has maybe been influenced by the workforce availability that is currently limited. Compared to 1982, when intangible assets like people accounted for only 38 percent of an organisation's worth, by the turn of the century, this percentage had increased to 80 percent as organisations started to prioritise hiring and training top talent as a crucial business strategy.

2.5 SUCCESSION PLANNING MODELS

The aim of succession planning models is to provide a step-by-step process that can be followed by organisations. The succession planning model must be linked with the strategic objectives and the vision and mission of the organisation. Linking the succession planning model to the vision and mission will assist the organisation with succession planning policies and identifying the future leaders of the organisation while assisting the organisation to put a system in place for the appointment and selection of future leaders (Arrieta, Barrameda & Sudarsana, 2022).

According to Friday (2019) there are two types of succession theory models, namely the Relay Succession Planning Model (Santorin, 2004) and Scharmer's U Theory Model (Scharmer, 2007).

Scharmer's model is suitable for this study because for succession planning to be effective within the SAPS, there must be a joint objective created by all stakeholders for the succession planning tasks that must be performed in future. The approach addresses brainstorming and generating novel strategies for successful succession planning, highlighting managers' willingness to mentor junior members, which is currently an issue inside the organisation. The model is discussed briefly as follows:

2.5.1 Scharmer's Theory U Model

Scharmer (2007) developed the Theory U Model, which has been applied to succession planning. Scharmer's view is that there must be enough time and steps taken to plan for the successor and the effectiveness of the plan requires management to be on board and for the business owners to be supportive. The focus is on the planning process, as it is the succession planning's foundation. That is why, when the incoming leadership of an organisation is not planned for by the executive, new leadership has challenges in executing its responsibilities successfully. This shows that it is imperative for management to plan in advance for the suitable successor to take over leadership roles as they become vacant.

Scharmer (2007) argues that it is essential for top management to first embrace change to endorse succession planning and they must act to make it happen. The model sees succession planning as a departure point for the future success of the organisation and endorses the concept of a U model process, which consists of five movements that support change. These movements are co-initiating, co-sensing, pre-sensing, co-creating and co-evolving and the movements may assist the organisation to prepare for the future by establishing and executing succession planning processes and strategies and also has a potential to contribute in supporting the organisation to accept change.

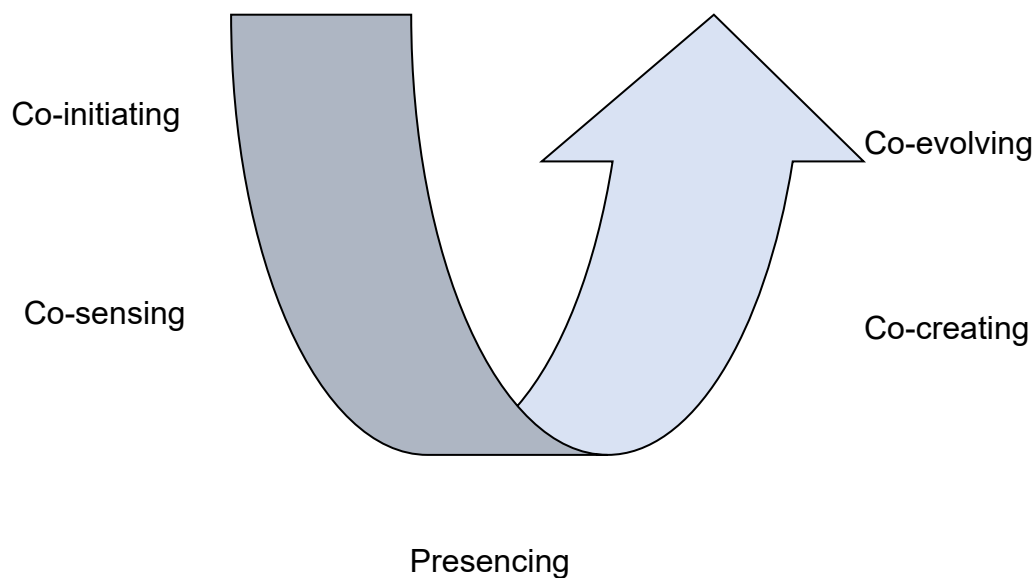


Figure 2.2: Scharmer's Succession Planning Theory U Model

Source: Scharmer (2007)

The stages of Scharmer's Theory U Model can be explained as follows (Scharmer, 2007):

- 1) **Co-initiating** – a joint objective is created with all organisational stakeholders for future tasks, in terms of succession planning within the organisation.
- 2) **Co-sensing** – putting together and brainstorming innovative ideas through collaborative input in terms of which possible models and strategies can be implemented that will be suitable to the structure of the organisation.
- 3) **Presencing** – an envisioned future is seen as a possible reality. Being unable to presence is one of the reasons why the majority of organisations are comforted by a false sense of security that disregards the potential difficulties of having key positions unfilled without qualified successors.
- 4) **Co-creating** – executives or senior managers must have an interest in the succession planning process and be involved in the grooming of suitable candidates for future positions before the retirement of the current incumbent of

the post. At this stage, a collective of change agents or advocates for transformation significantly enhances the organisation's potential and prospects for the future.

- 5) **Co-evolving** – created prototypes are evaluated by organisational leadership, as to which prototypes are practical and beneficial to the organisation, among the many options available and then the organisation will adopt this innovation as its strategy.

2.6 SUCCESSION PLANNING AT SAPS

During the first part of 2020, the National Commissioner of the SAPS requested that the Division HRM, in the absence of succession planning in the SAPS, research and develop a Succession Planning Strategy for the SAPS. A Succession Planning Strategy was developed by the Section Compensation Management and subsequently approved by the National Commissioner of the SAPS on 23 September 2020.

Although the National Commissioner approved the Succession Planning Strategy, the roll-out and implementation by provinces could not be done due to COVID-19 restrictions at the time. The Section Compensation Management was requested to prioritise the implementation and roll out of the strategy. The strategy was introduced to provinces and divisions during a virtual meeting in August 2021, which was chaired by the Divisional Commissioner, HRM.

There seems to be a challenge with the current succession planning strategy within the SAPS. The researcher focused on succession planning and employee performance because the two concepts are interlinked. Currently SAPS only has a succession planning strategy but this does strategy is not linked to employee performance. The researcher is of the view that the integration of succession planning with employee performance is essential for cultivating a robust and high-achieving organisation, guaranteeing that exceptional talent is recognised, nurtured, and equipped to assume pivotal positions.

For an example, the researcher is currently working in the Human Resource Planning office at provincial office and there are sessions of succession planning that were

conducted for the programme of developing future female station commanders. Employees attended all work sessions that were scheduled for them and they received completion certificates. The office then experienced challenges upon completion of the programme, where employees had to be placed at stations to shadow and be mentored by current station commanders, the station commanders perceived this as an additional endeavour, resulting in a lack of mentoring opportunities.

The development of a succession planning strategy aimed to mitigate these challenges and make mentoring a compulsory component.

The SAPS Strategic Plan has six outcomes. Outcome 5 refers to “SAPS being capable and being professional”.

To implement this outcome the department must ensure that there is an effective and adequately resourced policing capability in response to the demand. Furthermore, a succession strategy is one of the tools to assess and evaluate the existing workforce by identifying critical positions and highlighting potential vacancies. The selection of main competencies and necessary skills for organisational continuity will assist the organisation in focusing on the training and development of suitable individuals or candidates who will meet future organisational needs.

The Provincial and Divisional Commissioners are responsible for identifying key positions to be included in the Succession Planning Strategy in their respective environments.

However, when identifying key positions, provincial and divisional Commissioners should keep in mind that the following environments are prioritised as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2020 to 2025:

- Stations
- Specialised and General Detective Services
- Visible Policing
- Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL)
- Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS).

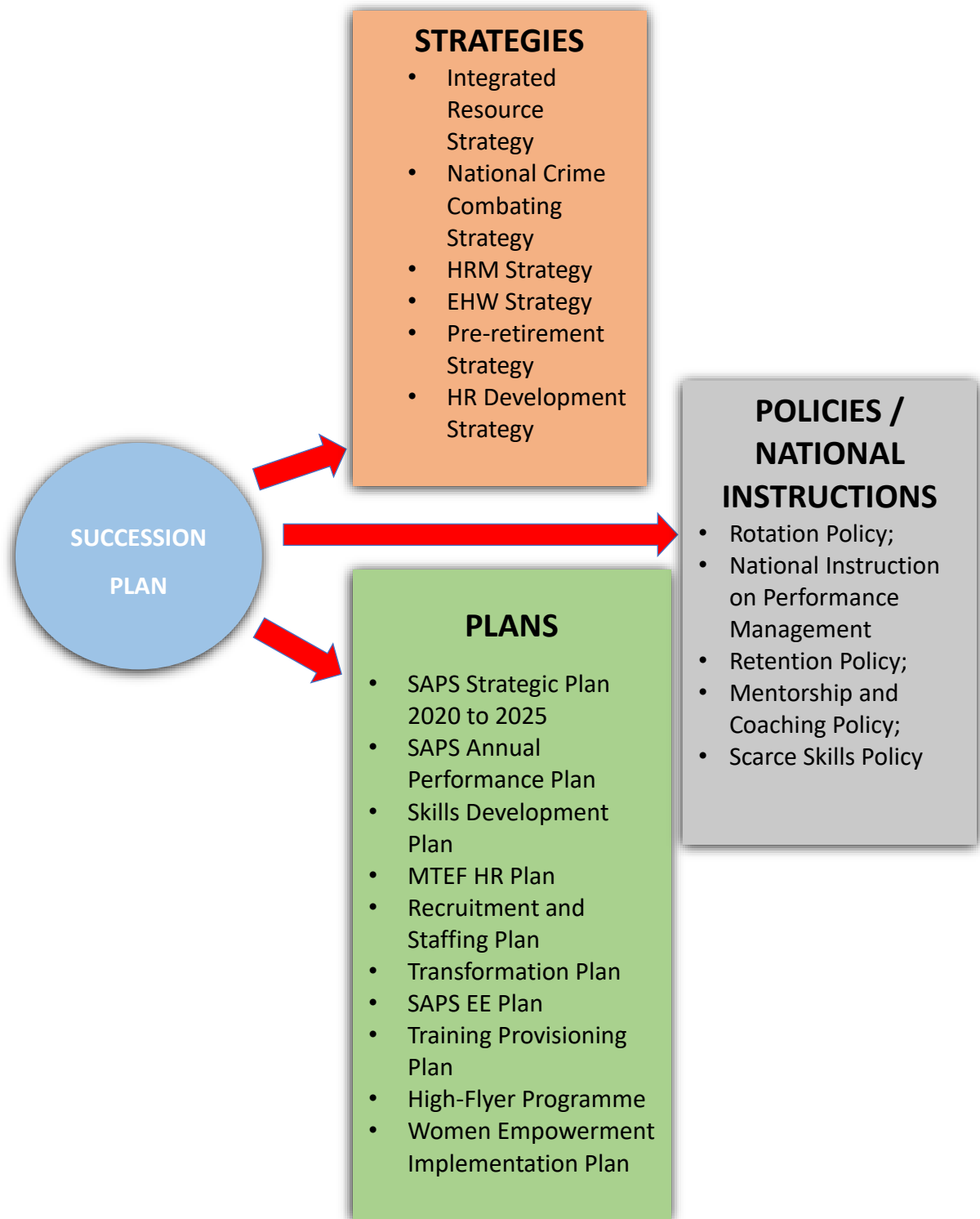


Figure 2.3 SAPS Succession planning strategy

2.7 DEVELOPING A SUCCESSION PLAN

After the identification of succession planning requirements by the organisation—the strategy, approval and the availability of resources—follows the development of the plan phase. Succession plan development is a process that is multi-layered and consists of three broad phases (Qureshi, 2019):

- 1) **Initiation.** Prior to the planning phase, there must be an outline or framework developed to manage the whole process. Activities in the planning phase include risk assessment, contextualisation of key leadership roles for successor identification, documentation of selection criteria for excellent performance, performance evaluation criteria, and a strategy to address skills gaps. The HRM and the board are examples of stakeholders whose roles are authorised and clearly documented. Another part of this phase is the creation of the processes for a successor and career ladder.
- 2) **Planning.** Key positions are identified because the assessments were done in the initiation phase. The screening of identified individuals is done based on their job profiles. Then the developmental plans will be created and subjected to the assessments results of the skills gap identified. In the same way, the succession plans are now put in place for every position identified. Senior management then authorises the developmental plans and confirms the identified successors.
- 3) **Development.** After authorisation, development of the successors will be as per the authorised development plan. Management should consider testing the skills, knowledge and expertise acquired by successors to measure the effectiveness of developmental plans.

2.8 EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

Mehrabani and Mohamad (2021) argue that the development needs of individuals' must be considered for all job categories through efficient succession planning and management efforts. Maintenance of talent by keeping employees engaged and motivated is one of the most important objectives of a succession planning programme. According to Mehrabani and Mohamad (2021), talented employees can be assisted by

an efficient succession plan to move faster and more appropriately. Each and every organisation is unique, has its own culture and specific features, but there are many factors that can assist succession planning systems if put in place to be effective and a success. First, there must be a commitment to succession planning by executives and top management and the implementation of the system must also be supported by the same stakeholders. Employees must also take part and support the planned activities. Additionally, there is a need for alignment between succession planning systems and other human resource activities. A sufficient human resources information system, job engineering and a suitable organisational structure are required to safeguard experiential learning. Training and development, coaching, mentoring and giving feedback are also required, as well as the organisation committing to promoting from within the organisation when the need arises or future posts become vacant. In addition to the above mentioned, organisations should disclose their employees' developmental strategy implementation plans and be held responsible for succession planning implementation, consider the system and plan evaluation in the human resource tasks. Human resource development is the key factor that has no influence on succession planning and it includes development of the organisation, career development and training and development of employees that are potential successors.

Rothwell (2010) explains how succession efforts can be assisted by a few strategies that can support the effectiveness of succession planning initiatives. These elements consist of:

- making the desired result of the effort and the aim clear,
- current performance requirements determined,
- performance measurement,
- needed future performance determined,
- potential assessment,
- finding a way to minimise the gaps,
- following up,
- competence documentation,
- development and maintenance of rewards for people development

- results evaluation, and
- taking the lead.

2.9 BENEFITS AND BARRIERS OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

Like many programmes, succession planning also has benefits and barriers. According to Mehrabani and Mohamad (2021), some of the benefits and barriers of succession planning are as follows:

Managers will work with high morale when they understand that the organisation is dedicated to their development using a succession planning system. A system like this makes it vividly clear that organisations have career paths that are available for its employees. Organisations constantly lose employees. While organisations may have the capacity to replace employees rapidly, the underlying issue is the significant loss of personnel. This trend leads to a depletion of expertise and critical skills that have not yet been adequately transferred within the organisation. It is not always managers that are lost by organisations, but also key employees like delivery, design, research and production operatives. These are employees who possess critical problem-solving knowledge. The employees possess a deep understanding of the processes and manual operations, indicating their essential role within the organisation. Hence, the implementation of the succession planning system can assist the organisation in filling vacant positions (Mehrabani & Mohamad, 2021).

Ensuring business continuity, identifying future leaders and nurturing their potential within the organisation and enhancing staff engagement and morale are just a few benefits of successful succession planning. Through the identification of key persons and positions that will be available in future within the organisation, the implementation of training and development programmes and the establishment of efficient communication strategies, the SAPS can improve their succession planning. According to McConnell and Qi (2022), the type of potential benefit is the possibility that continuing work or plans will not be disrupted if the current incumbent of the post was to retire or leave the organisation, as the successor is in place. For organisations working on large projects, avoiding disruptions may be very beneficial. Adding to the benefits of succession Yudianto, Sekawarna, Susilaningih, Ramoo and Somantri

(2023) indicate that improved self-confidence, a clearer connection to career planning and a clearer grasp of their future path is also one of succession planning benefits.

According to Pita (2015) the process of planning and implementing succession planning is not an easy one and it may be delayed by barriers and complications. Succession planning barriers and problems differ according to the culture of the organisation, organisational strategy and economic conditions. Some organisations do not assign sufficient time for succession planning or understand the value of succession planning, because they are focusing on, caught up with or distracted by issues in their organisation and forgetting to think about the future. Another barrier would be the organisation understanding the significance of succession planning, classifying the process, selecting individuals to be groomed and developed but the person not fully taking over as the successor. It is frequently challenging when incumbent managers, who have extensive tenure inside the business, remain employed while the organisation contemplates their successors. Other leaders may be reluctant to relinquish their positions, preferring to maintain their roles. Some of the leaders and managers focus on their own needs instead of the needs of the organisation. The foundation for discovering the key concerns of resources, notification of decision makers and getting the training needed for strategic plan implementation for employees are provided by the potential obstacles that could prevent putting a comprehensive succession planning strategy into practice (Mehrabani & Mohamad, 2021).

2.10 SUCCESSION PLANNING BEST PRACTICES

Scholars such as Rothwell (2010), Bano et al., (2022) and Fulmer (2002) have identified best practices that apply to succession planning. These practices include integrating succession management plans with organisational strategies, recognising potential candidates and having a support system with senior management and line managers.

2.10.1. Succession planning best practices

Bano et al., (2022) indicate that a multitude of researchers have delineated optimal practices pertinent to the domain of succession planning (Gandossy & Verma, 2006; Rothwell, 2010, 2005). This section will examine the most effective succession practices as delineated by renowned scholars such as Rothwell, which involves road mapping, top leadership involvement, development and implementation of an effective performance management system. The section also includes the need for strategic objective competencies, individual development plans help to narrow development gaps, assessment of employees with competencies, the development of ethical standards, and shared resources for all employees. The section again looks at developing shared competencies that are essential for the future through leadership development initiatives, while Fulmer's (2002) best practices involves human resource contribution, role of technology, talent pool identification, individual developmental plans, fundamental development activities and traditional education programmes.

2.10.2. Best practices according to William Rothwell

Rothwell (2010) identifies the following succession planning practices:

- 1) Roadmap** - succession planning needs more than just a mere identification of internal development of future leaders. Future leadership development is essential and necessitates a strategy. Organisational programmes like succession planning management, can assist the organisation in the identification of leadership development. Organisations central way to maintaining stability is by devoting funds to an internal leadership development programme.
- 2) Top leadership involvement** – The CEO's role in the organisation is a very strategic position. Succession planning process is on the correct path and will be well implemented with the support and the involvement of the organisations' CEO. That is the reason the CEO's role is significant during the succession planning process. The type of talent required for a vacant post need to be known. The reinforced shared accountability, comments mechanism and the general

importance of leadership improvement is as a result of a constructed essential lifestyle with the participation of employees and senior management (Ridwan, 2017).

- 3) **Develop and implement an effective performance management system** - assessment of employees is dependent on organisational needs and organisational culture. Employees' performance is measured by effective assessment tools that are used in the organisation. 360-degree is the evaluation method that is used to evaluate employees from their superiors', peers and subordinates. This kind of evaluation method is good for evaluating top positions leaders. Internally developed candidates may receive effective results from their direct supervisor but might obtain poor results from peers.
- 4) **Strategic objectives competencies will be needed** – the achievement of strategic objective of the organisations for the selection of a successor is done through the identification of competencies.
- 5) **Narrow development gaps by individual development plans** - an organisations success is dependent on main two things. The first one being development of young candidates for future positions, candidates that will be available for appointment. The second being, for continuation purposes, replacements for retiring employees' transition plans must be done timeously. Training and development programmes that are well developed can assist new employees mentoring. Employee development programmes and selection for a successor needs to be known by both the organisation and employees.
- 6) **Assess employees with competencies and develop ethical standards** – an effective succession plan is also affected by strong organisational culture, values of the organisation, beliefs and standards of the organisation for all employees. Organisational values on a daily basis provide regular guidelines for business continuity.
- 7) **Shared resources for all employees** – the development of the whole system for each and every employee with the assistance of formal training and action

learning activities is one of the best practices in succession planning. A perspective is that instead of managers benefiting, it can rather be talented employees who are sharing different resources. Managers and employees can use the development device to develop together by resource sharing.

- 8) **Use leadership development efforts to build shared competencies needed for the future** – what is key to future organisational success is the development of professional competencies (Rothwell, 2010).

2.10.3 Best practices according to Fulmer

Succession planning is connected to the vision and mission of the organisation including the organisational strategy. Organisations which connect between business continuity and succession plans, are organisations that have the best succession planning practices. Business strategy linkage gives succession planning the chance to affect the organisation's long-term goals and strategic objectives (Fulmer, 2002).

- 1) **Contribution of human resources** – Although not during the development phase, but human resource contributes significantly to the process of succession planning. Human resource plays a role or its responsibility comes during the implementation phase. A critical role is played by human resources during the workforce planning process, which involves the identification and analysis of the need to meet the needs of the organisation (Fulmer, 2002).
- 2) **Role of technology** - technology is a very basic element in the succession planning process. The preference is for technology to be an enabler to the process rather than being the focal point. It helps and shortens the process, simplifies and makes it more flexible (Fulmer, 2002). Succession planning practices was dramatically impacted by organisations approach of being in competitive races to enter e-commerce and high-tech space, such as video conferencing or audio teleconferencing, MS Teams and online space, namely the intranet or extranet (Rothwell, 2010). Employees' current potential levels, skills

and experience are assessed by other organisations by making use of the organisation's succession management website.

- 3) **Talent pool identification** – Organisations use best practices like cyclical, on-going, processes to identify and focus on future leaders. Succession management competencies and essential set of leadership competencies are used by organisations. Organisations often face challenges in identifying successors in a timely manner. In such circumstances, they invest considerable effort in cultivating a robust pool of candidates, from which suitable successors can be chosen as the need arises within the organisation. High performing and strong candidates at that time will then become the successor (Fulmer, 2002; Rothwell, 2010).
- 4) **Individual development plans** – individual development plans for each and every employee are seen as significant by organisations who are growth-oriented or have interest in the development of their employees. Developmental activities needed are identified through individual development plans organisations that excel at what they do usually have systems in place that make it easy for employees to participate in professional development opportunities (Fulmer, 2002).
- 5) **Fundamental development activities** – optimal practice collaborators leverage all developmental activities to a significantly greater degree than the sponsoring organisation, but rely on the important growth activities of coaching, training and development (Fulmer, 2002).
- 6) **Traditional education programs** – It is becoming increasingly common for partners to make use of specialised assignments, action learning and web-based development activities in addition to the conventional educational courses that are being utilised (Fulmer, 2002).

2.11 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

Specific succession planning programmes often differ, but they depend on an organisation's vision, mission and goals. Effective succession planning programmes have common elements, which can be organised as a practical ideal type of conceptual framework (Hassan & Siddiqui, 2020; Seniwoliba, 2015). Figure 2.2 depicts a conceptual framework of planning for succession arranging the components of a cycle by outlining their respective functions as follows:

- 1) **Top management support** – This is the initial phase in developing an effective succession planning programme supported and actively led by senior leadership.
- 2) **Dedicated responsibility** – There are aspects of succession planning which requires skilled coordination and those aspects being referred to are focused attention, professional growth, senior management support and needs-driven assessment. The programmes being developed, must be relevant to top talent in the organisation and be in touch with the management of training and development opportunities. A background in human resources must be a pre-requisite for the person and they must also monitor and evaluate the candidate's progress to determine the readiness to move to leadership positions. A database must be maintained to keep track of the training and developments taking place. Senior management must then review the database and when considering promotions.
- 3) **Performance of a needs-driven assessment** – Identify gaps between the demand and supply within the organisation, prioritise those gaps, then choose the most important and urgent gaps to be addressed. The assessment tool is also needed so that main competencies of positions identified using the succession planning programme can be determined.

- 4) **Professional development opportunities** – Employee-training needs are addressed by developing the skills necessary for leadership promotions through formal professional development opportunities within the organisation.
- 5) **Focused individual attention** – Following selection, the candidates begin collaborating with management to establish career development plans that are in line with the expectations, aspirations and goals of each employee. Candidates will be drawn to an effective program that finds talented people and offers career development to improve skills through focused attention. These candidates will be willing participants who see the program as a chance to grow within the company and further their professional objectives.
- 6) **Extension to all levels** – An effective succession planning spreads over all levels within the organisation for a comprehensive evaluation, because training and development opportunities are benefiting all position, at all levels and also benefit all employees.
- 7) **Inclusion in the strategic plan** – For the next generation of leaders to share the organisations' mission, vision and goals that are supported by the current leadership, succession planning must be incorporated in the organisation's strategic plan. Management must review succession plans' written purpose statement to confirm that the programme's measurable goals are in line with the strategic plan of the organisation.

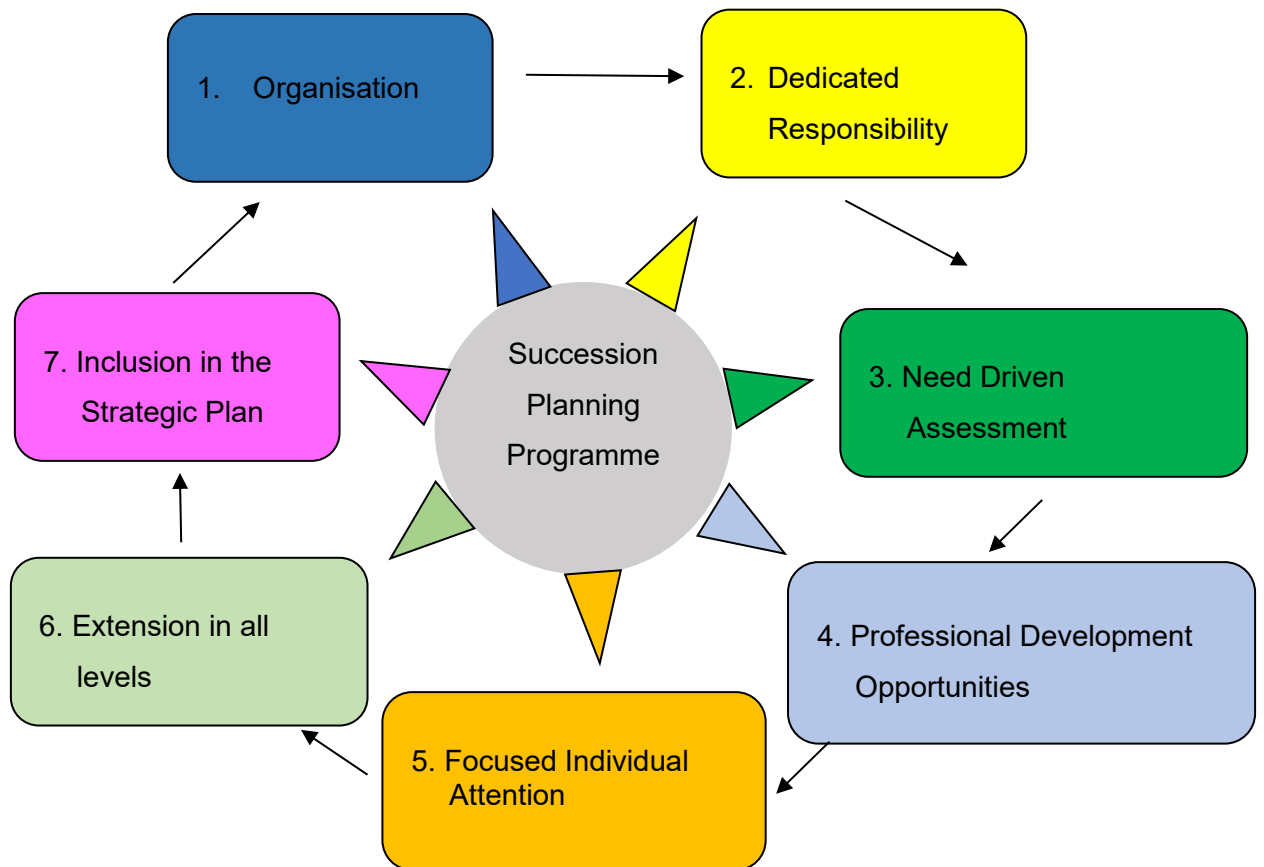


Figure 2.4: Conceptual framework of succession planning

Source: Seniwoliba (2015)

2.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided the context of succession planning, which presented the definition, significance, and purpose of succession planning. Furthermore, the need for succession planning, its importance, internal and external factors that influence it, as well as best practices, benefits, and barriers, were also discussed. The chapter also illustrated a step-by-step guide to succession planning with diagrams, and conceptual models were explained. Lastly, the succession planning best practices of Rothwell and Fulmer were discussed, and the researcher elaborated on the suggested succession planning best practices that organisations can adopt or implement. Chapter 3 will follow with the conceptualisation of employee performance.

CHAPTER 3: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to report on the existing literature on employee performance and to conceptualise its theoretical foundation. This chapter reports on the significance, the need and the factors related to employee performance.

3.2 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Almulaiki (2023) explains that employee's performance is one of the most significant elements for the organisation and leads to business success. For motivation of employees and evaluation of employees' performance efficiently and effectively, managers within organisations are trying or seeking to find ways that are creative within the organisation's performance management system. Improving employees' efficiency and increasing employees' connection with the organisation in which they work is the main objective for motivating employees.

In human resource development, employee performance in an organisation is necessary for both the organisation's success and the employee's own development. Performance improvement of employees does not just benefit the organisation, but employees themselves also benefit. Theoretically, high performance can lead to a higher degree of career advancement for employees (Hermina & Yosepha, 2019).

According to Ali and Mehreen (2019), employee performance within the organisational context refers to the level where an employee contributes towards attaining organisational objectives and also indicate that performance is derived from the word job performance or actual performance which indicates work performance or real accomplishment by an employee

Hermina and Yosepha (2019) define performance (work performance) as the work being carried out by employees, with responsibilities assigned to that specific employee. Performance when executing duties is not independent but is always connected to employees' satisfaction of the job and the level of compensation provided

by the organisation, which is also influenced by the skills, competencies and qualities of the individual employee.

Employee performance is the term of employee productivity and output. It includes specific targets given to employees, the amount of work to be done, the time at which the work must be completed and whether the work was performed in a cost-effective manner and that is so that the employee assists the organisation to achieve its objectives. Enhancing organisational performance, is the main or primary aim of each and every organisation and organisational performance can be improved through efficient employee performance (Harun & Ling, 2020).

Employee performance is interconnected with organisational performance and organisational success. The focus on encouraging employee engagement is of utmost importance to uplift the performance of the employee. A wide range of gratifying practices that are enhancing synergetic teamwork towards organisational goals is displayed by engaged employees. These synergetic efforts lead to improved employee performance (Harun & Ling, 2020). Riyanto, Endri and Herlisha (2021) also support Harun and Ling's (2020) notion that an employee shows a higher performance when they find meaning in work, organisational culture and policies. Employee involvement is also caused by associating employees with job roles, which encompasses being persistent at work, strongly involved in work and developing in work activities.

By comparing coworkers' job satisfaction within the organisation, the employees' performance can be evaluated or determined (Buil, Martínez & Matute, 2019). There is a two-way definition on employee performance: its in-role and extra-role performance. Attaining or reaching set targets is in-role performance, whereas assisting others, going beyond and above expectations are extra-role behaviours of employees (Top, Abdullah & Akar, 2020).

The results of work within an organisation are associated with employee performance. Performance outcome encompasses quality, quantity, efficiency and timeliness, but the development of employees is very important for evaluating performance within the organisation. Employee's performance appraisal reflects the value of performance evaluation (Kuswati, 2020). The ability of the organisation's leader to mentor, develop,

inspire and lead, employees to carry out their responsibilities is a major factor in determining the attainment of employee performance in that organisation. Motivation must come natural to management. The success of the implementation of the above motivation depends on the ability of the organisation to implement the principles of motivation. Though great performance can enhance organisational performance and lead to job satisfaction and motivation can strengthen commitment which will result in improved performance (Kuswati, 2020).

Riyanto et al. (2021) argue that for ensuring organisational sustainability, it is imperative for management within the organisation to view performance assessment as significant. Employee performance comprises controlled behaviour, while setting boundaries for the behaviour that is inappropriate. In the interim, performance measures whether employees have actively carried out responsibilities that were set for them by the employer, as outlined in the formal contract they signed. Employee performance has two categories, namely performance of duties and behavioural performance. According to Çalışkan and Köroğlu (2022), performance of duties is the amount and calibre of effort needed to complete the fundamental tasks listed in employees' job descriptions. It is a scenario that includes the primary elements of the task, is executed by the employee and is managed by the supervisor. Performance of duties behaviours include organising and planning, setting priorities, taking responsibility and working efficiently and being result-oriented. In this regard, performance of duties plays a significant role in attaining organisational and individual goals. On the other hand, behavioural performance is defined as the positive actions of employees that are not listed in their job descriptions but are encouraged by the organisation. It focuses on the actions of the employee that help the organisation function effectively in addition to task performance. Behavioural performance considers work-related elements, immediate behaviour and extra roles as reflected in the workplace. Behaviour can be either positive or negative. Having performance appraisals in place for employees can enhance motivation and inspire employees to participate in innovative programmes and will simplify reaching desired objectives (Riyanto et al., 2021).

Feedback is supplied using a performance appraisal so that the organisation can develop relevant programmes for performance improvement where necessary and assist in the development of employee skills and maximisation of their potential (Endri, 2020).

The necessity for talented managers who are prepared to see opportunities is recognised by the organisation's strategy to obtain the best performance. Thus, as a result of the organisations' focus to implement human resource practices and methods that create the possibility of achieving good performance by enhancing employees' quality, including both formal and informal training, payment, collaboration and career development (Riyanto et al., 2021).

In addition to enabling a positive working environment and co-worker relationships, (Riyanto et al., 2021) indicate that managers also execute their duties to support employee training and development and employee performance. Employee performance management is a wider concept which involves a variety of actions where organisations evaluate employees and build their capabilities, enhance performance and reward those employees. Employee performance can be influenced by the transfer of intrinsic knowledge into work tasks. Staff may feel anxious about their work, performance and relationships with colleagues. Nevertheless, performance management is a key procedure for accomplishing organisational objectives. Expectations and encouragement of the behaviour to achieve significant objectives for programme development or additional actions of personnel can be communicated by the organisation through performance management (Riyanto et al., 2021).

Van Helden and Reichard (2016) conducted case studies at public institutions and found that a properly managed succession plans can influence employee performance. Friday (2019) investigated the relationship between succession planning and staff training at ten commercial banks and found that training improves succession practices, which in turn improves employee performance. While Gordon and Overbey (2018) theoretically state that succession planning brings worker satisfaction and greater performance, as well as helps with job security confirmation, career path developments and employee performance enhancement, Ali et al., (2019) detail that

succession planning is knowingly related to employee performance. According to Johnson et al. (2018), succession planning increases worker satisfaction and well-being.

3.2.1 The need for employee performance

According to Hermina and Yosepha (2019) employee performance is needed for organisational success as it influences productivity, efficiency and profitability by matching individual efforts with business goals. High employee performance leads to improved goal achievement, higher-quality products and services, enhanced employee engagement and retention and a more favourable workplace culture. Poor performance, on the other hand, can slow growth, raise costs and have a negative impact on morale and customer satisfaction. Employee performance is significant in every organisation for achieving individual and organisational success. Improving the performance of these workers benefits the organisation as well as the employees themselves because, in theory, good performance can lead to better employee career growth (Hermina & Yosepha, 2019).

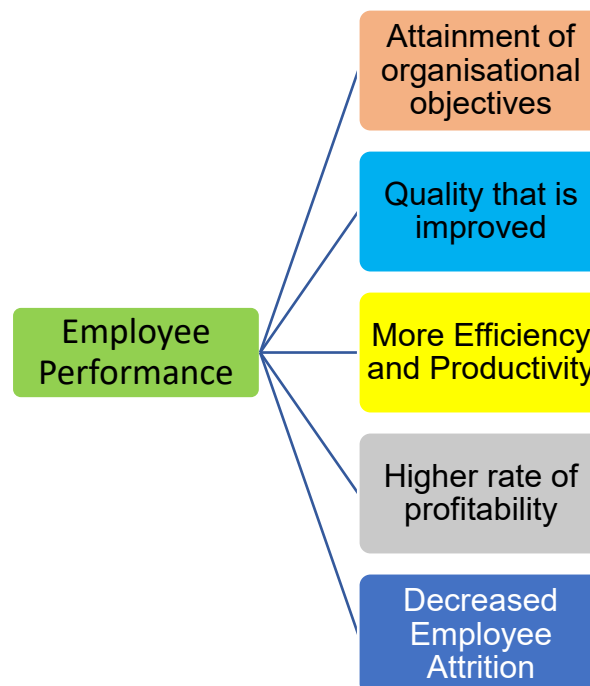


Figure 3.1 The importance or why organisations need well performing employees

Source: Authors' s compilation

Attainment of organisational objectives – facilitates the alignment of employee performance with the vision and goals of the firm, ensuring that all employees are working towards the same strategic objectives.

More efficiency and productivity – employees that perform exceptionally well are able to complete more work in a shorter amount of time, which results in increased productivity and improved resource utilisation.

Improved quality – errors can be reduced and the quality of products and services can be improved via the implementation of appropriate training and performance monitoring.

Higher rate of profitability – as a direct result of higher productivity, decreased errors and improved work quality, a healthier bottom line and increased revenue are achieved.

Improved service to the customers – employees that are engaged in their duties and are motivated typically provide superior experiences for customers, which in turn contributes to an improvement in the reputation of the organisation.

Decreased employee attrition – when employees excel in their roles, the organisation acknowledges their contributions, fostering a sense of value and support. This recognition not only highlights avenues for personal and professional growth but also increases the likelihood of their continued commitment to the organisation.

3.3 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE DIMENSIONS

Pradhan and Jena (2017) see performance as a multifaceted term that can differentiate the process aspect of performance which is the behavioural engagements from the anticipated results. Behavioural engagement talks to the action taken by employees to complete their tasks, whereas anticipated results symbolise the outcome of an individual's job behaviour. Although it seems that behavioural engagement and expected outcomes are related to each other in the workplace, at the present moment there is no evidence of the overlap between the two constructs, as factors like motivation and cognitive abilities influence the anticipated results rather than the

behavioural aspect. Then view task performance as a form of performance which consists of clear job behaviours which include the essential job responsibilities allocated to an employee as part of the employee's job description (Pradhan & Jena, 2017).

Aima, Adam and Ali (2017) describe the dimensions of employee performance as follows:

- 1) Work quantity – work load or target of duties assigned to the employee, for example, conduct three (3) meetings quarterly.
- 2) Work quality – standard of work that a team or employees delivered in a consistent manner based on the inherent requirements that are influenced and determined by the difficulty or easiness of a job to be performed, for example, accuracy, completion of work, communication, time management and attendance.
- 3) Knowledge of the job – refers to an employee's comprehension of the knowledge, methods, abilities and processes necessary to perform a task effectively. It covers both context (such as how a particular task fits with team dynamics, industry standards and organisational goals) and technical abilities (such as how to operate a piece of equipment).
- 4) Creativeness – developing an idea and a course of action to have a solution to address issues when the need arises.
- 5) Cooperation – being ready to collaborate with coworkers and be a team player.
- 6) Dependability – understanding the importance of completing the tasks assigned to oneself.
- 7) Initiative – being passionate or ambitious and to take more responsibility and more tasks.
- 8) Personal qualities – is one of the dimensions and the individual qualities and they are: personality, leadership and personal integrity.

Pattnaik and Pattnaik (2021) explain the employee performance dimension as a multidimensionality of performance, which has been well-established in research, with the two most commonly cited performance dimensions being task performance (TP) and contextual performance (CP). Function-specific tasks that are formally acknowledged and rewarded by the company and that an employee holding that

function is required to perform are included in TP. Conversely, CP encompasses voluntary activities that may or may not be paid by the company; an employee would not be punished for failing to perform these non-role-specific tasks.

Pradhan and Jena (2017) added that performance of tasks is mainly accelerated through the knowledge of tasks to be performed (knowledge necessary or values to ensure job performance and possessing and the ability to handle multiple tasks assigned), task skill (application of practical knowledge to complete tasks without much oversight) and task habits (a distinctive ability to reply to allocated jobs that either facilitate or obstruct the performance) and that requires additional cognitive ability. Thus, the main focus of task performance is the capability to perform one's duties and prior experience.

Performing tasks at work is a contractual agreement between the manager and the subordinate to attain the task assigned to the subordinate in a working environment. The task performances assigned are segregated into two distinct categories: the execution of technical-administrative tasks and performance leadership tasks. The execution of technical-administrative tasks necessitates the application of one's technical expertise to plan, organise and manage daily tasks; business judgment is a necessary component of job performance. Establishing strategic objectives, upholding the necessary performance standards and inspiring and guiding employees to finish tasks via praise, constructive criticism and encouragement are types of identifying leadership task performance (Pradhan & Jena, 2017).

3.4 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MODELS

Employee performance models are controlled or organised frameworks or processes in the organisation that are used to observe, evaluate and improve the performance of employees. There are various employee models that are available in the literature, namely the Triarchy Model of Employee Performance (Pradhan & Jena, 2017) and the Heuristic Model of Employee Performance (Koopmans et al., 2011). Employee performance models provide an organisation with a process that is formal for managing, tracking and rewarding performance while also ensuring that both individual goals and organisational objectives are aligned (Peoplebox, 2024). The model which

is relevant to this study is the Heuristic Model of Employee Performance. This model is relevant to this study because the Heuristic Model of Employee Performance considers the overall performance of the employee and can be used as a reference to fully understand the concept of individual work performance (Koopmans et al., 2011). The Heuristic Model of Employee Performance is discussed in the next section.

3.4.1 Heuristic Model of Employee Performance

According to Koopmans et al. (2011) the Heuristic Model of Employee Performance suggests that individual work performance is multidimensional and cascades into four main groups, namely (see Figure 3.2):

- Task/duties performance
- Discretionary extra-role behaviour
- Performance adaptability
- Counterproductive work behaviours

These groups allow us to obtain a complete view of the employees' overall contribution to the organisation (Koopmans et al., 2011).

3.4.1.1 Task performance: Mastering the core

The execution of a person's main duties is referred to as task performance. The ability of an employee to deliver efficient and reliable high-quality results is consistently the backbone of this dimension. Task performance, which is the foundation of our work, is essential for determining how directly an employee contributes to the bottom line of the organisation (Koopmans et al., 2011).

3.4.1.2 Contextual performance: Beyond the job description

However, contextual performance is more about the behaviours that keep social wheels of the organisation turning than it is about job-specific tasks. It is about the willingness to provide a helping hand to a colleague, taking initiative and being a contributor to a positive working environment. While these activities might not neatly fit into a job description, they are essential for developing collaboration and nurturing a supportive culture within the organisation (Koopmans et al., 2011).

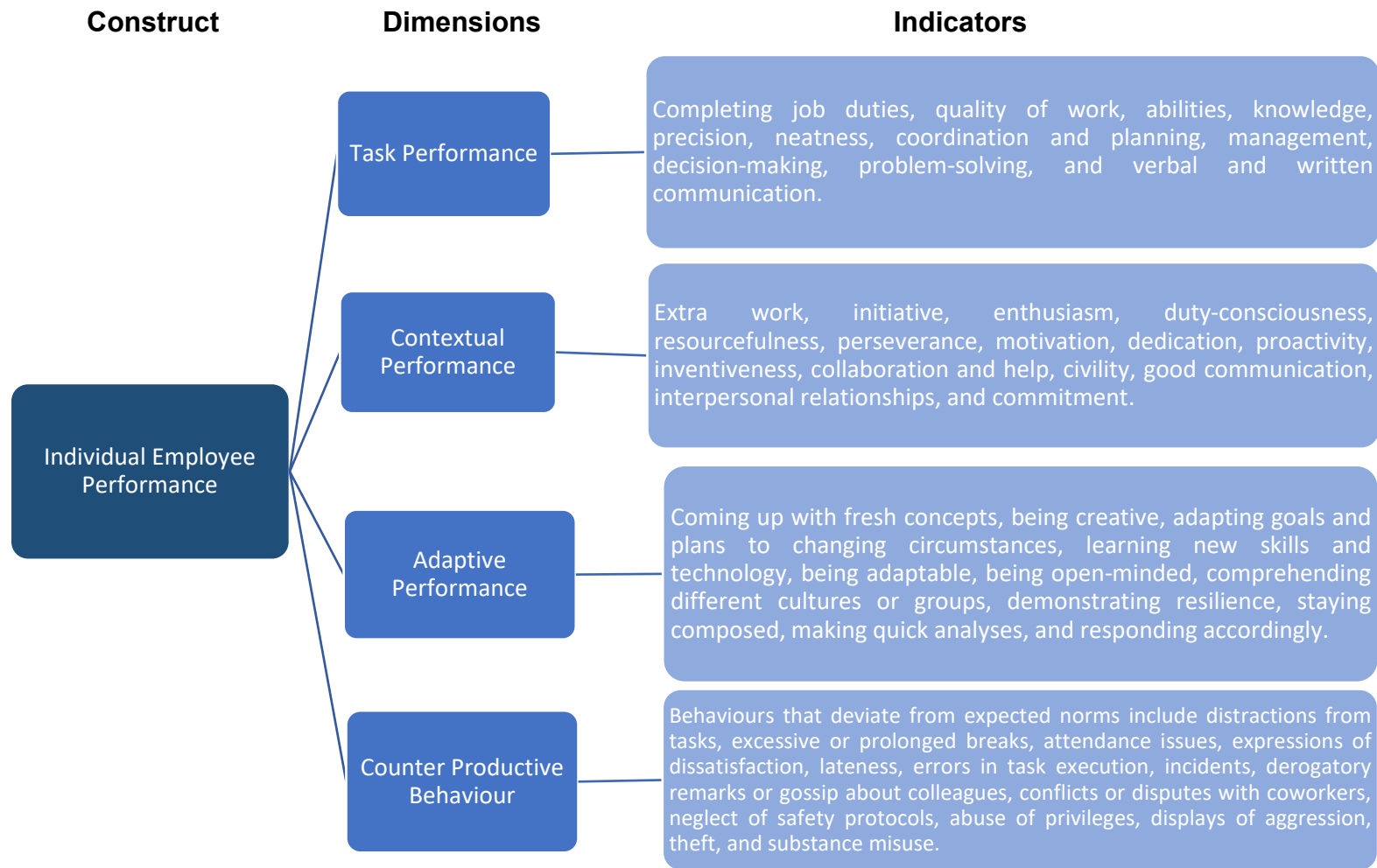


Figure 3.2 Heuristic Model of Employee Performance

Source: Koopmans et al. (2011).

3.4.1.3 Adaptive performance: Staying ahead of the curve

Adaptability is a very critical quality nowadays, especially because of the fast-paced world. An employee's ability to change their tactics to adapt to a changing working environment encompasses adaptive performance. Whether the employee is adjusting to the new restructured team, adapting to changing markets, learning new technology, those who can quickly pivot remain precious resources of the organisation (Koopmans et al., 2011).

3.4.1.4 Counterproductive work behaviours: Minimising the pitfalls

Counterproductive behaviours do not exempt anyone or any organisation; they can even occur in the best team or its members. Understanding and managing these behaviours is of vital importance for maintaining a positive working environment and ensuring consistency (Koopmans et al., 2011).

According to Koopmans et al. (2011) the dimensions of the Heuristic Model of Employee Performance are related to one another. Even though they are highly positively related, task performance and contextual performance are different. In different ways, both types of behaviour independently improve overall employee performance. The dynamic nature of modern work makes it difficult to distinguish between task performance and contextual performance. Contextual behaviours are increasingly becoming a requirement as task behaviours are implicit or explicit (Koopmans et al., 2011).

Certain behaviours can be viewed as task behaviours in some jobs and contextual behaviours in others. The relationship between task performance and counterproductive work behaviour are not entirely clear and have been found to be either moderately or highly negative. How task performance is defined and measured can be the reason for inconclusive results. Task performance is more related to counterproductive work behaviour, when it is defined as what a person generally 'will do', than what an individual can do to the fullest extent possible. This is due to the fact that work performance is usually evaluated over a longer time period, which increases the chances of counterproductive work behaviours (Koopmans et al., 2011).

Additionally, counterproductive work behaviours are more likely to occur since ordinary task performance is often less closely evaluated as maximal task performance. Naturally, one would assume that contextual and counterproductive work behaviour would be negatively related. Someone who frequently acts in a way that benefits the organisation is unlikely to act in a way that would harm the organisation and vice versa (Koopmans et al., 2011).

3.4.2 Employee performance, succession planning and conceptual framework

Abdullahi et al., (2021) indicate that practicing succession planning fosters and transforms employee attitudes regarding performance achievement, drawing on the principles of SET and SDT. As a result, SDT is associated with the performance of employees. It places emphasis on the importance of individuals satisfying the three emotional needs and goals that are necessary for them to succeed at their jobs: connection, freedom and competence (Ntoumanis et al, 2021; Ryan et al. 2021). The idea of self-determination is presented in a way that draws a critical distinction between behaviours that are performed by an individual, such as those that are driven by intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. The significant humanistic notion that people are inherently and enthusiastically inclined to work towards self-organisation and personal development is the basis of SDT. When people interact with other people, they gain a better understanding of themselves and when they try to venture outside their comfort zone and engage in social activities in the world beyond their immediate surroundings, they are more likely to develop as individuals without being influenced by external factors. It has been argued that the responsibility for succession planning ought to be a collaborative effort between the employee and the organisation. This approach should align with the organisation's future direction, ultimately leading to the development of future leaders for the business (Ntoumanis et al, 2021).

Zhang et al., 2019) identify SET as a foundational theory that has been widely employed to elucidate the relationship between leadership and employee behaviour. The premise is that when organisations invest more in the well-being and development of their employees, it is anticipated that employees will respond favourably to such expressions of support (Ali et al., 2019). Moreover, the investment made by the

organisation is anticipated to close the gap in improving succession opportunities and fostering organisational relationships, which will, in turn, impact organisational objectives uniformly. The perception of SET workers regarding their development as a form of social exchange is shaped by succession planning, which in turn impacts the behaviour of their colleagues, particularly in relation to employee performance (Ali et al., 2019). The succession planning model underscores the necessity for managerial support, a point that is articulated by the SET within the conceptual framework. According to Marcus, Zulkefli, Rakibe, Khairuddin, Sani, and Syahlan (2021), employee performance concerns their efficiency and productivity in achieving organisational objectives. Therefore, improving employees' performance is important as it can contribute to the success of an organisation. The learning organisation plays an important role in enhancing employee performance by providing training and development (Putri, Sarmigi & Desiana, 2024). The employee performance model is intricately connected to the SDT, as it comprehensively encompasses all facets of employee performance.

3.5 EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT SAPS

Some employees tend to stay in one job for a long period because of the hierarchical character of the SAPS, which frequently results in a lack of vertical career mobility. The repeated tasks and procedures that these employees perform on a daily basis cause them to lose interest in the SAPS and tend not to perform their tasks to the best of their ability (South African Police Service, 2019). The importance of employee rotation within certain environments is to ensure that those employees are provided a fair chance to gain exposure, knowledge and gain experience within the environment in which they will be pursuing their careers. This is especially applicable to employees who are inexperienced and show the possibility of advancement within or progression within the organisation.

The current employee performance evaluation at SAPS, especially at lower levels or station level, seems like a tick box exercise, where employees and managers or supervisors do not really discuss the employee performance and developmental plans during the assessments. Assessments are just conducted so that members are

assessed and the rating is captured on the system for compliance purposes (South African Police Service, 2018). When employees feel bored in a certain environment, they just apply for a transfer and keep on moving from one environment to another.

Due to frequent employee turnover, it is difficult to create a career development plan for them and groom them for succession planning. For example, after attending investigation training, an employee may move from the investigation environment to the visible policing environment, losing the competent, skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced investigator. The organisation must advertise for interested employees, even if untrained, then train new investigators, while the new investigators' performance is below par in serving complainants and the community (South African Police Service, 2019).

To mitigate negative employee performance within the organisation, employee rotation was introduced. Employee rotation involves the reassignment of individuals within an organisation to various positions, aimed at improving performance, efficiency and skill development (South African Police Service, 2019).

Rotation is a temporary arrangement where someone is placed in a job for a specific time frame to learn the key performance areas and activities of a particular job or post. Thus, a person will always return to his/her post after acquiring the applicable competencies. Rotation is never a permanent arrangement and must not be confused with or linked to the Transfer Policy (SSSBC Agreement 5 of 1999) or National Instruction on Resettlement Cost (National Instruction 9 of 2016). If rotation will result in physical relocation of an employee, the transfer or detached duty policies is applied.

3.6 EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Organisational existence is ensured by employees; therefore, the performance effectiveness of employees is critical. Three elements that were identified as a measurement of effectiveness within the organisation are leadership, skills for communicating and management skills and this is a result of successful leadership and these aspects have an effect on employee performance (Shafie, Baghersalimi & Barghi 2013).

According to Kalogiannidis (2020), producing high-quality customer services and increased productivity are both dependent on employees performing at a high level for the organisation. In the long run, the benefits of improved employee performance are likely to lead to a sustainable competitive advantage.

3.7 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

According to Chen (2024), factors influencing employees' personal performance can be categorised as internal and external. Internal factors include employees' emotional commitment and personal ability, while external factors include basic compensation and welfare, organisational management and commitment. Employee performance is influenced by both the internal and external environment.

3.7.1 Internal factor

The internal factor that will be discussed in the section below will be individual employee competence.

3.7.1.1 Individual competence

To perform their professional responsibilities inside an organisation, people need to possess and master a set of abilities, behaviours and knowledge known as competence (Kanya, Fathoni, & Ramdani, 2021). The advantages that a person can bring to a task or activity are referred to as individual competency. Since individual employees will receive a certain amount of money or other benefits in exchange for demonstrating and improving their personal ability at work, personal ability primarily refers to the working ability of employees, which is the value or benefits created by employees for their companies or teams during the course of work. As a result, employees' work ability may have an impact on their work (Chen, 2024).

Employee performance is also influenced by other elements, such as personal psychology. Individual employee performance is reported to be strongly correlated with both emotional intelligence and self-efficacy (Kanya et al., 2021).

3.7.2 External factor

The internal factors that will be discussed in the section below will be the basic compensation and benefits, organisational management, organisational commitment and work design.

3.7.2.1 Basic compensation and benefits

Basic compensation and benefits are an essential component of organisational management and they have an impact on employees' job productivity and attitude in addition to the organisation's financial gains. The fundamental remuneration and associated benefits serve as the principal motivators for most employees, profoundly influencing their enthusiasm as a recognition of their diligent efforts. Employees may consequently improve their work performance and quality to attain greater compensation, as they operate within an economic framework (Chen, 2024).

3.7.2.2 Organisational management

An essential component of environmental influences is organisational leadership. The performance of employees is shaped by various facets of organisational leadership, such as compensation frameworks, performance assessments, working hours and overall work ethos, among others. The traditional approach to salary design, which relies on fixed salaries tied to results, has become outdated. The significance of competitive incentive mechanisms has grown, reflecting the evolving landscape of human resource inputs necessary to support business objectives, which are slowly but surely being replaced by science and technology in performance management, which is continuously upgrading the new economic structure (Chen, 2024).

3.7.2.3 Organisational commitment

There are two values associated with organisational commitment as seen through the lens of employee performance. According to employees, organisational commitment is a way for the organisation to reward employees for their individual work accomplishments, either on a spiritual level (evaluation and recognition of high-ranking officials) or on a material level (bonuses or material rewards), based on organisational

values. In this way, employees can feel a sense of accomplishment aligned with the organisation's values. On the organisational level, through the implementation of an incentive structure for employees, the organisation is able to more effectively activate the emotional dependency and loyalty held by employees towards the organisation, which will reward the organisation with harder work (Chen, 2024).

3.7.2.4 Work design

In evaluating employee performance, the fundamental factors that impact the quality of work include the degree of sensitivity to work effort, the inherent complexity of the tasks, the nature of the work and the associated appeal. within the traditional framework of employee performance management. To cultivate a profound sense of internal motivation and achieve exceptional work performance, effective work design is essential. It ensures that employees discover meaning and value in their tasks, enables them to recognise the significance of their contributions and responsibilities and facilitates a timely understanding of the outcomes of their efforts (Chen, 2024).

3.8 BENEFITS AND BARRIERS TO EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

According to Tamunomiebi and Oyibo (2020), the culture of long working hours was identified as one of the barriers to employee performance. Other barriers include, but are not limited to, increased work demands and lack of support from line managers which leads to decreased employee morale.

Due to leadership significance, it can be argued that when leadership is ineffective, it is one of the primary barriers to employee performance. These kinds of problems, along with some studies on the subject, prompted researchers to look at the connection between leadership styles and how they affect employee performance. Perhaps by doing this, these barriers can be effectively removed, leading to better employee performance, which will in turn have an effect on organisational performance. Leadership style affects employee performance by how managers motivate their employees, engage with employees, how employees trust, employee growth and being a leader who understands the culture of the organisation (Shafie et al., 2013).

Performance distribution, the persistent lack of reliable methods for collecting performance judgements, the ineffectiveness of performance feedback for workers and the ineffectiveness of performance evaluations for employers were the four challenges identified by Murphy (2020) as impediments to effective employee performance.

According to Shafie et al. (2013), employee performance can be beneficial as follows:

- 1) **Increased productivity:** good performing employees will produce more output, will work efficiently, leading to an overall good performance for the organisation.
- 2) **Enhanced quality:** well-performing employees are inclined to pay close attention to detail and maintain quality standards, which will result in better product and service quality.
- 3) **Goal achievement:** high employee performance directly contributes to organisations being able to achieve its goals and targets, leading to the success of the organisation.
- 4) **Enhanced employee engagement:** consistent feedback, one-on-one sessions and recognition for good performance can significantly improve employee engagement and motivation.
- 5) **Reduced employee turnover:** employees who feel valued by their organisation and have growth opportunities within the same organisation are less likely to leave the company, leading to lower turnover costs.
- 6) **Innovation and creativity:** contribution of innovative ideas and solutions to problems, developing a creative working environment is more likely to come from high-performing employees.
- 7) **Customer satisfaction:** Customer satisfaction is affected by excellent employee performance, as high performing employees provide better service and support.
- 8) **Career development:** employees are given an opportunity to identify areas for improvement and develop their skills, leading to career advancement opportunities using the performance management system.
- 9) **Talent recognition:** recognising and rewarding high performers helps identify and retain top talent within the organisation.
- 10) **Positive work environment:** a positive and supportive working environment can be created by a team of high performing employees within an organisation.

3.9 BEST PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Kalogiannidis (2020) states that employee performance is linked to each employee's accomplishment in accordance with different regulations, policies, or expectations of the company, such as rewarding performance, celebrating achievements, and employee motivation. Practices, abilities, values and capabilities of leadership within the organisation are mirrored or reflected by the commitment of employees and how they perform their duties in the organisation. Employees who are more knowledgeable and skilled are more likely to demonstrate and exhibit a high level of expertise and dedication while they are on the job. This, in turn, leads to higher levels of employee performance as compared to employees who have less experience and skills. Effective communication is one of the most important components that affects employee performance and productivity levels in an organisation, but there are other aspects that affect employee performance besides skills, competence, expertise, or professionalism (Kalogiannidis, 2020).

According to EHL (2023), the best methods for increasing employee performance are as follows:

- 1) Scrutinise performance metrics: performance metrics provide managers with a detailed view of employee performance. By examining employee performance data over time, managers conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) to give managers ideas of what they should be focusing on and which areas need to be improved by employees.
- 2) Communicate with purpose: For organisations to be successful, they need to communicate effectively. Managers must communicate expectations and directives to personnel very clearly and briefly. Make sure that instructions are easily understandable and objectives and goals that need to be attained are clearly described. For employees to stay on track and receive constructive criticism where necessary, managers must also ensure that regular feedback is provided to employees.

- 3) Expectation management is essential: Realistic goals and expectations must be set for employees by managers. Employees will be de-motivated to perform to the best of their abilities when they are overwhelmed and struggling to keep up with unrealistic demands. Otherwise, when employee's expectations are realistic, they will feel equipped to challenge themselves and perform their duties the best way they know how.
- 4) Prioritise accountability: For effective performance, vital accountability is needed. Managers should establish systems that simplify the tracking of progress for employees. This could involve giving employees access to performance data, allocating time frames for projects, or conducting performance appraisals. Employees are more likely to stay on track and achieve better results when systems promoting accountability are implemented.
- 5) Develop collaboration opportunities: For a team to be successful, it is crucial for them to work together. By providing projects and tasks that bring out the best in each employee, managers can encourage their employees to work together. By doing so, everyone can learn from one another while reinforcing their strengths. Employees can also learn to trust one another to finish tasks allocated to them. Creativity and innovation are encouraged by opportunities created for collaborations, which can be beneficial to any organisation.
- 6) Importance of team training and development: giving employees the resources and tools they require in order for them to be successful is crucial for managers. Tools and resources can entail offering coaching, training sessions, or access to the newest technology and research for employees within the organisation. Long-term benefits will be the result of investing in your team's growth, or making sure employees have the abilities and knowledge required to perform their job or tasks better.
- 7) Morale building investment: When employees are happy, they become productive. Creating a favourable working environment that is beneficial to good morale should be what managers are striving for. Managers can accomplish this by recognising and rewarding exceptional work, celebrating team

accomplishments and organising team-building exercises. Investing in morale-boosting activities can help inspire employees to put in more effort and accomplish their objectives.

- 8) **Reward good performance:** An excellent way to demonstrate to employees how much their contribution is valued is by rewarding excellent performance. A system of rewards should be in place to motivate employees to produce high quality excellent work and for them to work toward the organisation's ongoing success. This could involve, among other things, offering promotions, bonuses, additional time off / rest days, or organisational incentives, such as rewarding outstanding performance. Any incentive that is given to employees must make them feel that their excellent contribution is recognised and appreciated by the organisation.

Each organisation aims for high performance from their employees and putting the appropriate policies in place is very important, as that enables the organisation to achieve these goals. By following the best practices outlined above, managers can encourage and empower their employees to perform to the best of their abilities and contribute to organisational success.

3.10 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

According to Koopmans et al. (2011) a conceptual framework structure for employee performance typically illustrates the relationship between independent variables (such as training, leadership, and motivation) and dependent variables (including task, adaptive, and contextual performance) to advance organisational objectives. Essential components encompass strategic planning, evaluation, constructive feedback, and incentives, frequently integrating social-cognitive frameworks.

The figure below illustrates the relationship independent variables (such as training, leadership, and motivation) and dependent variables (including task, adaptive, and contextual performance).

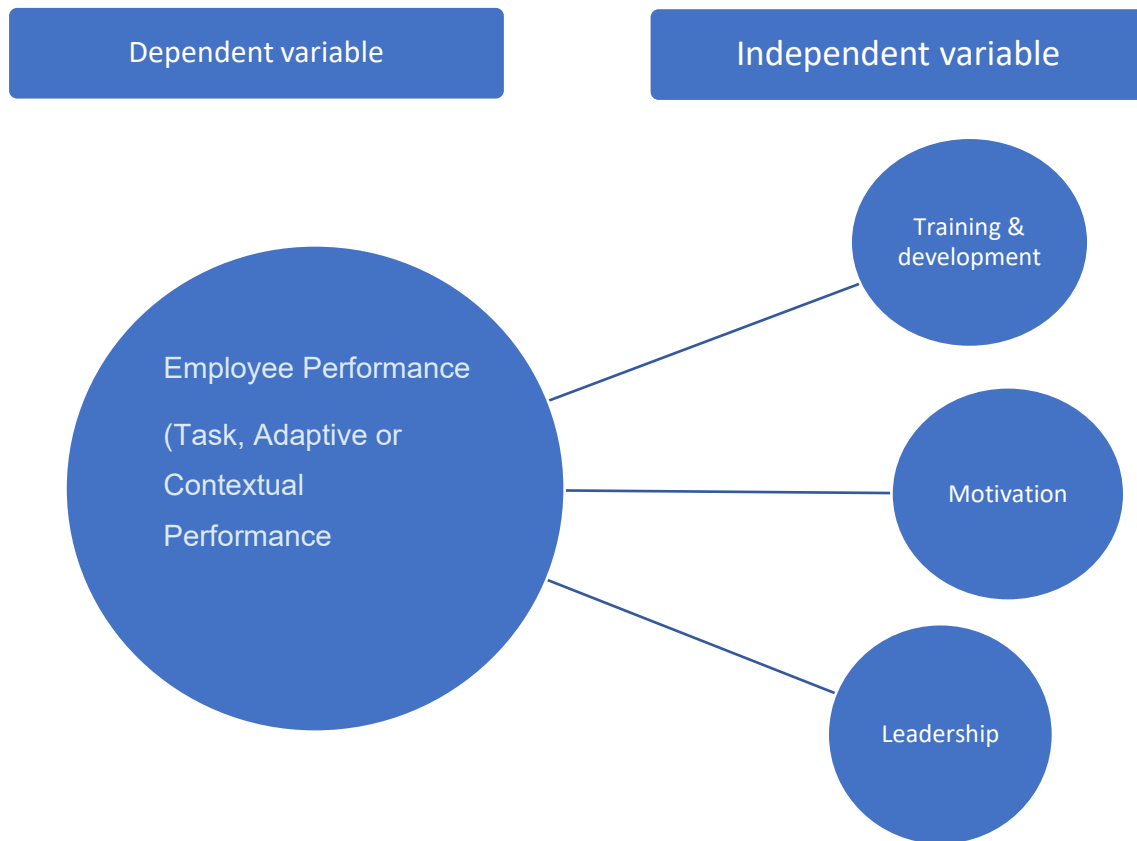


Figure 3.3: Conceptual framework for employee performance

Source: Author's compilation

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided the context of employee performance, which includes the definition, significance and purpose of employee performance. Furthermore, the need for employee performance, the importance thereof, internal and external factors which influence employee performance, best practices, benefits and barriers of employee performance were also discussed. The chapter also illustrated a step-by-step guide to employee performance.

Next, Chapter 4 provides the research methodology.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was used to explore how SAPS employees perceive succession planning, employee performance and to develop a succession planning and employee performance strategy for SAPS. The chapter will discuss the research design and the research approach of this study.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM, ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Research paradigms are general frameworks or worldviews guiding how research should be conducted. It is supported by philosophical assumptions such as ontology and epistemology and informs methodological selection. Research paradigms include, among others, interpretivist and constructivist paradigms. Critical to social science research are the constructivist and interpretivist orientations. All of these paradigms stress the importance of developing one's own theories and social conceptions in order to comprehend social phenomena and human behaviour (Pulla & Carter, 2018). The interpretivism paradigm was used in this research as it has been acknowledged as a valued tool for researchers, because it enables researchers to confront issues with society interaction and investigate the facts about the discipline under study (Adil, Nagu, Rustam, Wahyuni & Winarsih, 2022).

4.2.1 Interpretivism research paradigm

According to Pervin and Mokhtar (2022) researchers utilise a diverse array of paradigms, contingent upon their perspectives and the objectives of their enquiry. Grasping the research paradigm is crucial when conducting a study, as it guides the investigation of the study's questions and objectives. The researcher embraced the interpretivism paradigm, acknowledging that this approach posits reality as a subjective and socially constructed phenomenon. This concept posits that individuals' comprehension of reality is influenced by their unique viewpoints and experiences and due to its ability to identify specific life events, this framework is relevant to the research at hand. To reconstruct the intended meaning of the text, researchers may employ data

analysis to explore, elucidate, articulate and endeavour to empathise with the perspectives of the participants (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022; William, 2024).

Pervin and Mokhtar (2022) define interpretivism as a term that refers to paradigms that emphasise the significance of people's personalities and participation in social and cultural life from a philosophical standpoint. This is accomplished by selecting a paradigmatic camp that involves several underlying assumptions about reality. This study allows researchers to assert that individuals' understanding of reality is socially built, hence necessitating the acceptance of reality as true. This is due to the fact that interpretivism studies typically concentrate on meaning and may employ a variety of methodologies to reflect various aspects of the research topic (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022).

This paradigm attempts to gather information through narrative interviews, which are largely subjective. The individuals have gathered experiences, viewpoints and convictions in positive contexts and certain cultural and societal value systems support them. As a result, facts are examined by researchers as sets of facts that are constructed specifically through the study of individuals but also shaped by conflicting societal ideals (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022).

According to Alharahsheh and Pius (2020), for the interpretivism paradigm, the behavioural factors based on experiences of participants are allowed for researchers to enable them to study various factors, such as behavioural aspects and this would assist in explaining reality given the assumptions and beliefs of the interpretivist researcher that would assist in describing reality.

Furthermore, by considering the participants and their accompanying conditions, the interpretivism paradigm allows researchers to view the research setting and circumstances as unique. This contrasts with the positivist paradigm, which encourages researchers to focus solely on the specific topic and discourages broader generalisations (Husam & Pius, 2020).

Interpretivism concentrates on comprehending people's subjective meanings and interpretations. It may entail gathering rich data about participants' viewpoints through

qualitative methods like focus groups, interviews and ethnographic research. The data collection method places a high value on thoroughly examining people's subjective experiences and perceptions. To learn more about human vision and the distinction of meaning-making, researchers can employ participant observation, open-ended interviews and narrative analysis (Husam & Pius, 2020).

Interpretivism places a strong emphasis on interpreting personal interpretations and viewpoints. Grounded theory, narrative analysis and thematic analysis are among the methods that researchers might employ to find themes and patterns in the experiences and perceptions of participants (William 2024).

There are numerous common qualities of an interpretivism paradigm, which were adopted by this research, that can be summarised as follows (Husam & Pius, 2020):

- 1) The researcher's interest, involvement and commitment were the primary factors that drove the researcher to identify and develop the questions and problems of the study.
- 2) Make personal experiences feasible to be explored in detail through interviews and discussions.
- 3) The interpretivism paradigm delved into a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions among SAPS employees regarding succession planning and employee performance, by employing qualitative designs and methodologies to explore individual experiences.
- 4) The interpretivism paradigm enables the use of experience as a crucial component and contribution in advancing scientific research.
- 5) Instead of considering a general measurement as given in the positivist paradigm, researchers would be permitted to explore individual experiences in depth.
- 6) Integration of subjects and objects with the experience under study, leading to the findings.

Drawing from interpretivism, this study incorporates exploratory research, which consequently gives it the opportunity to explore and understand how employees view succession planning and employee performance. The perception of respondents on

succession planning and employee performance within the organisation constitutes the nature of reality in this study. In addition to openly sharing their experiences and comprehension of the two concepts, participants must provide honest answers to questions pertaining to the research at hand, to ensure that the data collected were credible and reliable (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

Research paradigms include several components that can be categorised as ontology, epistemology and methodology (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

4.2.2 Ontology

Ontology can be defined as the nature of reality. Thus, the main focus of ontology is the phenomenon's nature of existence. It is seeking a reality or solution to a research inquiry by indicating the kind of knowledge that exists (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). According to Shrestha and Sharma (2024) ontology seeks to understand the assumptions that the researchers' have about reality. It looks at the nature of being, and beliefs of participants about reality, at the processes that influence our perceptions, helps the researcher to know if reality is objective or subjective and helps researchers to know what exists. Ontology claims that there is an objective reality independent of the mind, or that reality is formed in the mind. Ontology of relativist has numerous realities, whereas ontology of non-singular reality has different interpretation.

According to Shrestha and Sharma (2024) ontology contain the following fundamental features:

Categories of existence: classifies entities into various categories according to their nature, for example, objects, events, processes, properties.

Essence and existence: investigation of the connection between the fundamentals of an object and its existence.

Universals and particulars: studies the relation between general concepts and particular organisations that instantiate those concepts.

Reality and appearance: deals with the contrast between the way things are in fact (reality) and the way they seem (appearance).

Substance and attribute: is the difference between things that exist independently (substances) and things that exist by virtue of other things (attributes).

The researcher applied this by developing the proposed succession planning and employee strategy to assist the SAPS to come up with the solution.

4.2.3 Epistemology

Alharahsheh and Pius (2020) define epistemology as the researcher's method of acknowledging reality. As a result, epistemology addresses the researcher's goal of uncovering information to reach the truth. Also, epistemology is seen as something that exists internally to the researcher since it deals with their perceptions of the world and their ability to distinguish between true and false information. When it comes to questions of ontology and epistemology, many paradigms offer diverse takes on the matter. Consequently, different paradigms may reflect different research strategies in their respective methodologies and approaches, which in turn reflect different views on reality and knowledge. The interpretivism epistemological assumption is that knowledge is subjective and co-created by the researcher and the participant. Hence, the researcher in this study pursued to create an in-depth understanding of the research questions and actively listened to the perspectives of the participants who share their lived experiences, beliefs and interpretation of the phenomenon (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

The researcher was assisted by epistemology to explore the knowledge and understanding of SAPS employees on succession planning and employee performance. In order to face succession planning, epistemology takes into account the way a company recognizes, validates and transmits the competence of its leaders. It changes succession from a simple administrative process into a strategic knowledge-management process that ensures continuity and protects an organization's intellectual property.

The researcher followed the interpretivism paradigm, as the research was aimed at the exploration of the perception of SAPS employees and interpretivism assisted the researcher to capture rich data on participants' perspectives by means of semi-structured interviews and by prioritising in-depth exploration of individuals' subjective experiences within the organisation.

4.3 EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

Instead of attempting to provide final solutions to pressing issues, an exploratory research design seeks to elucidate research questions. A researcher commences with a broad idea and utilises the research as an instrument to find problems that could be the subject of future studies. In contrast to the objective of providing definitive answers to research questions, the objective of exploratory research is to investigate the study problem at a variety of dimensions. Exploratory research is the preliminary study that forms the basis of more conclusive research (Olawale, Chinagozi & Joe, 2023).

Van Zyl (2014) identifies different types of research designs, which differ on three dimensions, namely the nature of questions asked, answering methods utilised for research questions and the level of accuracy the design intends to achieve when answering the research questions. There are two types of research designs, namely non-experimental (descriptive, historical, correlation and qualitative) and experimental (true experimental and quasi-experimental) research designs. Van Zyl (2014) indicates that qualitative research represents a domain within the social or behavioural sciences that seeks to explore the intricacies of behaviour and the social, cultural and political contexts in which such behaviour manifests. This is achieved through a variety of investigative techniques, including interviews, surveys and other methods that prioritise personal engagement. According to Van Zyl (2014), qualitative designs are exploratory and are usually applicable when the researcher is unsure of what to anticipate.

Olawale et al., (2023) indicate that qualitative research stands out from other types of study because of its unique ability to accurately portray the wide range of social phenomena that involve human experiences and points of view. Qualitative research is crucial in a society that is getting increasingly complex because it enables

researchers to gain insights into complex social phenomena, develop human-centred understandings, relate to problems that occur in the real world and quickly adjust to changes in society. Therefore, qualitative research is inextricably tied to issues that are prevalent in the real world because its primary objective is to explore phenomena in their natural contexts. Insights gathered from qualitative research are particularly significant for social scientists, lawmakers and a wide variety of other stakeholders who are engaged in the investigation and resolution of societal challenges. It is guaranteed that the knowledge produced by qualitative research is immediately applicable and responsive to the needs and complexities of the actual world (Lim, 2023). This type of research is based on the experiences and perspectives of individuals and communities, serves as an essential approach for uncovering the current state of affairs, seeking fresh insights, posing enquiries, and evaluating phenomena from a novel perspective, and beneficial for researchers aiming to explore or delve into the comprehension of an issue, particularly when there is uncertainty regarding the exact characteristics of the problem (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016). Consequently, the applicability of qualitative research to this study, is to comprehend and explore the perceptions of employees of the SAPS about succession planning and employee performance.

According to Aithal and Aithal (2024), exploratory research is a more adaptable open-ended research approach, and is often used when the study challenge is poorly defined or when little is known about the topic. Exploratory research's primary objectives are to investigate a phenomenon, spot trends and produce themes for additional investigation. This method is particularly helpful in the early phases of research when the objective is to comprehend the background of a topic and obtain basic ideas. Exploratory research can include a variety of methodologies, such as qualitative techniques, literature reviews and pilot studies.

In cases where no prior knowledge or theory is available, this layout is particularly helpful. The overarching goal is to discover the essence of a phenomenon, get fresh ideas, and assess phenomena from a different angle by generating preliminary findings and the relationship between the concepts. To kick off further in-depth studies, researchers use it as a reference (Makri & Neely, 2021; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

In order to delve deeply into the perceptions of succession planning and employee performance among SAPS employees, this research study chose the qualitative research approach. The present study appeared to be well-suited to this research approach because its goals included investigating employees' perceptions and formulating an integrated strategy for succession planning and employee performance.

4.3.1 Qualitative approach

In their book titled, *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods*, Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2016) describe a qualitative approach as research that generates descriptive data from people's own written or spoken words and observable behaviour and also as an approach grounded in the practical, real-world context. Furthermore Phillips, Tichavakunda and Sedaghat (2024) see qualitative methodology as where the researcher examines subjects within their authentic contexts, striving to comprehend occurrences through the perspective of the interpretation individuals attribute to them. Moreover, the ultimate outcome encompasses the perspectives of participants, the introspection of the researcher, a detailed portrayal, and analysis of the issue along with its implications for the existing body of literature or a plea for transformation. The objective is to articulate the intricacies of the lived experience, event, or phenomenon through a comprehensive exploration of qualitative data collection methods. Qualitative methodology is frequently conducted via participant interviews, focus groups, or the observation of individuals within their natural settings. The objective is to gather the insights, viewpoints, and interpretations of the subjects under examination and to effectively represent and convey these discoveries.

The section below discusses the concept of qualitative research (Taylor et al., 2016):

- Qualitative researchers are interested in the meaning that people attach to the things in their lives. It is crucial to qualitative researchers to comprehend individuals from their own frames of reference.
- To fully understand the perspectives of the people they examine, qualitative researchers identify and empathise with them. Qualitative researchers do not

take anything for granted and see events as if they were happening for the first time.

- Research that is qualitative is inductive. Qualitative researchers employ patterns in the data to develop concepts, insights and understandings, rather than merely collecting data to evaluate predetermined models and theories. To the extent that a theory is founded on and drawn from the data, it can be considered grounded. Making sure the theory matches the evidence rather than the other way around is the aim of qualitative research.
- Instead of treating people, places, or groups as variables, qualitative methodology sees them as a totality. The qualitative researcher looks at people based on their past experiences and present situation. When we limit people's words and behaviours to statistical formulae, we run the risk of missing the human component of social interactions. Qualitative research enables us to grasp the difficulties people experience daily and to obtain to know them personally.
- The way people think and behave in their daily lives is of interest to qualitative researchers. According to one definition, naturalistic qualitative research uses methods that mimic how individuals behave in everyday situations, usually engaging with informants in an unnoticeable and natural way.
- Every viewpoint is valuable to the qualitative researcher. The idea that the opinions of those in positions of power are more legitimate than of those who are not is rejected by the qualitative researcher. Examining things from several perspectives is the aim of qualitative research.
- Qualitative researchers place a strong emphasis on the significance of their findings. They are able to remain close to the empirical world by using qualitative methodologies. They are made to make sure that the data closely matches what individuals say and do in real life. The qualitative researcher gains direct knowledge of social life without the use of operational definitions or rating scales by watching people in their daily lives, hearing them discuss their thoughts and examining the documents they create. Quantitative researchers place more

emphasis on research reliability and reproducibility, whereas qualitative researchers focus more on the significance of their findings.

- Every group and environment have something to teach the qualitative researcher. No facets of social life are too commonplace or unimportant to research. Everyone and everything are both the same and different at the same time. They are comparable in that generic social processes can occur in any environment or among any population.
- Due to the lack of standardisation and refinement in methodologies compared to other research approaches, qualitative research is a craft.

Table 4.1 illustrates how quantitative and qualitative research methodologies differ. Table 4.1 assisted the researcher in selecting the most appropriate research method for conducting the study. The study conducted was exploratory, the sample size was small and it had probing questions and the qualitative methodology was more suitable than the quantitative method. This study aimed at exploring in depth how SAPS employees perceive succession planning and employee performance. Qualitative research seemed appropriate for the current study since it aimed at exploring the perception of employees and developing a succession planning and employee performance strategy. Because of the objectives of the research, the qualitative seems to tick a lot more boxes than quantitative (Taylor et al., 2016).

Table 4.1 Differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods

Qualitative research	Quantitative research
Unconstrained and logical observation.	Thorough and under control observation.
Considering that the research is inherently subjective, the researcher's interests and attitude may have an effect on the findings.	Impartial in character, with no possibility of researcher influence.
Causes, interpretations and implications are highlighted.	Quantitative scoring, statistical and mathematical analysis and measurement are the main points of emphasis and accuracy in event description.
Conducted on a small scale, which entails a tiny population.	Carried out on a huge scale, meaning with a large population.
Emphasises language, conduct and the environment.	Emphasises meaning, numbers and a controlled environment.
Meaning- and process-oriented.	Focused on results and products.
Adaptable and comprehensive in nature.	Rigid and particular in character.
The method is inductive and focused on exploration.	The technique is deductive and the attention is focused on verification.
In order to create a logical and consistent image, analysis involves organising data and drawing themes or generalisations from the evidence.	Statistics, tables, charts and analysis are used to explain how the variables relate to the hypotheses.
Case studies, phenomenological research, ethnographic research, heuristic research, historical research, philosophical research and so on are all examples.	Examples include surveys, co-relational studies, experimental and quasi-experimental research and more.

Source: Kandel (2020)

A qualitative methodology was used for this study. The researcher's decision to select an exploratory qualitative research design was informed by the following:

- The research questions sought to explore how SAPS employees perceive

succession planning and employee performance within the organisation.

- The study aims to determine the importance of succession planning and employee performance in the organisation.
- The researcher needs to conduct interviews to obtain the employees' perception of succession planning and employee performance within SAPS.
- Questions need to develop a succession planning and employee performance strategy that will determine whether succession planning is well implemented in SAPS and analyse the current succession planning documents.

Taylor et al, (2016) show that in the broadest sense, the term qualitative methodology refers to a study that generates descriptive data, people's unique written or spoken words and observable behaviour. A qualitative methodology is more than just a collection of techniques for collecting data; it is an approach to the world of facts. Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger (2020) are of the view that qualitative methodology includes data that is in word form and not numbers.

Azungah (2018) asserts that qualitative methodology provides an opportunity to delve into and uncover the values, attitudes and expectations that shape HRM practices. Participants are able to express themselves on matters that are important to them since the method is less rigid, more open-ended and flexible. Participants in a research study are given the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings regarding the topic under study, free from the researcher's influence or bias. To make sense of how social actors interact with social reality, the researcher makes use of social actors' conceptions and meanings. New phenomena will most certainly be uncovered by qualitative methodologies due to their adaptability and transparency (Manzoor, Wei, Bányai, Nurunnabi & Subhan, 2019).

4.4 POPULATION, SAMPLING AND PARTICIPANTS

4.4.1 Population

Population refers to a group of people whom the study is focusing on, whereas sampling refers to the individuals who are selected by the researcher to participate in the study. Entities such as individuals, groups, organisations and similar constructs are encompassed within this framework. This group serves as the central subject of the research and stands to gain significantly from the study's findings. The concept of populations enables the reader to concentrate on specific locales within a predetermined framework, aids in delineating the parameters of the study and offers insights into the surrounding environment and context (Hossan, Dato'Mansor & Jaharuddin, 2023). The targeted population for this study was SAPS employees in the Free State province.

4.4.2 Sampling

Sampling is divided into two categories, which are probability and nonprobability sampling. These two types of sampling are further divided into sub-categories (Bhardwaj, 2019). Figure 4.1 illustrates the two categories of sampling and their sub-categories.

According to Bhardwaj (2019), in the context of research, a sample is a selection of individuals, objects, or products from a massive population that are chosen for evaluation. The process of selecting a sample for a specific form of research from either an individual or a significant population is known as sampling. Samples possess an assortment of advantages and disadvantages. Occasionally, we may contemplate the necessity of sampling. The reason for the use of sampling in research studies is that it is simply too expensive and time-consuming to survey the entire population. Therefore, sampling is crucial in research when the population is large.

Purposive sampling was used when conducting the study. In purposive sampling, the researcher chooses participants according to his/her own judgement and participants are chosen with the study purpose in mind (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). This study did not require participation from all employees within the SAPS; it specifically sought

employees from the rank of Sergeant, despite the entry-level position being Constable. Additionally, the focus was on individuals employed under the Police Act (police officials) rather than the Public Service Act (civilians), targeting those aged between 25 and 60, as the mandatory retirement age for police officials is 60 years. The study intentionally focused on selecting only the Police officials holding the rank of Sergeant to the rank of a Major General and for this reason, purposive sampling was more suitable than other types of sampling. The researcher used purposive sampling because of the population size and the researcher was aware that the target group met the criteria.

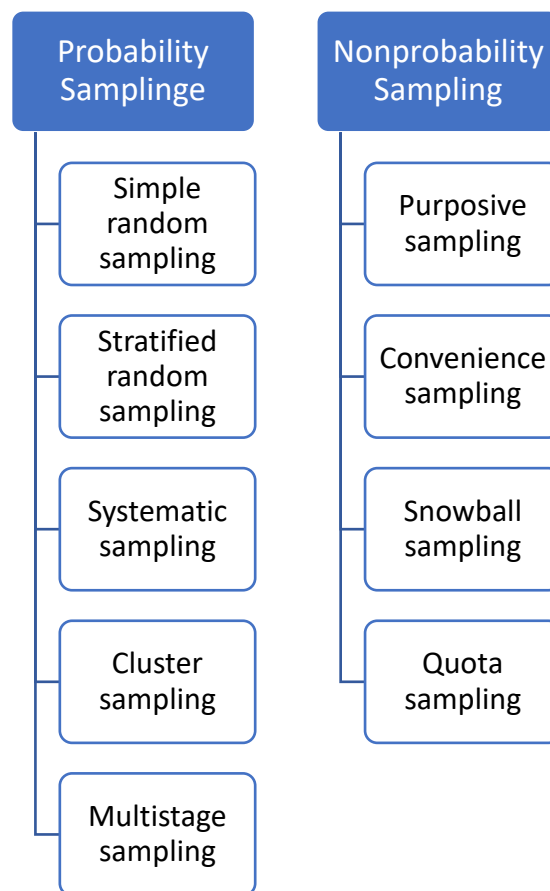


Figure 4.1: Types of sampling

Source: Bhardwaj (2019)

Secondly, the sampling method is optimal when there is a requirement to refine the samples selected by alternative sampling techniques, as it relies on the researcher's

expertise and familiarity with the subject matter. Thirdly, with the sampling selection carried out by a knowledgeable person, there will be no obstacles, making the sample selection process straightforward. Fourthly, the chosen samples are expected to serve as effective respondents/ participants for the study, likely yielding real-time results, as the participants possess relevant knowledge and a strong understanding of the subject matter. Lastly, it is because the researcher in this study can achieve the intended outcomes by engaging in direct communication with the target audience (Bhardwaj, 2019).

The advantage of purposive sampling is that participants who are chosen are participants of the highest interest to the researcher and the disadvantages are the difficulty in determining the populations to which these samples generalise and purposive sampling necessitates a precise identification of individuals that are suitable for the purpose of the study (Zickar & Keith, 2023).

According to Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe and Young (2018), determining how many people will be interviewed before actual data collection is one of the challenges faced by qualitative researchers. As a result, there have been ongoing discussions on how to determine the sample size in qualitative research. In an effort to address the topic, "How many interviews is enough for one qualitative research study?" this evaluation was conducted. When preparing a qualitative study proposal, researchers are always deceived by this question. Despite the existence of diverse experiences, the question of "how many" remains a contentious one among qualitative researchers. Thus, saturation is the gold standard when it comes to evaluating the suitability of purposive samples for qualitative research. However, neither the process nor the necessary sample sizes for determining saturation have been made explicit. Saturation with various forms of qualitative data had not been experimentally evaluated until recently. As part of their groundbreaking grounded theory approach to qualitative research, Glaser and Strauss (1998) established the idea of saturation, which they called "theoretical saturation". As stated by Bryant and Charmaz (2007, p.611), theoretical saturation is "the point at which gathering more data about a theoretical construct reveals no new properties, nor yields any further theoretical insights about the emerging grounded theory". As a result, it is the stage of data collecting where all

significant problems or revelations have been fully explored (Bekele & Ago, 2022; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022).

The participants who formed part of this study were all employees of the SAPS from various units/components/departments within the SAPS Free State province. The total number of SAPS employees in the Free State is N = 9 997. Within SAPS, there are different departments and, in those departments, there are employees appointed at different job levels. Seventeen (n=17) police officers working at various police stations in the Free State province voluntarily participated in semi-structured interviews to explore their perception about succession planning and employee performance. The researcher stopped with interviews when the data were saturated.

The inclusion criteria were employees appointed in terms of the SAPS Act 68 of 1995, meaning uniform wearing employees not civilians. The criteria used were employees from the rank of Sergeant to Major General, which is the second last highest rank within the provinces, as the highest rank in the provinces is Lieutenant General, who would be the Provincial Commissioner. The entry rank in the SAPS is the Constable, but the researcher selected participants from the rank of Sergeant, which is the rank that follows the Constable rank. The researcher selected this rank because of the fact that most of the police officials who are Sergeants have more than a minimum of 12 years' experience in the organisation; therefore, they are experienced and familiar with the processes and policies within the organisation.

The researcher approached a senior manager to act as a gatekeeper. The researcher explained to the manager the role of the gatekeeper, being helping the researcher to gain access to potential participants, facilitating the communication between the researcher and participants and disseminating the invitation of participating in the study to potential participants.

4.4.3 Demographic information: research participants

Seventeen (17) police officers working at various police stations in the Free State province voluntarily participated in semi-structured interviews. The individual participants who were interviewed fall into two groups, namely officers (Brigadier,

Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel) and non-commissioned officers (Sergeants and Warrant Officers). The individual participants' rank and years in the police services are depicted in Table 4.2. To maintain anonymity, the participants were given unique numbers (i.e., P1 through P17) with p referring to participant and no names were utilised.

Table 4.2 presents the participants' biographical information.

Participant No	Rank	Age	Years of Service
P1	Brigadier	55	32
P2	Brigadier	55	35
P3	Brigadier	57	38
P4	Colonel	60	38
P5	Colonel	55	32
P6	Lieutenant Colonel	50	31
P7	Sergeant	39	13
P8	Sergeant	42	21
P9	Sergeant	45	20
P10	Sergeant	44	17
P11	Sergeant	38	13
P12	Sergeant	40	16
P13	Warrant Officer	53	26
P14	Warrant Officer	49	24
P15	Warrant Officer	42	15
P16	Warrant Officer	48	30
P17	Warrant Officer	50	29

The participants were between 38 and 60 years old and had between 13 and 38 years of working experience in the SAPS.

Next follows a description of the semi-structured interviews as a data collection method that was used in this study.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION (SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS)

Given the study's need to collect data from a small, geographically converged sample of people, the interview option seemed more practical. Semi-structured interviews were used. Face-to-face interactions between the researcher and the participants with the goal of comprehending their particular viewpoints on their lives, experiences, or circumstances are referred to as semi-structured interviews. Understanding other people's life experiences and the significance they assign to them is the foundation of semi-structured interviews (Taylor et al., 2016).

Data for this study were collected by means of semi-structured interviews. The researcher selected interviews as interviews are a common data collection tool in qualitative research. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that interviews are useful in acquiring a more comprehensive understanding of the thoughts, motivations, interests and feelings of participants, as well as the way and the reasons behind the particular occurrences. Consequently, when it comes to selecting the most suitable research instrument, interviews emerged as a valuable instrument that warrants careful consideration (Jain, 2021).

The interviews were semi-structured because they exhibited the following characteristics (Jain, 2021):

- The interviewer conducted the formal interview and engaged with the respondent,
- The interviewer developed questions and used them as a guide for the interview,
- The list of open-ended questions and topics that define the nature of the study or topic under investigation that need to be covered during the interview was provided for both the interviewer and the respondent and the interview questions were provided to the respondents beforehand.
- During the interview, there were follow-up questions and prompts,
- The interviewer followed the interview guide but was able to follow relevant lines of enquiry in the conversation that may stray from the guide when appropriate.

On this basis, the researcher opted for semi-structured interviews. Thirty (30) invitations were sent to participants, but 17 interviews were conducted. Other interviews did not materialise due to cancellations, unavailability and work commitments. The interviews took place at a venue and time that was convenient for the participants. Interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. The interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder and a cell phone was used as a backup recorder.

The researcher reached data saturation during data collection, as the information received during the interviews was repetitive. Data saturation is finding duplication in data without a defined theoretical framework. Saturation is described as the repetition of information and it is different from formal data analysis procedures. It is also defined as the point at which the researcher has exhausted all possible uses of the data gathered. Data saturation is achieved when the researcher has completely examined the phenomenon of the study and there is no new or important information being found and the researcher can cease data collection. Data saturation is significant not only for selecting sample size but also for enhancing the credibility and validity of qualitative research. Failure to achieve data saturation might result in partial or superficial findings that lead to misleading or incorrect conclusions. Saturation is also a measure of methodological rigour in qualitative research, signalling that the research process has been thorough, rigorous and representative of a variety of participants' perspectives (Ahmed, 2025; Bouncken, Czakon & Schmitt, 2026; Naeem, Ozuem, Howell & Ranfagni, 2024). The researcher reached data saturation after conducting 17 semi-structured interviews. As a result of the above information, the researcher implemented the data saturation rule after conducting 17 semi-structured interviews.

TurboScribe software was used to transcribe the interview data verbatim. The researcher did not subscribe or purchase the software, so TurboScribe could not transcribe the recording for more than 30 minutes; the remaining time had to be transcribed by the researcher.

In this study, face-to-face interviews were conducted, providing an opportunity to explain the purpose of the research directly to participants. Furthermore, it was feasible

to include clarifying remarks and pose insightful queries or probe for more information. Since the study questions were broad in scope and focused on how SAPS employees see succession planning and employee performance, an expert's assistance was not necessary in creating the list of questions (Jain, 2021).

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The semi-structured interview recordings were transcribed and the data were analysed. Eight themes were constructed from the data: understanding of succession planning, understanding employee performance, leadership development, impact of a lack of succession planning on employee performance, employee perception on how positions are filled, succession planning challenges, employee performance challenges and leadership capabilities.

Thematic data analysis provides a tool for analysing large volumes of data systematically and the process of inductive reasoning is used. Qualitative data from a variety of sources, including researcher observations and interview transcripts, can be analysed using thematic analysis. Every piece of information was translated into textual form whenever feasible. The act of comprehending and evaluating the underlying themes in the gathered data is known as thematic analysis. It involves a step-by-step coding process (Jain, 2021). A summary of the three-step thematic analysis process is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

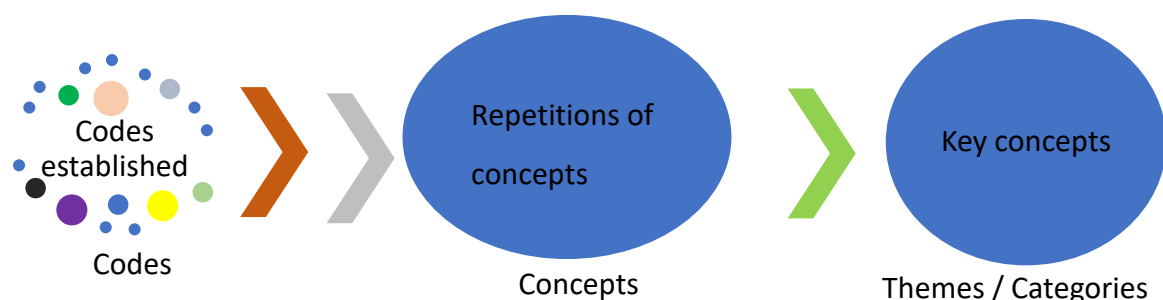


Figure 4.2: Three-step thematic data analysis process

Source: Jain (2021)

Step 1 – codes establishment

All of the textual components, words, or phrases that were pertinent to the study questions were gathered and codes were generated in the first stage of analysis. During the process of code generation, the trajectory of the analysis remained uncertain, as the text meticulously unfolds the particulars at each stage of the analytical process.

Step 2 – concept establishment

The selection of recurring concepts, or ideas, was the second stage of the study (Jain, 2021). Following the collection of pertinent texts or codes, it was observed that several concepts were repeated, although with different or similar wording.

Step 3 – categories establishment

A broad direction begins to emerge from the chosen codes and concepts during the third stage of the process. The identification of themes, or categories, is the third step (Jain, 2021). Eight themes were constructed from the data.

The study's focus, in this case, the current study's research questions, must be at the centre of the coding. In the second level of analysis, codes were then categorised into concepts. The notions were grouped into more generalised and abstract categories in the third stage of the research. The trustworthiness, coherence and transferability of the findings are the primary concerns highlighted by qualitative content analysis (Jain, 2021). These codes and themes were created using the Atlas.ti software, which also facilitated the generation of visual representations of the data.

4.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND QUALITY OF THE DATA

The most important factor that determines the level of rigour in qualitative research investigations is the researchers' credibility, which is indicated by the researchers' ability and the amount of effort they put into the qualitative enquiry. When it comes to her work, the researcher recognises the importance of maintaining objectivity, consistency, perseverance and to create standards that guarantee trustworthiness (Kakar, Rasheed, Rashid & Akhter, 2023).

Van Zyl (2014) indicates that when a test measures a similar thing multiple times and the results are the same, then that is reliability. Reliability in qualitative research entails the trustworthiness of the data.

According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019), collected data should meet the following trustworthiness criteria:

- Credibility relates to whether the results are correctly and accurately depicted in the data presented. To ensure credibility data was gathered from different groups of stakeholders such as officers and non-commissioned officers (triangulation) and member-checking was performed by soliciting feedback from participants on emergent findings to alleviate any misinterpretation of the meaning of data obtained from the participant.
- Transferability relates to whether the findings can be applied to other settings and contexts. The findings of the study and recommendations were submitted to the Division of HRM for consideration and can be applied or transferred to other provinces within the SAPS, given similar circumstances.
- Dependability relates to whether the findings were consistent and suitable over time. A recorder was used and the methodology was explained in detail to ensure the dependability of the study.
- Confirmability relates to whether the findings were shaped by the researcher's biases. The researcher maintained detailed notes on participants' comments and body language during the interview to support objectivity.

In this study, the researcher provided clarity to the participants when required. Participants were permitted to withdraw or cancel their appointments, as they expressed a lack of familiarity with succession planning within the organisation, suggesting that the research questions posed could be more aptly addressed by management or human resource practitioners. Additional withdrawals occurred as participants expressed concerns about potential victimisation and the desire to protect their professional trajectories. Despite the researcher's assurances regarding the strict

confidentiality of their information, some participants expressed a desire to withdraw from the study.

Since the researcher asserts that trustworthiness is what gives qualitative research its significant position in the academic world, it is imperative that qualitative research be guaranteed to be trustworthy. There is a widespread belief that qualitative research needs to be reliable. Therefore, a researcher must become proficient in a number of areas, including epistemological understanding, in-depth literature study skills, theoretical comprehension and argumentation abilities, in order to increase credibility in qualitative research. To comprehend and use trustworthiness in qualitative research, additional components are also necessary, such as different data gathering methods, suitable data analysis processes, connections to theories and interactions between these ideas (Edirisingha, 2012; Kakar et al., 2023; Rose & Johnson, 2020).

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The University of South Africa's research ethics policy (UNISA Ethical Policy, 2012) was considered, in order to guarantee that moral behaviour was upheld during the course of the study and to shield or protect participants from any harm at all times. When conducting research, it is of utmost importance to protect human participants using the appropriate ethical principles. Due to the in-depth nature of the study process, ethical questions have a certain resonance in a qualitative study. The ethical issues become more prominent. When conducting interviews in-person with vulnerable groups of participants, ethical considerations become more prominent, as participants may experience stress when articulating their feelings during interviews. The ethical principles that are now in place for doing qualitative research include advice that is more general in nature, rather than concentrating on application in the real world.

Six important ethical matters that were taken into consideration in this study are discussed (Arifin, 2018).

4.8.1 Permission obtained

Permission for conducting the study was requested and granted by the SAPS research department, for the research to be conducted in the organisation and ethical clearance

and permission to conduct the study were obtained from the Ethics committee of the Human Resource Department of the University of South Africa with ethics reference number 1191.

4.8.2 Informed consent

The researcher followed the procedure of obtaining consent and it was offered willingly; participants understood what was asked from them and participants had the capability to provide consent. Participants had been sufficiently informed about the research, comprehended the information and had authority and freedom of choice to decide whether to participate or not (Arifin, 2018).

The researcher formulated a consent form for the participants, which was provided to them before they participated in the study, for them to give consent of participation.

Consent to participate in this study was obtained from the participants, but only after the purpose and process of the research was explained and clarified in detail. All participants provided written informed consent. Enough time was provided to participants for questions and to address their concerns or discomfort.

4.8.3 Protection from harm

All participants were protected from any harm whether physically or emotionally (Van Zyl, 2014). Personal information of participants was protected with guidance of the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act. There was no emotional or physical harm to any volunteering participant who was assisting with his/her participation throughout this research study.

4.8.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

It was ensured that the names and identities of the participants were kept anonymous throughout the process of data collection, analysis and reporting of the conclusions of the study, thus ensuring their anonymity. During the interview sessions, data analysis and dissemination or disclosure of the findings, the confidentiality and privacy of the interview setting were carefully protected throughout the whole process (Arifin, 2018).

4.8.5 Voluntary participation

All participants were informed that since participation is entirely voluntary, declining to take part in the study or leaving it midway through would not have any bearing on their employment status with the organisation. In this instance, participants were afforded sufficient time to review the information document and determine whether or not to participate in the study (24 hours to a week) (Arifin, 2018). The information sheet and consent form were sent to participants via e-mail two weeks prior the interviews, as the researcher wanted to give participants ample time to prepare and for participants to make a decision to participate in the study. Also, because the researcher understood that participants are busy with their work commitments and did not want to inconvenience them.

The consent form included information such as the purpose of the research, the timeframe indicating their participation, choice of withdrawing from the study at any given point, the probable benefit to the participants and the organisation and a guarantee that the outcome will be kept confidential. Participants were informed on how to obtain a copy of the results and how to reach the researcher should anyone involved in the research have any questions.

4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the exploratory qualitative research design used in the study and the research paradigm. The chapter further went on to explain the population and sampling used for the study, how data were collected, how the data were analysed, the trustworthiness of the study, the principles of ethical consideration complied with for safeguarding against possible research misconduct and the quality of data provided for the study. In the following chapter, the research findings will be discussed.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4, the research design and methodology were discussed. This chapter focuses on the findings and interpretation. Eight main themes were constructed, namely current understanding of succession planning, understanding employee performance, leadership development, impact of a lack of succession planning on employee performance, employee perceptions on how positions are filled, succession planning challenges, employee performance challenges and leadership capabilities.

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings were generated using Atlas.ti and the following themes and sub-themes were constructed, as illustrated in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Themes, sub-themes and categories

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Succession planning understanding	✓ Employee empowerment / mentoring ✓ Skills gap minimisation
2. Employee performance understanding	✓ Performance measurement / assessment ✓ Environment exposure
3. Leadership development	✓ Inadequate opportunities for leadership development ✓ Partial involvement and commitment from leadership ✓ Absence of a formal succession plan for leadership development of leadership
4. Impact of lack of succession planning on employee performance	✓ Negative impact of employee performance ✓ Negative impact of employee morale

Themes	Sub-themes
5. Employee perception on how positions are filled	✓ Unfairness ✓ Favouritism ✓ Incompetence or inexperienced managers
6. Succession planning challenges	✓ Lack of human resources for leadership development ✓ Ageing personnel ✓ Increased workload due to shortage of manpower ✓ Lack of support from management ✓ Fear of creating an expectation
7. Employee performance challenges	✓ Negative impact of employee performance ✓ Negative impact of employee morale
8. Leadership capability	✓ Incompetence ✓ Lack of experience

5.2.1 Theme 1: Understanding of succession planning

An understanding of succession planning as a process that is used within the organisation to assess the readiness of the employees to take on future positions within the organisation was demonstrated by participants. Specifically, participants commented that succession planning is typically employed by the organisation to fill open leadership positions when the incumbent of the position leaves the organisation.

Below is an example of how the participants responded. Their response was verbatim transcribed.

Succession planning, I think for me it's twofold, because when we look at the organisation as a whole, that looks at its mandate and how we will have a continuation to ensure that its mandate is implemented or it is done accordingly. So when it comes to the work, the employer has a responsibility to ensure that there is a succession in terms of the work that needs to be done so that there's no gap if one person retires or resigns and the next person has to take over either in an interim capacity or in terms of a permanent placement by means of an appointment, so that that gap is not there and that there's also continuous development when it comes to business processes and also in terms of how work needs to be done in terms of methodology.

Participant 1

Succession planning is preparing that someone must take over whenever an office occupant or someone occupying a position within the structures of the organisation is either retiring or passed on or a person finds himself or herself dismissed then there must be someone ready to take over from where the individual left and that in itself is the preparedness of the organisation to make sure that we don't leave any vacuum whenever someone passed on or any person retire who was holding a higher position or a command ship in the organisation or that individual is dismissed by any manner.

Participant 2

It's actually to equip and empower the members that we leave behind, to be able to go on with what we were doing.

Participant 3

Succession planning for me, it is to build other people and to capacitate other people, that I can have a better understanding in the environment where this is working and also to learn other things around you. And if someone is going out, they can come and fill that post immediately. That is the success planning.

Participant 5

In terms of succession planning or my understanding of succession planning is that as people move closer towards maturity in terms of retirement there should be a policy or a strategy in terms of you know let me say replacing that specific skills set of people that is leaving meaning we actually should identify or have people in a pool available that can take basically that position so in my instance should I for an example retire there must be a succession planning in terms of a pool of people skilled in this specific environment of a station commander who can step in and take over.

Participant 6

In terms of succession planning, I believe it's a way of the organisation trying to empower us as members in terms of what to expect probably in the future or on a higher level. It's more of a program whereby you are being, what's the right word that I'm looking for? Mentored.

Participant 15

Two sub-themes emerged from this topic: (i) employee empowerment / mentoring; (ii) skills gap minimisation. The sub-themes are discussed as follows:

5.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Employee empowerment / mentoring

The majority participants stated that management should empower, mentor and equip employees who will be left in the organisation with skills for business continuity and to continue with the culture of the organisation. According to the participants, this will allow and assist the organisation in avoiding the vacuum that is left by employees who leave the organisation.

The participants articulated their views as follows:

Succession planning is preparing that someone must take over whenever an office occupant or someone occupying a position within the structures of the organisation is either retiring or passed on or a person finds himself or herself dismissed then there must be someone ready to take over from where the individual left and that in itself is the preparedness of the organisation to make sure that we don't leave any vacuum whenever someone passed on or any person retire who was holding a higher position or a command ship in the organisation or that individual is dismissed by any manner.

Participant 2

It's actually to equip and empower the members that we leave behind, to be able to go on with what we were doing.

Participant 3

In terms of succession planning, I believe it's a way of the organisation trying to empower us as members in terms of what to expect probably in the future or on a higher level. It's more of a program whereby you are being, what's the right word that I'm looking for? Mentored.

Participant 15

5.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Skills gap minimisation

Majority of participants stated that the skills gap must also be a priority for management, minimising the skills gap by ensuring continuous development of employees and capacitation of employees with skills and knowledge. Participants have a view that, this will assist the organisation to have a pool of employees with a set of skills required for specific environments.

The participants articulated their views as follows:

Succession planning, I think for me it's twofold, because when we look at the organisation as a whole that looks at its mandate and how we will have a continuation to ensure that its mandate is implemented or it is done accordingly. So when it comes to the work, the employer has a responsibility to ensure that there is a succession in terms of the work that needs to be done so that there's no gap if one person retires or resigns and the next person has to take over either in an interim capacity or in terms of a permanent placement by means of an appointment, so that that gap is not there and that there's also continuous development when it comes to business processes and also in terms of how work needs to be done in terms of methodology.

Participant 1

Succession planning for me, it is to build other people and to capacitate other people, that I can have a better understanding in the environment where this is working and also to learn other things around you. And if someone is going out, they can come and fill that post immediately. That is the success planning.

Participant 5

In terms of succession planning or my understanding of succession planning is that as people move closer towards maturity in terms of retirement there should be a policy or a strategy in terms of you know let me say replacing that specific skills set of people that is leaving meaning we actually should identify or have people in a pool available that can take basically that position so in my instance should I for an example retire there must be a succession planning in terms of a pool of people skilled in this specific environment of a station commander who can step in and take over.

Participant 6

Despite the participants' lack of exposure to succession planning within the organisation, they understand the foundations of the process and were able to offer feedback on their organisation's procedures or lack thereof during their interviews.

Following the voices of the participants, succession planning can be conceptualised as a process to forecast, assess and mentor employees that might be ready to assume a higher-level position within the organisation.

The following Atlas.ti figure depicts the Atlas.ti image of the first main theme.

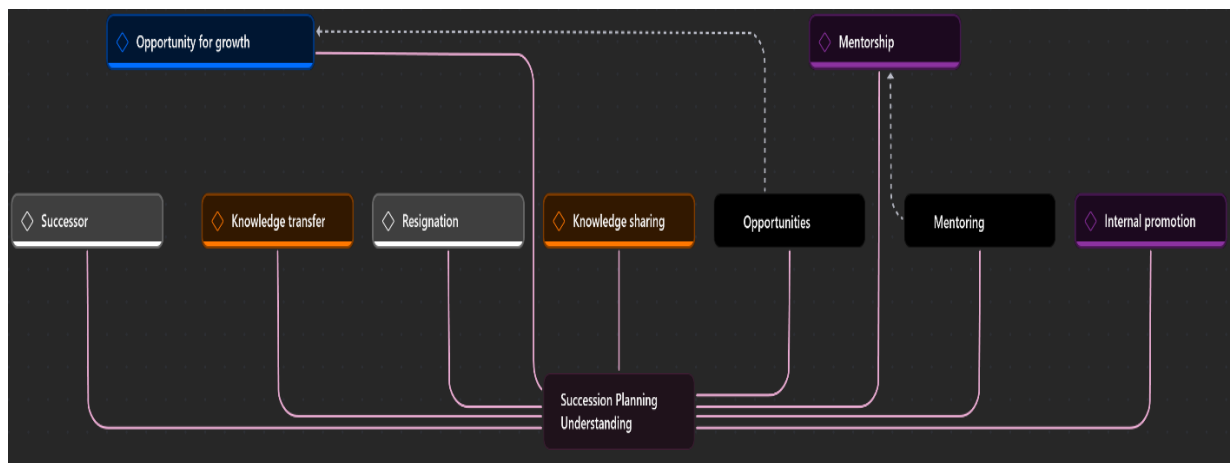


Figure 5.1: Understanding succession planning

Source: Author's compilation

5.2.2 Theme 2: Understanding of employee performance

Participants were able to indicate their understanding of employee performance as a process used within the organisation to assess whether the employees perform according to the set standards for assisting the organisation in reaching its strategic objectives.

Their responses were as follows:

Employee performance obviously we link it closely with our performance assessments and then also what we call our PEP processes and the assessments thereof where we have key performance areas on which we have sub points under each and then where we actually have to reach a certain standard and level of performance however in terms of the issue of employee performance.

Participant 6

Well, if you say employee performance, for me, it's a best assessment to understand whether people perform in line with what is expected.

Participant 4

I think employee performance would be the tasks that the employees need to perform, like the targets. You look at our job descriptions, our Performance Enhancement Processes, those things they measure performance.

Participant 11

I would also say it is closely linked to your skill set I think nowadays we are a changing organisation laws national instructions they change thick and fast so you should be very adaptable and I have picked up that in the current situation we sometimes find that employees that have never been exposed to certain environments obtain placed and actually you know it sometimes hamper the performance and the efficiency of certain units but yes in terms of performance of employee that means how you perform how you perform against specific set targets and goals.

Participant 6

That would mean an employee understanding the reasons why they are at the workplace in the first place. You know, to understand that when one wakes up at home to come to a workplace, we come here to come in and do work, to work. You know, to have certain indicators to say maybe your day, your work will include or consist of what and to be able to, at the end of each day, to say you have performed, you have done, you have produced work to the required standard. Not a case where an employee is at the workplace for the sake of it.
Participant 14

Two sub-themes emerged from this topic: (i) performance measurement / assessments; (ii) Environment exposure.

The sub-themes are discussed as follows:

5.2.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Performance measurement / assessment

The participants indicated that employee performance is linked to performance measurement, which in turn is also linked to employees' skill set or knowledge. Participants are of the view that employees must know the task they are required to perform and how they are being measured on their performance.

The participants articulated their views as follows:

Employee performance obviously we link it closely with our performance assessments and then also what we call our PEP processes and the assessments thereof where we have key performance areas on which we have sub points under each and then where we actually have to reach a certain standard and level of performance however in terms of the issue of employee performance I would also say it is closely linked to your skill set I think nowadays we are a changing organisation laws national instructions they change thick and fast so you should be very adaptable.

Participant 6

Well, if you say employee performance, for me, it's a best assessment to understand whether people perform in line with what is expected.

Participant 4

I think employee performance would be the tasks that the employees need to perform, like the targets. You look at our job descriptions, our Performance Enhancement Processes, those things they measure performance.

Participant 11

That would mean an employee understanding the reasons why they are at the workplace in the first place. You know, to understand that when one wakes up at home to come to a workplace, we come here to come in and do work, to work. You know, to have certain indicators to say maybe your day, your work will include or consist of what and to be able to, at the end of each day, to say you have performed, you have done, you have produced work to the required standard. Not a case where an employee is at the workplace for the sake of it.

Participant 14

I have picked up that in the current situation we sometimes find that employees that have never been exposed to certain environments obtain placed and actually you know it sometimes hamper the performance and the efficiency of certain units but yes in terms of performance of employee that means how you perform how you perform against specific set targets and goals.

Participant 14

5.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Environment exposure

The participants indicated that employees are often placed in environments which they were never exposed to because of a shortage of skilled and experienced employees in the environment.

The participants articulated their views as follows:

Employee performance obviously we link it closely with our performance assessments and then also what we call our PEP processes and the assessments thereof where we have key performance areas on which we have sub points under each and then where we actually have to reach a certain standard and level of performance however in terms of the issue of employee performance, I would also say it is closely linked to your skill set.

Participant 6

I think nowadays we are a changing organisation laws national instructions they change thick and fast so you should be very adaptable and I have picked up that in the current situation we sometimes find that employees that have never been exposed to certain environments obtain placed and actually you know it sometimes hamper the performance and the efficiency of certain units but yes in terms of performance of employee that means how you perform how you perform against specific set targets and goals.

Participant 6

The participants indicate that employee performance is linked to performance assessment, where the performance is measured against set standards on the employees' job descriptions and the performance enhancement process documents. The assessment also indicates the time, quality, quantity and efficiency within which the tasks must be completed.

This Atlas.ti figure depicts the participants understanding of employee performance within the organisation.

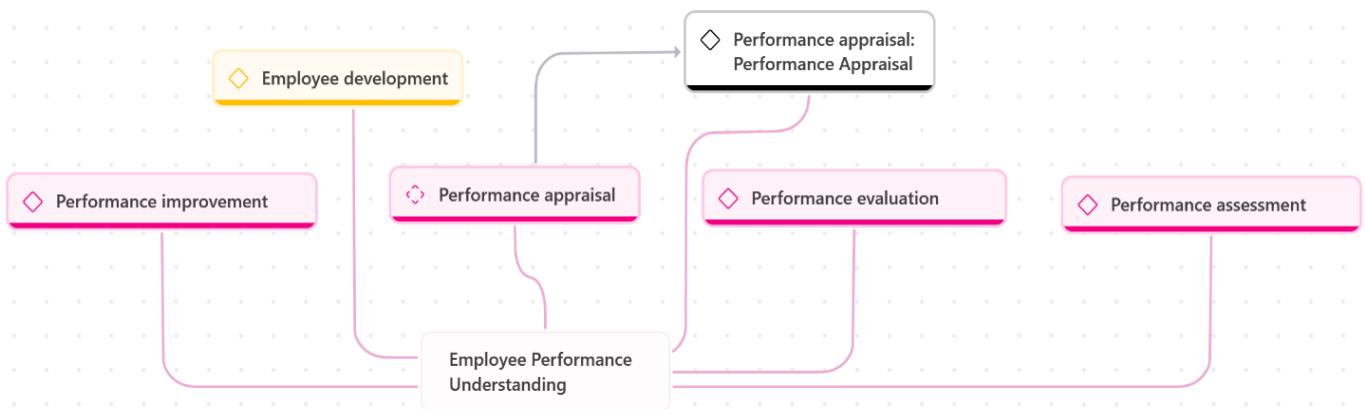


Figure 5.2: Understanding employee performance

Source: Author's compilation

5.2.3 Theme 3: Leadership development

The third theme that emerged during data analysis was leadership development for current succession planning within the organisation. When participants were asked about the current practices of filling leadership positions in the organisation, they

indicated that posts are being filled after being normally advertised and the normal appointment process is followed.

This is evident from the following participant extracts:

Mostly it's done through posts that are advertised. There's a certain set in terms of academic qualifications, experience, year service and then candidates apply and then interviews are conducted, which test a certain part of a person's ability. Sometimes you'll find that the person is highly qualified with many qualifications, but the person might not have all the attributes.

That is a sort of a challenge in the organisation at times. But it's not easy to test all of that in the current way of which posts are being filled.

Participant 3

A post will be advertised and then on the advertisement of that post, they will tell you the requirements or what is it that you require in order for you to fill that post.

And if you meet the requirements, you complete your forms, you meet the requirements and then you are shortlisted for the post and then you are able to obtain that post, be it on a lower level or management level. That's how leadership posts are.

Participant 15

Three sub-themes emerged from this topic: (i) inadequate opportunities for leadership development; (ii) partial involvement and commitment from leadership; and (iii) absence of a formal succession plan for leadership development of leadership. The sub-themes are discussed as follows:

5.2.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Inadequate opportunities for leadership development

The participants stated that management must offer leadership development opportunities. According to the participants, the leaders' inability to create internal opportunities for identifying and developing the future generation of leaders had made role stagnation problematic.

The participants articulated their views as follows:

I think the responsibility doesn't merely lie with the senior management of the organisation but lies with each senior manager in his or her office where he is working.

Like I made an example I have one deputy director in the office. I make it my business to nominate her for training and take her step by step on what I'm doing because she would act when I'm on leave, she needs to know exactly what I'm doing.

Participant 2

I remember at one stage, I was working at Sebokeng, they gave me a relief or shift, I had to form a new relief or shift. Obviously, they give you the members they don't want, problematic members, members who are not trained because they don't want a responsibility of or they are reluctant to send them for courses. So, I had a concentration on them, send them for training and because there are limited number of courses, sometimes train them myself and we were the best team, for three years in a row.

Participant 3

I believe firstly members who are going to run this process must be appointed and have the skills and be HR Practitioners, have passion for the job. They must be sent on capacitation session or training for what succession planning is, how does it work and how was the strategy put together also how to implement. At the university I was fortunate to be in the exchange programme because it shows you the importance of research.

Participant 1

You see a mess. Yeah, that one is a disaster, that one. There will be post advertised and they will appoint someone from another station or unit because there will be no one trained for that position at the station and not because members don't want to go to courses but because commander will be saying member cannot go to courses because of shortage of manpower and service delivery comes first, so obviously the service will be badly affected.

Participant 9

And if we can obtain that right the basics to make sure that whoever is beneath you as a senior manager or a commander wherever, whether it's a station, whether it's a unit, whether it's a

component to make sure that that is developed so that he/she has a clue of what is happening in that office. Even if the person can be appointed in an acting capacity for some time but you don't drop the ball and think the person knows exactly what is happening, the person must still attend the formal training.

Participant 2

5.2.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Partial involvement and commitment from leadership

Partial involvement and commitment from leadership and HRM is the second sub-theme under leadership development. The participants indicated that employees are appointed in management positions and if management were involved in leadership development, they would know and make informed decisions on who to appoint.

According to the participants:

Then she was promoted into being a Visible Policing Commander, meaning she's working under a captain. Only to find that the manager that I'm working with is not even half clued up.

So, in terms of how to run the station, you see. And then the warrant officer has to be the one that does everything. And cover the station commander, the one who's responsible for the station, you see.

And you find a lot of that in the SAPS. That one, I'm not even ashamed to say it. Like being led by someone who is not experienced enough or equipped enough for that post.

Participant 15

If succession planning is well not planned by management or it's not executed by human resource management, it affects the organisation very badly because let's say I'm from the HR office and then I'm placed in the VSPOL environment. From the HR, I've never been into the VSPOL or operational environment and then I'm appointed to fill the VISPOL Commanders' position at the level of Brigadier, that police station is going to struggle, because I know nothing about crime as I am an HRM Practitioner.

Participant 7

It may be easier to provide staff with the variety of abilities required to meet present and future leadership demand if they have a thorough awareness of the organisation's goals and strategic plan, which are linked to the dedication and involvement of leaders.

5.2.3.3 Sub-theme 3: Absence of a formal succession plan for leadership development of leadership

The lack of official succession planning for leadership development was the third sub-theme. The participants mentioned that it was standard procedure and that there was no official succession plan in place for the posts to be filled after the incumbent had left, or for employees to exercise leadership authority without fully comprehending the duties of the role.

As stated by the participants:

I think we need to be honest with ourselves that we are lacking a bit on that because you find at times a person we know, it's only in cases where a person passed on or in cases where a person is dismissed where we can say we never anticipated to have a movement within that post.

Participant 2

And I think that is our challenge, when this last line of defence of the experienced members are leaving and we're sitting with the young members, with the workload that they obtain, because you can, especially in the Free State that I've seen, people obtain a lot of dockets. There are people, I was shocked to see there are investigating officers with 300 plus dockets, which is very difficult. As the person who's in that position, when do you obtain time to teach him because this person is just trying to keep his nose above the water.

Participant 3

We know people might be appointed in other provinces or somewhere but at least if you have a pool knowing very well that should that person pass on, should that person retire or resign, should that person maybe be dismissed, you have a pool from where you can take. It worked

very well because as and when the post is advertised, we know those people will be eager to apply because they are empowered.

Participant 2

If people just do it because there is a head office instruction that tells us to do it, they want to just go through the phases or the process. They won't really have the appetite to let make this thing work and you also need to have the correct people who must drive the process in terms of marketing it correctly in the organisation but also administer the succession planning process correctly so that the participating members have the will or willingness to participate and also build that passion to step into leadership.

We basically need people who want to step into leadership, so we need to build that passion and that success planning is part of that

Participant 1

The following Atlas.ti figure depicts the participants understanding of leadership development for current succession planning within the organisation.

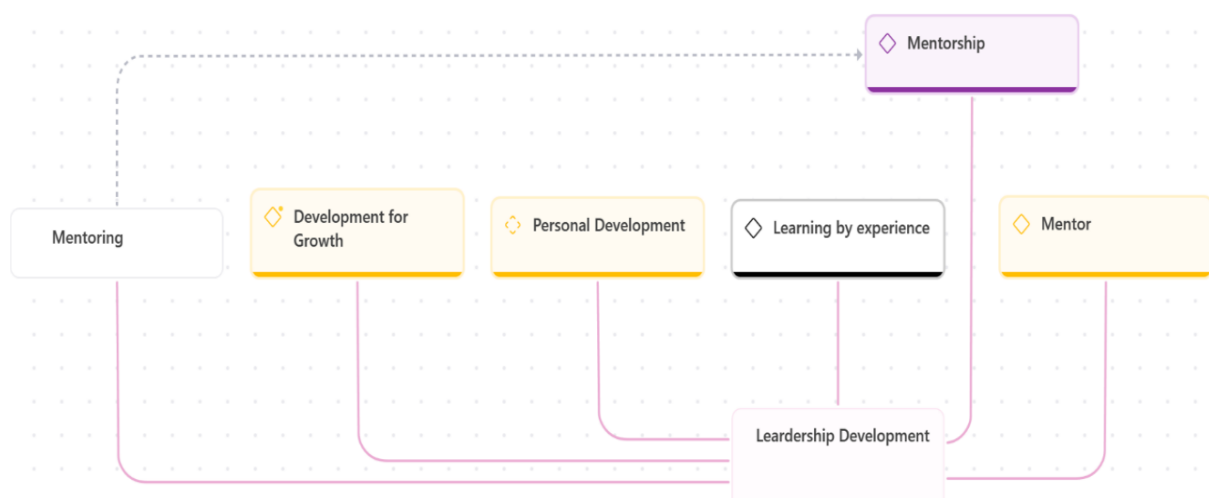


Figure 5.3: Leadership development

Source: Author's compilation

The participants indicate that the absence of a succession plan makes it difficult for the organisation to appoint competent employees in leadership positions, because when the organisation has leadership development programmes, it becomes easy to promote employees to leadership positions, as there will be a large pool of employees from which to select.

5.2.4 Theme 4: Impact of a lack of succession planning on employee performance

After participants were questioned about the impact of the lack of succession planning within the organisation on employee performance, the majority of participants mentioned that it has a negative impact on the performance and morale of employees.

The participants responded as follows:

I think it affects performance negatively so. Let's say for that person who has qualification and I have qualification, I have experience and I know this person who I was with at the interview does not have experience, does not have qualifications, she gets the post. That is going to make the employee negative because you ask yourself what happened or how are these promotions being held. So, it affects the members negatively so because they lose their morale of doing their best because they don't see the rewards or they are not recognized for what they do.

Participant 7

But when the new person who has been promoted comes here, where I have been appointed in an acting capacity, then takes over from me. Obviously, he/she is going to need guidance from me, who's has been operating in that environment /post sometimes I have acting for more than a year. That will obviously affect my morale negatively at work, as it will be low.

Participant 13

It's just negative. You know you can do a better job than that guy who's appointed in the post. But he's appointed, not you. So, the management must check who does the job now, how does he do it and just promote him/her. For example, like a group leader, he's been doing group leader work for three years. Now a post comes out. He applies and is not even short listed for the interview, but somebody else is appointed. That person will become negative at work.

Participant 16

Two sub-themes emerged from this topic: (i) negative impact on employee morale; (ii) impact performance negatively.

These sub-themes are discussed as follows:

5.2.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Negative impact on employee performance

According to the majority of the participants, lack of succession planning affects employee performance negatively.

I think it affects performance negatively so. Let's say for that person who has qualification and I have qualification, I have experience and I know this person who I was with at the interview does not have experience, does not have qualifications, she gets the post. That is going to make the employee negative because you ask yourself what happened or how are these promotions being held. So, it affects the members negatively so because they lose their morale of doing their best because they don't see the rewards or they are not recognized for what they do.

Participant 7

It's just negative. You know you can do a better job than that guy who's appointed in the post. But he's appointed, not you. So, the management must check who does the job now, how does he do it and just promote him/her. For example, like a group leader, he's been doing group leader work for three years. Now a post comes out. He applies and is not even short listed for the interview, but somebody else is appointed. That person will become negative at work.

Participant 16

5.2.4.2 Sub-theme 2: Negative impact on employee morale

According to the participants, lack of succession planning affects employee morale negatively.

But when the new person who has been promoted comes here, where I have been appointed in an acting capacity, then takes over from me. Obviously, he/she is going to need guidance

from me, who's has been operating in that environment /post sometimes I have acting for more than a year. That will obviously affect my morale negatively at work, as it will be low.

Participant 13

The organisation's lack of succession planning has a detrimental effect on employee performance, which in turn affects employee morale and career growth.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Employee perception on how positions are filled

After participants were questioned about the way positions are being filled within SAPS, the majority of the participants indicated that they are not aware of the succession planning within the organisation, and it became evident that within the SAPS there was no formal succession planning process taking place and if there was, employees were not aware of it. The participants indicated that within the organisation succession planning was either unstructured, informal or non-existent. As a result, employee perceptions on how positions are filled was the fifth theme constructed from the data.

The majority of participants indicated that nothing is being done to develop or enhance the existing competent and skilled workforce. Promoted employees are within the organisation, even though sometimes they are promoted to environments or departments with which they are not familiar.

The following quotes attest to this:

Honestly, I believe that they are sometimes, or partially so, they're not fully fair.

As we have witnessed, to make an example, two people who are going for the same interview, you find one has experience in that specific post that is being advertised, they have qualifications. And then on the same list of interviewees, you find someone with no qualification, with no experience. But at the end of the day, the person with no qualification, with no experience, is appointed, where else the person with the experience and qualification is not appointed on the post, so I feel they are partially not fair.

Participant 7

I believe the criteria is not working. It's not working in a sense of, now you appointed this, okay, let's make this a little bit scenario.

Now you appointed this person as a senior in this office and then me as a junior, now I must groom or I must now teach this person the environment of statistics, how does it work, or the analysis offices, how do we work. Remember, this person is appointed from HR, I'll make example, he or she knows the environment of HR and now she comes in a statistic area, meaning she needs to learn and now I'm the one who has to teach the person because now I'm the one with experience.

Participant 12

I have different views when it comes to SAPS. Maybe it might differ in other organisations because they are a bit strict when it comes to how positions are filled.

People that have been longer in a certain levels, positions or ranks, actually let me put it as such, a rank, they have certain years before they can be elevated to the next rank and my personal opinion, that is not contributing positively to what you asked me for in terms of succession in the SAPS because people, most of them that are promoted or I'd say the majority, they are not qualified to occupy a certain position based on the level of service that they acquired within the organisation themselves.

Participant 8

I just wish that whatever it is that we are talking about, I really think that maybe they might consider it. For me, I feel that like when you look at the SSSBC agreement, the triple SSSBC agreement, for me, in a way, it's not fair to certain people. Like take for instance, there are those people that came into the organisation with qualifications.

Participant 15

That it's time-consuming on me to teach someone how to do the job because now my work is going to suffer because I had to mentor this person now at the same time. Whereas if the post was filled by a person who has an experience or qualifications of being in this environment, it will be different because now you're just going to add the knowledge that the person already has. But if you take someone from a different environment, you start from zero.

Participant 12

The following sub-themes emerged from participants' perception of how posts are filled, namely fairness, favouritism and incompetence or inexperienced managers.

5.2.5.1 Sub-theme 1: Unfairness

According to the majority of the participants, there are either no succession planning procedures and sometimes posts are not filled fairly.

If it can be done fairly and openly, so I think it can assist. They must find a neutral person from outside the SAPS who doesn't know who is who, who connects to who. They must find at least from the panel, maybe two people can be from the SAPS and then they can have another two from external agencies that can ensure the process runs smoothly. Then it can be fair.

Participant 7

There were applicants who had qualifications but the person that was appointed did not have and for me that is not fair. That person was no longer working in the environment of the post advertised and moved to another department but then overlooked over the person who is currently in that environment.

Participant 11

It's already decided beforehand who will be promoted to the posts. Remember, the rest of us, we've got no insight on what's happening on that interview. So, it's only those people that feel aggrieved afterwards who can register a grievance.

Participant 4

5.2.5.2 Sub-theme 2: Favouritism

According to the majority of the participants, other employees are appointed or promoted because they are favoured and not because they qualify or deserve to be promoted. The participants' views are as follows:

Then only to find out that I do have the qualifications, all the papers I have, but when the panel don't favour you, you are not going to be promoted to the position. They would rather give it to someone whom they favour.

Participant 10

Members have the perception, we cannot run away from that notion, that management have their own people that are eyed for the positions and they don't see any reason for them to participate in the succession programme.

Participant 1

5.2.5.3 Sub-theme 3: Incompetence or inexperienced managers

According to the majority of the participants, incompetent or inexperienced employees are promoted to leadership positions and that creates a problem because their juniors must do the work on their behalf. Participants' views are as follows:

The other thing is, the panellist doesn't look into the person who has the ability to be promoted. They just promote some of the people who don't have that knowledge and things and now you sit in a certain management position that people don't have the knowledge of what is going on in that working environment.

Participant 5

This one, I'm sure a lot of people are experiencing it. You find that here I am, like I say, it's an example. I'm not saying it's like that. I have certain qualification from where I come from in terms of experience the police. Then I was promoted into being a Visible Policing Commander, meaning I am working under a captain. Only to find that the manager that I'm working with is not even half clued-up with the environment, like in terms of how to run the station, you see.

Participant 15

And then as the warrant officer I have to be the one that does everything and cover the station commander, the one who's responsible for the station, you see. You find a lot of that in the

SAPS. That one, I'm not even ashamed to say it. Like being led by someone who is not experienced enough or equipped enough for that post, but unfortunately, because in the SAPS, we work with what you call protocol and all that and as a warrant officer, there is nothing that I can do.

Participant 15

Following the voices of the participants, the participants are not convinced of the fairness, lack of favouritism and appointment of experienced and deserving managers when filling vacancies within the organisation in the absence of succession planning.

The following figure depicts the Atlas.ti image of theme 5, employee perception on how positions are filled.

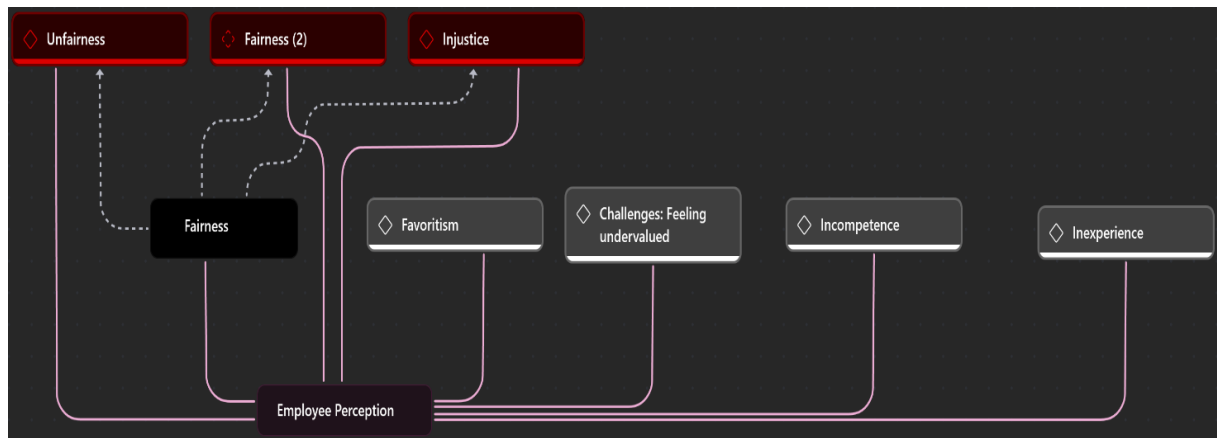


Figure 5.4: Employee perceptions on how positions are filled

Source: Author's compilation

5.2.6 Theme 6: Succession planning challenges

The sixth theme that emerged during data analysis was the succession planning challenges within the organisation. When participants were asked about any succession planning challenges faced by the organisation, they unanimously indicated that there are challenges with regards to succession planning in the organisation. The sub-themes that emerged from this theme were lack of human resources for leadership

development, fear of creating an expectation and lack of support from management, with further categories of an ageing workforce and increased workload.

5.2.6.1 Sub-theme 1: Lack of human resources

Lack of human resources for leadership development was the first sub-theme. An inadequate supply and availability of time, money and human resources are obstacles. An ageing workforce and an increased workload as a result of a staffing scarcity were the two categories that comprised this sub-theme.

5.2.6.2 Sub-theme 2: An ageing workforce

An ageing workforce was the second sub-theme. Since the majority of the participants were getting older and getting ready for retirement, they referred to succession planning as a valuable technique for leadership development that did not apply to them.

According to the majority of the participants:

We all, we will leave at the same time there will be nothing there. So, it's got a huge impact. The fact that there is no succession planning and not just in our environment. Even if you take our office at the strategic side. All those people are 55+.

Participant 4

Members from level 7 downwards also reach maturity in terms of terms of retirement age at 60, as we also lose them from time to time. I've mentioned to you my relief commanders at the CSC and what I have picked up is that where I'm currently sitting with one captain at my reliefs of which I must have four, this captain is reaching 60 in 2025 end of January there is nothing in place at this moment in time indicating that here is a possible pool of employees which we can consider, I have to internally look at what I have, my support services head Lieutenant Colonel XXX who also went on early retirement, left us last year in December

Participant 6

I'm having a captain that is currently acting in that position not having necessarily skills set to step into the post because she was from Vispol and she had to go and assist us there because

it is a critical post at my station. At my finance office I have another captain who is actually also ending reaching 60 also end of January next year and as you know finance is more of a specialised post you need actually someone with financial background so it's very difficult at station level to manage these things because all of us whether we like it or not we are growing old we are not getting younger and then obviously it's something that is not necessarily in your control.

Participant 6

5.2.6.3 Sub-theme 3: Increased workload due to shortage of manpower

The third sub-theme was an increased workload due to a shortage of manpower. The participants referred to a heavy workload due to a shortage of manpower and positions not being filled or advertised in time.

According to some of the participants:

But you do find a situation like we are caught mapping when it comes to a person leaving the organisation it's when we are trying to run around to see when will the post be advertised. You can even stay for 6 to 8 months without the post being filled because we will wait until someone says you have a post now you can advertise it. It's only like I said in most senior level like your major generals you find quicker the post is advertised.

But at this level where the work is being done people are hands on you find we take time before we fill the post.

As a result, you put more burden on the people who are in there because they find themselves doing double work for people who have already left the organisation and their posts are not filled. However, if we can effectively navigate and implement the succession plan, it will undoubtedly facilitate the responsibilities of all involved.

Participant 2

I think that is our challenge, when this last line of defence of the experienced members are leaving and we're sitting with the young members, with their workload, because you can, especially in the Free State that I've seen, people/investigators receive a lot of dockets. There are people, I was shocked to see there are investigating officers with 300 plus dockets, which is very difficult and the person who's in that position, when do you teach him?

Participant 3

Most of the participants in this study emphasised the importance of succession planning, particularly considering the leaders' advancing age and the future of the SAPS. This indicates that the SAPS must embrace succession planning to ensure competent successors and avoid losing knowledge and organisational institutional retention.

5.2.6.4 Sub-theme 4: Lack of support from management and fear of creating an expectation

The fourth sub-theme was lack of support from management. Participants indicated that management is reluctant to implement succession planning because of a fear of creating expectations in their employees.

According to the minority of the participants:

Because there will be no one trained for that position at the station and not because members don't want to go to courses but because commanders will be saying member cannot go to courses because of shortage of manpower and service delivery comes first.

Participant 9

There's this thing of, they like to say, they want someone who is trained and with experience. So where do we need to be trained if we are not selected or nominated to attend courses and if they don't find that person with the experience they are looking for, they will leave that vacant position, that post being vacant like that without even saying, okay, fine, let's take someone who doesn't have experience and let him act on that position so that he can gain experience or groom the person so that the person can obtain experience or be able to performs required duties.

Participant 10

Following the voices of the participants, challenges on succession planning can be conceptualised as barriers which prevents the organisation from implementation of the concept or construct and in most instances that affects organisational and employee performance.

The Atlas.ti figure depicts the challenges related to succession planning within the organisation.

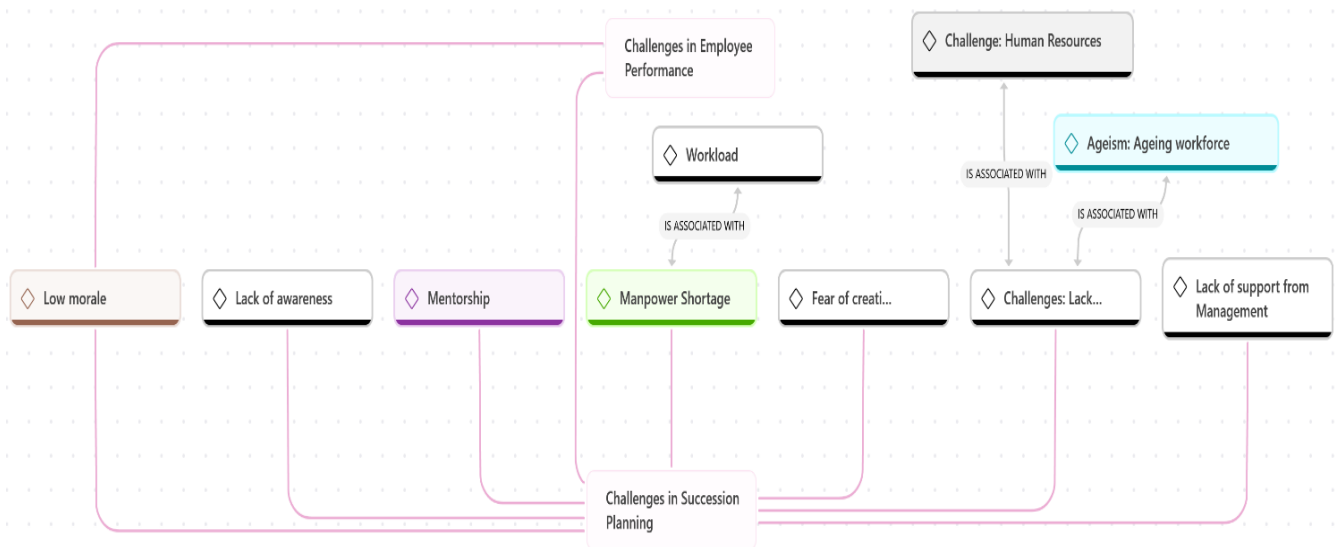


Figure 5.5: Succession planning challenges

Source: Author's compilation

5.2.7 Theme 7: Employee performance challenges

Employee performance challenges within the organisation was the seventh theme that surfaced during the data analysis process. When asked, participants indicated that low morale and pessimistic thinking are issues that affect employee performance.

According to the majority of the participants:

You have to select one best person to fill up that position. And so sometimes it happens that somebody is not promoted, for whatever reason, felt that, that position was made for them.

Participant 14

So, my performance is already going to be affected also. Okay. Can you just take me through to how will it be affected negatively? Yes, negatively affected because I'll be like, okay, it's fine. This is a new person, he's appointed, let me take a step back and let him do the job. No matter he knows the ins and outs of it, but I'm not into it anymore.

Participant 9

But when he comes here, where I am acting, then he takes over from me. Obviously, he is going to need guidance from me, who's operating that post. And that, obviously, my morale will be low.

Participant 13

Well, it affects it negatively and in a big way actually. Service delivery will always be hampered due to the lack of knowledge, lack of experience, lack of execution of duties. There is another impact that it will have.

Participant 8

So, you see the challenges. So, yes, people become negative. But I think they already accepted it, that it's not going to happen, but you cannot say you sit with positive people. How do I talk about succession planning with these people? They will laugh at me.

Participant 4

It is evident that employee performance is negatively affected by lack of succession planning within the organisation.

5.2.8 Theme 8: Leadership capability

The eighth theme that emerged during data analysis was leadership capability within the organisation. Participants indicated that mostly incapable employees are promoted to leadership positions while they have little understanding of the work environment.

Two sub-themes emerged from this theme, namely incompetence and lack of experience. The sub-themes are discussed below.

5.2.8.1 Sub-theme 1: Incompetence

The first sub-theme that emerged was incompetence. Participants alluded to the fact that people are appointed, but management often realises that the individual was appointed merely to fill the position and does not have the necessary skills to perform the role.

According to the majority of the participants:

So in terms of filling the can be done through the normal, you know, advertising and filling of post process, but you don't have a person who runs with the same passion and zeal for the post as the as the predecessor, where there are things or processes already put place and the next person just needs to step in and just take forwards to the next level, but things falls apart and we have to struggle to find that person up to the standard we even us. If you are even able to do that to take you to the next level. So yeah, in terms of success and it's not being successful so far and the filling of post doesn't mean we are winning. We are getting the warm bodies there but it doesn't mean that the whole body can do the job unfortunately.

Participant 1

Poor candidates that are appointed to leadership roles fail to ensure that employees under their command complete their tasks and perform their responsibilities because they are not competent to lead. Those are the results of poor succession planning.

Participant 11

5.2.8.2 Sub-theme 2: Lack of experience

The second sub-theme that emerged was a lack of experience. Participants mentioned that sometimes people who are promoted to certain leadership positions, are individuals lacking expertise or familiarity within an environment and may find themselves elevated to a position, only to be reassigned after a brief period when leadership recognises their inability to fulfil the responsibilities effectively.

According to the majority of the participants:

There's this thing of, they like to say, they want someone with experience. So where do we need to get that if they don't find that person with the experience they are looking for, they will leave that vacant position, that post being vacant like that without even saying, okay, fine, let's take someone who doesn't have experience and let him perform those duties, let mentor him and let him act on that position so that he can gain experience or groom the person so that the person can get experience or be able to performs required duties.

So, there's no way, if you don't act on a position or something, you'll never have experience, so the post will always be vacant, people need to be given an opportunity to get experience or grow. Instead, they will appoint someone with no experience which doesn't make sense for me.

Participant 10

The succession planning and employee performance features that were developed from the themes. The researcher developed the features by also taking into consideration the identification of important positions, appraising talent using performance data and behavioural methods, and the establishment of individualised development plans (IDPs) for identified employees. The themes talked to succession planning and employee performance understanding, leadership development, impact of lack succession planning and employee performance, employee perception on how positions are filled, succession planning & employee performance challenges and leadership capability. The characteristics of succession planning includes exploring intrinsic capabilities, categorising abilities and proficiencies, articulating succession requirements and providing educational opportunities (Gabriel et al., 2020). Additionally, characteristics of employee performance like the behaviour that is directed towards achieving specific objectives, emphasising the employee's capacity to fulfil work responsibilities as well as engage in additional roles beyond their primary duties are all related to the themes mentioned above (Dewiana, Baskara & Hafidz, 2024), and as a result of the relation between the three (3), these themes assisted in creating the features which led to the creation or development of the succession planning and employee performance strategy.

The relation between the development of the features from the themes that emerged from the researchers' data analysis is that the features will assist SAPS to address the negative perception that employees have about succession planning and employee performance within the organisation.

The findings of the discussion above support that succession planning or lack thereof can have an impact employee performance. This enables efficient succession planning to reduce disturbance and sustain organisational stability. The results indicate that succession planning has a beneficial impact on employee performance and hence the organisation needs to realise the importance of a organised or structured succession processes in providing business continuity and stability. Most of the participants were of the opinion that clearly defined succession plans minimise potential disputes

between the employer or organisation and potential successors, and also assist by aligning the interests of the organisation and decreasing costs. The alignment promotes more continuous leadership transitions, and consequently improves organisational performance.

The findings of the discussion above correlates with Nosike and Egbunike (2024), and Kiwia et al. (2019) who emphasise the importance of succession planning in sustaining employee and organisational performance. This study also discusses the possible effect of succession difficulties on the effectiveness of succession planning through the impact on the development of successors. Overcoming these challenges can lead to a better commitment and relationships among the actors involved and hence to effective leadership transitions.

The succession planning and employee performance features discussion in this chapter follow in the next section.

5.3 FEATURES OF A SUCCESSION PLANNING AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

5.3.1 Features of succession planning

According to Gabriel et al., (2020), succession planning's characteristics include determining internal potential, enumerating skills and competencies, defining succession needs and offering training. They are as follows:

5.3.2 Identifying succession needs

Areas of the business that might be at risk of losing important personnel must be continuously considered as part of succession planning. Finding the important roles within the organisation that have the biggest impact on continued success is the first stage in this approach. It goes without saying that each position is significant, although some are more crucial than others. Senior leadership roles, hard-to-fill roles and new roles that may be needed because of environmental or corporate changes are examples of critical positions. In organisations with human resources departments, this

should be a formal planning session with senior leaders and HR personnel rather than a non-formal activity. For both large and small businesses, it is crucial to clearly identify areas that are at risk for succession owing to attrition, retirement, or the need for new skills.

5.3.3 Listing skills and competencies

Key talents and skills that the organisation will require must be carefully considered in order to plan for succession effectively. Organisations must consider the kinds of skills gaps that can arise as employees retire or depart, or when new organisational needs arise, in addition to merely identifying potential vacant positions. For example, social media is becoming more and more vital for many organisations, therefore, having the right abilities is crucial.

5.3.4 Identifying internal potential

Offering the chance for internal growth and development is one of succession planning's main advantages. In addition to reducing risk, organisations give employees valuable possibilities by aligning skill requirements with available internal candidates. Leaders might ask employees to self-identify and indicate areas of interest they would like to cultivate in order to find prospective internal talent.

5.3.5 Providing training

Once identified, the organisation can provide coaching, training and educational opportunities to address the training and development needs of persons who have the potential to transition into future open jobs. Making those chances available is a crucial step in guaranteeing that applicants can take up open positions.

5.3.2 Features of employee performance

5.3.2.1 Task related behaviour

According to Dewiana et al., (2024), task-related behaviour is defined as behaviour that is performed and measured in the context of the work tasks to be performed. Task-related behaviour is also referred to as goal-oriented behaviour that focuses on the

employee's ability to complete work tasks. Employees' work behaviours and contributions that enhance their performance capabilities are their job-specific behaviours and are evaluated separately from other job-specific roles and responsibilities. Employee behaviour for a task cannot be evaluated in the same way as field tasks. Task-related behaviour is in-role behaviour that includes specific environment-based behavioural actions that employees perform in their defined job roles (Ali et al., 2022). In defined job tasks and certain routine tasks, employees adopt work behaviours when performing daily tasks (Dewiana, et al., 2024).

5.3.2.2 Extra-role behaviour

Extra-role behaviour can be defined as adaptable behaviour that is typically unrelated to the official rewards offered by the company. However, the importance of extra-role performance cannot be overstated, as it can help create a pleasant work culture within the business by helping colleagues who struggle to execute their jobs. While extra-role performance (employee extra-role) demonstrates activity outside of the current function, performance in roles relates to the behaviour of individuals carrying out the duties required by the job.

A moderator of the relationship between high-performance work practices and employee performance is the extra role variable. Performance in roles is the behaviour of people carrying out the duties assigned to them, whereas extra role performance (employee extra-role) is behaviour that deviates from their current role (Salsabil, Adam & Chan, 2022).

Formulating a succession plan strategy typically commences with the establishment of a strategic plan, followed by the identification and evaluation of critical roles, and subsequently recognising potential leaders. The evaluation of these employees indicates their potential for leadership, dedication to the organisation, and a strong drive for advancement and success in higher roles. A methodical approach to candidate selection stands as a fundamental element in the formulation of a robust succession plan. Formulating a robust succession plan for SAPS leadership facilitates the cultivation & enhancement of future leaders via training initiatives or mentorship and improved employee performance. Consequently, it is essential to discern and

choose the most suitable strategy to guarantee its successful execution (Othman, Oweidat, Nashwan, Hijazi & Jaber, 2024).

Stemming from the themes and the features discussed in the previous section, the researcher developed the strategy that will benefit SAPS by creating a pool of leaders which the organisation will be able to choose from should the need arise.

This integrated approach to succession planning and employee performance represents a forward-thinking strategy to guarantee that SAPS possesses a well-prepared talent pool, which is prepared to assume essential roles as circumstances demand.

Figure 5.6 illustrates the succession planning and employee performance strategy that can be followed the SAPS to ensure successful implementation, monitoring and evaluation thereof, namely:

- Support and buy in from senior managers
- Develop a succession planning policy
- Revise the performance management process and align it with the succession planning process
- Revise the mentorship guidelines and align them to the succession planning process
- Develop a universal succession planning process
- Develop leadership training, a development and mentorship programme
- Identify employees that retire within a five-year period in leadership positions, and assign them as mentors
- Identify and nominate successor candidates to be mentored
- Develop a tool for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy



Figure 5.6 Succession Planning and Employee Performance Strategy Implementation

Source: Author's compilation

The succession planning and employee performance strategy implementation is briefly described as follows:

Support and buy in from Senior Managers – in order for the SAPS's succession planning to be a success, the organisation's Human Resource Management must have the backing of senior management. Succession planning execution can be difficult without the cooperation of senior management, thus it is crucial to secure their willingness to invest time and resources in these efforts.

Develop Succession Planning Policy - the development of a succession planning policy will assist SAPS to foresee potential leadership gaps in the organisation and to take preventative measures and instead of merely focusing on immediate replacements, the policy will be the guideline on identifying, evaluating, developing internal employees with high-potential based on performance appraisals, cognitive capacity, and leadership readiness in order to fill key positions when vacant.

Revise performance management process and align with succession planning process - when you link performance management with succession planning, annual performance reviews are no longer a matter of administrative compliance but instead a strategic tool for assuring continuity of business operations. Leadership dashboards are supplied with up-to-date performance data, behavioural data and skill gaps which will allow the organisation to deliver the establishment of dynamic, transparent and proactive talent pipelines.

Develop a universal succession planning process – developing a general succession planning process will assist the SAPS uniformity on identification of talent or mentees, all provinces will be following the same process and this will mitigate the perception of employees that succession planning is not possible in the SAPS.

Develop leadership training, development and mentorship programme - the organisation needs to establish an effective leadership program and needs a mixture of formal training, experiential learning and structured mentorship programme. Programs need to be aligned to SAPS's organisational goals and move beyond just the generic training into practical working environment experience, real-world application, continuous feedback and active coaching and mentoring.

Mentees need to be assigned to identified retirees who are in leadership positions, retiring within a five-year period and who are willing to act as mentors - SAPS needs to successfully match mentees with retiring leaders and develop a structured matching process that prioritises the transmission of organisational knowledge, critical skills and career aspirations. This approach maintains essential leadership knowledge and provides for seamless succession streams. The mentor has

to be willing to pay it forward, willing to be a mentor and willing to be a on the job trainer.

Identify and nominate successor candidates to be mentored - the organisation needs to identify successors through identifying critical positions, defining required competences and assessing internal talented employees or employees with leadership potential for readiness and skill gaps. A structured strategy guarantees that the organisation successfully identify and nominate employees to be mentored for critical vacant leadership positions within the organisation.

Develop an evaluation tool for evaluation of the effectiveness - the development of the evaluation tool will assist SAPS to identify, prepare and monitor personnel on the mentorship programme, their progress and their readiness to perform crucial tasks. HR departments and managers will need a tool evaluation tool for the accurate assessment of possible leadership candidates and for the measurement of the effectiveness of succession planning programme.

5.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the main and sub-themes that were constructed from the data. The main themes were understanding succession planning, understanding employee performance, leadership development, the impact of succession planning on employee performance, employee perceptions on how positions are filled, succession planning challenges, employee performance challenges and leadership capabilities.

The next chapter presents the recommendations and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This research study was aimed at understanding how SAPS employees perceive succession planning and employee performance and to develop a succession planning and employee performance strategy for the SAPS. Overall, the findings indicated that there was no succession planning, which affected employee performance. As part of the research, the researcher was able to gain perspectives from employees regarding the elements that support and hinder succession planning implementation in the organisation. This chapter discusses the conclusions and offers some suggestions for enhancing succession planning and performance procedures within the SAPS.

The research questions of the study, as outlined in Section 1.5, are as follows:

6.1.1 Research questions

- How do SAPS employees perceive succession planning and employee performance?
- What is the importance of succession planning and employee performance for SAPS employees?
- Which themes should be considered in developing a succession planning and employee performance strategy in the SAPS?

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

This study explored the perception of SAPS employees on succession planning and employee performance and aimed at developing a succession planning and employee performance strategy. Below, conclusions are made regarding each of the specified objectives (see section 1.4).

6.2.1 Objective 1

- To understand the importance of succession planning and employee performance for SAPS employees

SAPS employees view succession planning as an important practice that can assist the organisation to transition smoothly in an event where a leader is leaving the organisation, especially in the event of retirement, because the retirement age is known to the organisation.

The findings, in a theoretical context, are associated with SET which allow collaborative interactions between two parties and are deeply rooted in the principles of managerial psychology (Blau, 2017). SDT highlights the role an individual must undertake in their own growth to fulfil intrinsic desires, such as autonomy, a sense of competence, and connection, all of which are crucial for optimal or necessary employee performance (Ali & Mehreen, 2020).

The present study has successfully incorporated succession planning into the evaluation of employee performance. Consequently, it has been observed that succession planning exerts a beneficial influence and enhances employee performance. This aligns with the research conducted by Gordon and Overbey (2018), and Schaufeli (2015). According to Gordon and Overbey (2018), succession planning cultivates skilled employees who are committed to their roles, thereby facilitating the attainment of both personal and organisational objectives. It was also noted that organisations cultivate their talents to address future leadership requirements.

Furthermore, succession planning aligned with the SDT encourages individuals to pursue personal development while effectively utilising organisational resources to fulfil the future needs of leadership within the organisation. SDT further enhances individual performance by leveraging job resources and fostering engagement (Ali & Mehreen, 2020).

According to Deci and Ryan's (2000), autonomy, competence and relatedness are three basic psychological requirements that must be satisfied for an individual to experience positive effect which will contribute to the individuals' performance. Chapter 2 offered an in-depth examination of the theoretical frameworks surrounding succession planning and Chapter 3 offered an in-depth examination of the theoretical frameworks surrounding employee performance.

According to Abdullahi et al., (2021), succession planning procedures within the organisation inspire and alter employee attitudes toward achieving the intended performance and support the theories of self-determination and social exchange. These theories confirm/support the findings of the study as the study was aimed at exploring the perception of SAPS employees on succession planning and employee performance and because as life sciences, SDT and SET approach psychological development, integrity and well-being from an organismic/individual perspective. SDT assumes that people are naturally curious, busy and incredibly sociable creatures. Proactive involvement, assimilation of knowledge and behavioural norms and social group integration are characteristics of individual human growth (Ryan & Deci, 2024).

The importance of succession planning and employee performance can be seen as articulated by Abdullahi et al., (2021). The outcome of the study also highlights the importance of the two, where participants indicated that lack of succession planning leads to poor or inadequate employee performance. The suggestion is that due to lack of leadership training and development, inexperienced managers are appointed, which in turn affects the performance of employees working under that particular commander because of being demoralised and end up affecting the performance of the whole station or department.

The importance of succession planning and employee performance is also evident where participants indicated that there are no mentorship programmes for the subordinates, even though the organisation is aware that a leader is going on retirement in 12 months' time, there is still no one being groomed on the responsibilities of that leader and there is no handing over to the person taking over those duties, as the person is appointed when the incumbent of the post has already vacated the post. The evidence suggests that the performance outcomes of a unit or station reflect the effectiveness of untrained leaders.

6.2.2 Objective 2

- To explore the SAPS employees' perception of succession planning and employee performance

SAPS employees regarded succession planning and employee performance as significant activities within the organisation; however, they reported that they were unaware of the SAPS succession planning or that it does not exist. They believe that the performance of employees can be influenced by the appointment of employees who are either inexperienced in a particular position due to their previous experience in a different environment or the individual who is appointed in an interim capacity is not familiar with the responsibilities of the position.

The findings, in a theoretical context, are linked to the significant contributions the study makes to the existing body of knowledge by examining employees' perceptions of succession planning and individual performance, framed as a social exchange process within the context of Social Exchange Theory (Zhang et al., 2019). It further enriches the literature on leadership development by acknowledging succession planning as a crucial tool for cultivating leaders and exploring its impact in relation to other constructs of leader development, and employee performance (Ali & Mehreen, 2020).

What majority of the participants reported about their perception on succession planning and employee performance is that both are of vital importance to the organisation, and that lack of succession planning can have a negative effective effect / impact of the employee performance which will result to non-performance of the organisation.

“That handing over will make it easier for the person to have a proper succession plan rather than having someone starting on a new day and the person who was occupying that post is no more there” (Participant 2).

“I think there is a total misunderstanding of succession planning in the organisation, because the strategy and everything was created or compiled by head office, and I also think it came as a result of one the quality civil bodies, the presidency, which showed that we lack as the organisation and we needed to step up, and now we are doing just because it's there to tick the box. No one really understands it, or even have the appetite” (Participant 1).

“I think as a commander, you need to improvise because nothing stops you to have your own in-service training. And the member might not have a certificate to say I went to a course, but once you empower the member and teach the member some of those skills, and there's theory as well, of course, it's not only practical. When the member indeed goes for a course, the member will be better equipped, but the member will be able to do his job better” (Participant 3).

Stemming from the experiences or perception of the majority of participants, the interpretation is that, succession planning and employee performance is of the importance for sustained organisational performance and business continuity.

SET has been widely utilised as a theoretical framework linking leadership impacts on employee behaviour (Zhang et al., 2019). When organisations allocate greater resources to the well-being and development of their employees, it is anticipated that employees will respond favourably to such expressions of support (Ali et al., 2019). Moreover, the allocation of resources within the organisation is anticipated to close the divide in improving succession prospects and fostering organisational relationships, thereby impacting the established objectives of the organisation in a balanced manner. The perception of SET workers regarding their development as a social exchange is shaped by succession planning, which in turn affects the behaviour of other workers, particularly in relation to employee performance (Ali et al., 2019).

According to the research participants, the organisation, employees and community members have suffered in terms of service delivery as a result of succession planning shortcomings or non-existence. Knowledge gaps, inadequate transitions, a lack of personnel investment or training and development and inconsistent leadership are the top causes of the negative impact. According to research participants, the organisations' capacity to occasionally serve its clients is sometimes hampered by vacancies in important positions. When employees are not adequately trained, developed and invested in, organisations suffer (Kariuki & Ochiri, 2017; LeCounte et al., 2017; Rayburn, Grigsby & Brubaker 2016). The lack of a clear succession planning programme within the studied business led to a higher workload, low morale and

feelings of uncertainty among employees, which in turn affected employee performance. All research participants reported these experiences.

Ali et al. (2019) propose that employees will respond when organisations invest in them and their efforts to achieve organisational objectives will serve as a return on investment. This implies that when companies encourage succession planning, their employees will grow within the organisation, improving both individual and organisational performance.

In light of the above literature, the perception of SAPS employees is that succession planning will be extremely beneficial to the organisation and to the performance of the employees. One participant mentioned that, while training is sometimes unavailable due to cost constraints, in-service training could help implement succession planning processes *“I know we have training, but you know, we have things like cost containment, budgetary cuts. And one sees it that, you know, you will sometimes want to send your members for courses and there are no formal courses, and then I think as a commander, you need to improvise because nothing stops you to have your own in-service training”* (Participant 3).

“if we can remove those silo-ship type of approach by making sure that as an organization we are open and we know for 2025 so many senior managers will be leaving the organization and start planning three or four years before that time. We know people might be appointed in other provinces or somewhere but at least if you have a pool knowing very well that should that person pass on, should that person retire or resign, should that person maybe be dismissed, you have a pool from where you can take. It worked very well because as and when the post is advertised, we know those people will be eager to apply because they are empowered” (Participant 2).

“And so if you have a succession plan that works and includes members that doesn't necessarily have the formalised training, but they've over the years have acquired the skills through non-formal interaction with others and actually doing the job. So that when you create that sort of a pool of people who can succeed, that they are included in that” (Participant 1).

This will also improve the performance of younger employees. He gave an example of the detective or the investigation environments, where he indicated that most of the senior investigators would be retiring and many of the newly appointed investigators are inexperienced. Because the organisation is currently cutting costs, the senior experienced managers could provide in-service training to the new investigating officers, to transfer skills.

The current challenge lies in allocating sufficient time for the training process. The organisation faces a shortage of investigators, with many handling over 100 dockets each. Service delivery, particularly case investigation, takes precedence over training in this task. Thus, while participants recognise the importance of succession planning for employee performance, manpower constraints and mentor commitments prevent its implementation or mentorship.

6.2.3 Objective 3

- Develop a succession planning and employee performance strategy in the SAPS

The succession planning and employee performance strategy can assist the organisation to have the right quality of employees, with the required qualifications and skills and who can be ready to take over in leadership positions when the opportunity presents itself within the organisation; meaning, the organisation does not have to deal with grievances and access to information questioning the competency and eligibility of the appointed employee in a managerial position.

Succession planning strategies include starting and planning early and continuously to prepare the organisation for unexpected changes, developing a formal succession plan policy to identify suitable successor candidates, and setting clear goals. The involvement of senior management is essential to garner support for the practices within the organisation. It is crucial to assess the current talent level to identify key positions and the skills necessary to fill them in the event of vacancies. Additionally, investing in training and development programmes for potential successor candidates is imperative.

During the interviews, participants mentioned that it would have been better if the organisation had a formal structure within the Human Resource department, which is solely responsible and dedicated to implementing succession planning within the organisation. The request emphasised that individuals with genuine interest should be adequately prepared and trained, even if this necessitated their engagement with other organisations to observe the implementation of succession strategies.

Because of the responses and suggestion from participants, the researcher devised a succession planning and employee performance strategy that can be implemented by the organisation. The succession planning and employee strategy (see section 6.3.1) outlines the steps and gives guidance of what the organisation can do to successfully implement and monitor succession planning and employee performance.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the above discussion, the proposed recommendations are:

1. The employees working at Human Resource Planning or employees designated to deal with succession planning must be capacitated, by being sent to training for them to understand the importance of the concept for the organisation, so that they can drive and champion succession planning with a clear understanding of the concept and its impact on employee performance.
2. Change management sessions must be organised or carried out within the Free State Province to secure the assurance and support of the leadership in order to formalise and guarantee good succession planning.
3. Due to the stressful working environment that police officers are working under and the nature of their duties, it is important to keep employees motivated and competitive through mentoring (in line with the employees' career aspirations), upskilling, coaching or even through in-service training.
4. The structures or components that deal with succession planning and employee performance need to be created, to attend to projection of members that will be

leaving the organisation. Meaning the structure that will be specifically dealing with demand and supply and the measures to be put in place in case of emergency vacancies.

5. Market the concept to Senior Managers at Management meetings, to Station Commanders, at the Detective Forum and then cascade the marketing to the station management and station meetings.
6. Involve organised labour (unions) to have an understanding and their buy in in terms of the structured formalised succession planning model that will be adopted or followed by the organisation.
7. Implementation of a mandatory skills transfer at age 55, from employees or managers going on retirement at the age of 60, maybe moving them from operational environments and to training centres to be assigned mentoring duties only.
8. It is necessary to build individual development plans (IDPs), particularly for employees who are in leadership or management roles, as these plans help management and employees within the company set short or long-term goals for professional advancement. IDP helps with succession planning, which in turn opens doors for internal promotions and keeps talented employees.
9. Find and recommend successor candidates who can be mentored, taught and groomed for leadership roles in the future by enhancing employees' skills and expertise, knowledge and skills by training and developing them. They tend to perform much better and they are also better equipped to handle current and future challenges within their work environments.
10. Evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes.

6.3.1 Recommended succession planning and employee performance strategy

The researcher devised, from the data, as depicted in Figure 5.6, a succession planning and employee performance strategy that can be implemented in the SAPS (see Figure 6.1).

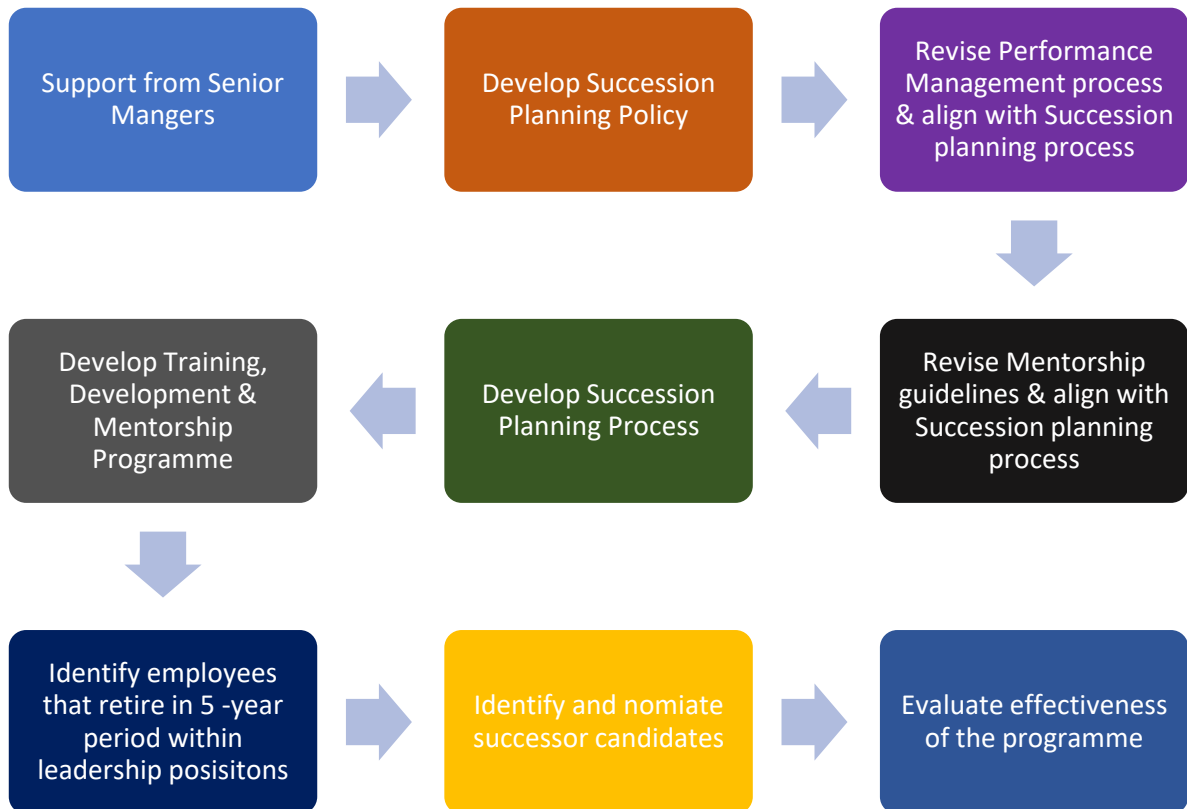


Figure 6.1 Succession Planning and Employee Performance Strategy

Source: Author's compilation

The above strategy will assist the organisation to have the uniform process that can be followed by all provinces, which will in turn assist the organisation to have sustainable performance and skilled managers that are ready to take up leadership roles should there be vacancies within the organisation in the future.

6.3.2 The final succession planning and employee performance strategy proposal to the SAPS

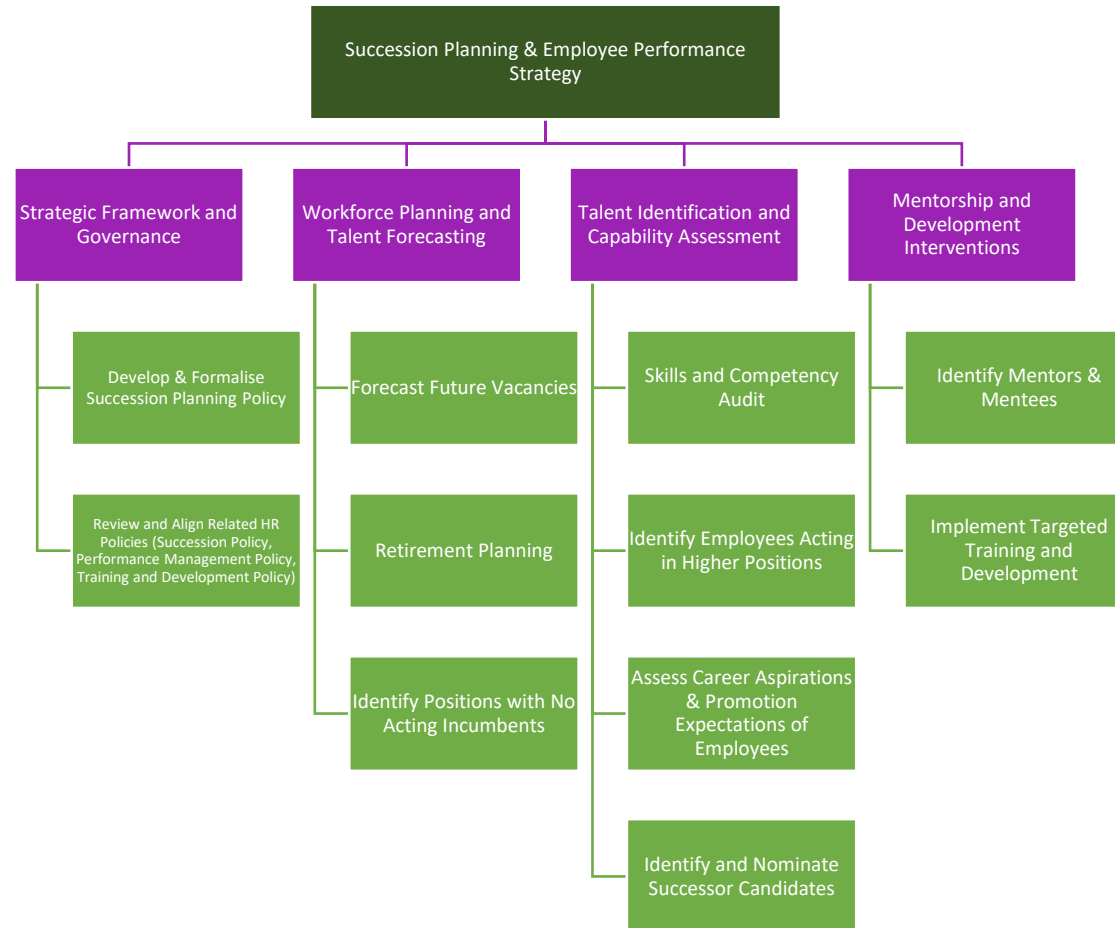


Figure 6.2 Final succession planning and employee performance strategy proposal

Source: Author's compilation

The researchers' final proposal of the succession planning strategy and employee performance to the South African Police Service was devised from the data in chapter 5, as depicted in figure 6.2.

The succession planning and employee performance strategy steps are briefly described as:

- 1) **Strategic framework and governance** - will give an organisation a formal, structured set of rules for how the organisation should operate, make decisions, and adhere. Ultimately, this will ensure that policies are created and used in a way that is responsible, open, and consistent with the organisation's legal demands and strategic goals.

The strategic framework and governance will assist the organisation in the development and formalisation of the succession planning policy as depicted in Figure 5.6 and also review and align HR related policies e.g. succession planning policy, employee performance policy and training and development policy. Aligning these policies will also curb or address the concerns of leadership capability, unfairness, favouritism, and inexperienced managers mentioned by participants in Chapter 5.

As indicated in Chapter 5 the development of a succession plan strategy generally begins with the creation of a strategic framework, which is then succeeded by the identification and assessment of essential roles, ultimately leading to the recognition of prospective leaders. Formulating a robust succession plan for SAPS leadership will facilitate the cultivation and enhancement of future leaders through training initiatives, mentorship, and improved employee performance. Therefore, it is crucial to identify and select the most appropriate approach to ensure its effective implementation (Othman et al., 2024).

- 2) **Workforce planning and talent forecasting** - workforce planning is an important part of talent management that makes sure that the needs of the organisation and the skills of the employees are aligned so that the company may

be efficient, productive, and successful in the long run. SAPS may determine the type of employees they will need in the future and find important talent gaps by looking at how employees act, what skills they have, and what is happening in the job market. This forecasting will help in figuring out what abilities are missing, what talent you will need in the future, and how to plan for succession (Yanamala, 2024).

Workforce planning and talent forecasting will assist the SAPS in forecasting vacancies for the future, plan for vacancies of employees who are going on retirement, and also identify positions with no acting incumbents. The forecasting and planning will help the organisation to know the demand of the organisation and plan for a sufficient supply of competent and skilled employees to fill the vacancies. The data presented in Chapter 5 demonstrates the necessity for the South African Police Service to adopt and implement succession planning in order to secure capable successors and prevent the loss of knowledge and institutional memory within the organisation, which also relates to Gabriel et al., (2020), features of succession planning, where identifying needs was discussed in section 5.3.2.

- 3) Talent identification and capability assessment** - when it comes to human resources, finding high-potential individuals and assessing their knowledge, abilities, and behaviours in respect to current and future needs are two interrelated but equally important activities. The talent pool can be compared to our strategic needs by comparing talent identification, which seeks out individuals with leadership or promotion potential, with capability evaluation, which demonstrates how well employees can carry out certain duties.

Section 5.3.2 indicates that when it comes to human resources, finding high-potential individuals and assessing their knowledge, abilities, and behaviours in respect to current and future needs are two interrelated but equally important activities. This will include skills competency audit, identifying employees acting in higher positions, assessing career aspirations & promotion expectations of employees and identifying and nominating successor candidates. The talent pool

can be compared to our strategic needs by comparing talent identification, which seeks out individuals with leadership or promotion potential, with capability evaluation, which demonstrates how well employees can carry out certain duties (Gabriel et al., 2020).

- 4) Mentorship and development interventions** - their purpose is to enhance employee skills, foster career advancement, and ultimately, improve how an organisation performs. In these partnerships, an individual with more life experience (the mentor) shares what they've learned and experienced with someone with less. These interventions are strong, long-term tools that can help people progress in their careers, professionally, and for the organisation as a whole. Effective mentorship programs often use frameworks like the four C's, which indicates connection which refers to the establishment of a strong, respectful, and trusting mentoring relationship between mentor and mentee, clarity referring to setting clear, measurable, and attainable goals that relate directly to the mentee's development journey, compassion which puts emphasis on empathy and understanding and the last C refers to commitment which highlights the dedication required from both mentor and mentee. These four C's are used to build trusting, productive partnerships (Sanfilippo, 2025).

Mentorship and development interventions involve identifying mentors & mentees and also implementing targeted training and development for the identified employees who have the potential to transition into future open jobs, see Figure 5.6 and section 5.3.5.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations are acknowledged by the study. The scope of this research was restricted to the Free State Province, rather than the entire SAPS. The sample size and participation were of SAPS employees, at Police Stations, Units and offices in Bloemfontein not the whole organisation, as a result the sample consisted solely of SAPS employees who are based in Bloemfontein. Despite the fact that numerous participants received participation invitations, it was challenging to arrange interviews as a result of their professional obligations. However, it is crucial to

acknowledge that the sample of this research still attained data saturation (see section 4.5 discussion on data collection (semi-structured interviews)).

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Drawn from the limitations of this study, recommendations for future research regarding succession planning and employee performance within the SAPS are as follows:

- 1) The participants responses during interviews made it apparent that there are several factors that impact the way employees in SAPS perceive succession planning and employee performance. However, little is currently known about the factors that influence their perception of succession planning and employee performance in SAPS. This is mainly because this study focused on exploring employee's perception on succession planning and employee performance and developing the succession planning and employee performance strategy. Therefore, further research on the perceptions of SAPS employees on succession planning and employee performance can focus on the factors influencing their perceptions and how to mitigate their perceptions needs to be done.
- 2) The research should not be limited to a certain province but be done for the entire SAPS to have a holistic view of the organisation, so that a universal succession planning and employee strategy can be developed.

6.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The researcher explored SAPS employees' perceptions of succession planning and employee performance and developed an integrated succession planning and employee performance strategy.

The current study's findings imply that the sample of employees interviewed perceived it as vital to consider both employee performance and succession planning.

Additionally, based on participants' comments, it seemed that the organisations' leadership buy-in was resistant. Since succession planning has a big influence, it is

assumed that management and HRM leadership teams will be the ones driving and supervising the process. In addition to a lack of leadership support, several other problems were found to be impeding the implementation of formalised succession planning. These issues included a lack of vacant roles within the different businesses, a lack of skills development and a lack of career development with existing employees within the component.

From the interviews of a relatively small sample of SAPS employees in the Free State, it appeared that the organisation is currently reluctant in advocating for succession planning, as it is believed that it will create an expectation for employees who are on the programme. Each of these elements plays a significant role in the complexity of the situation. The results indicate the detrimental consequences associated with the absence of structured succession planning. The researcher devised a strategy to address the concerns of participants and to resolve the issues articulated during the research conducted at the SAPS.

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ANNEXURE A: Ethical Clearance (Unisa HRM Ethics REVIEW COMMITTEE)



College of Economic and Management Sciences_ERC Human Resource Department

Date: 01/03/2024

Dear: Mrs Tankiso Dhlangua

Decision: Ethics Approval from March 2024 until March 2027

NHREC Registration # : (if applicable)

Ref # : 1191

Name: Mrs Tankiso Dhlangua

Student # : 51019132

Staff # :

Researcher: Mrs Tankiso Dhlangua

126 Charlotte Maxeke Street, Metpol Building

Bloemfontein

51019132@mylife.unisa.ac.za 0836921250

Supervisor: Dr Elizabeth Cornelia Rudolph rudolec@unisa.ac.za

Co-Supervisor: Dr Aleksandra Furtak hyraam@unisa.ac.za

Co-Researcher(s):

Email address:

Exploring South African Police Service (SAPS) employees' perceptions about succession planning and employee performance in order to develop a theoretical measuring instrument

Qualification: Master of Commerce in Business Management

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Economic and Management Sciences_ERC Human Resource Department for the above mentioned research study Ethics approval is granted for three years.

The **low-application** was **reviewed** by College of Economic and Management Sciences_ERC Human Resource Department on 30 January 2024 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence 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 is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College of Economic and Management Sciences_ERC Human Resource Department.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the

Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.

5. 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. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date (**March 2027**). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal, for Ethics Research Committee approval.

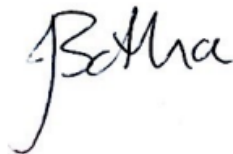
Additional Conditions

1. Disclosure of data to third parties is prohibited without explicit consent from Unisa.
2. De-identified data must be safely stored on password protected PCs.
3. Care should be taken by the researcher when publishing the results to protect the confidentiality and privacy of the university.
4. Adherence to the National Statement on Ethical Research and Publication practices, principle 7 referring to Social awareness, must be ensured: "Researchers and institutions must be sensitive to the potential impact of their research on society, marginal groups or individuals, and must consider these when weighing the benefits of the research against any harmful effects, with a view to minimising or avoiding the latter where possible." Unisa will not be liable for any failure to comply with this principle.

Note

The reference number 1191 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Dr Jo-Anne Botha

Chair of College of Economic and Management Sciences_ERC Human Resource Department

E-mail: Bothaj1@unisa.ac.za



Professor Maelekanyo Christopher MULAUDZI

Executive Dean / By delegation from the Executive Dean of College of Economic and Management Sciences_ERC Human Resource Department

E-mail: tshilmc@unisa.ac.za

ANNEXURE B: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS

South African Police Service



Suid-Afrikaanse Polisie

Privaatsak
Private Bag X94

Pretoria
0001

Faks No.
Fax No.

(012) 393 4333

Your reference/U verwysing:

My reference/My verwysing: 3/34/2

THE HEAD: RESEARCH
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
PRETORIA
0001

Enquiries/Navrae:

Lt Col (Dr) Smit

AC Thenga

Tel:

(012) 393 4333

Email:

ThengaS@saps.gov.za

TI Dhlanguisa

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE:
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA: MASTERS DEGREE: EXPLORING SOUTH AFRICAN
POLICE SERVICE EMPLOYEE'S PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SUCCESSION PLANNING,
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND TO DEVELOP A MEASURING SCALE: RESEARCHER:
TI DHLANGISA**

The above subject matter refers.

1. You are hereby granted approval for your research study on the above-mentioned in terms of National Instruction 4 of 2022.
2. Further arrangements regarding the research study may be made with the following office:
3. The Provincial Commissioner: Free State:
 - **Contact Person:** Lt Col Nair
 - **Contact Details:** (051) 507 7030 and/or 082 953 9194
 - **Email Address:** NairJ@saps.gov.za
4. Kindly adhere to paragraph 8 of our attached letter signed on **2022-12-15** with the above reference number.

BRIGADIER

ACTING HEAD: RESEARCH
DR GJ SCHWARTZ

Date: 2023-01-06

ANNEXURE C: INFORMATION SHEET



INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Prospective participant,

You are invited to participate in a semi-structured interview conducted by Tankiso Innocentia Dhlanguisa under the supervision of Dr Elizabeth Rudolph and co-supervision of Dr Aleksandra Furtak, who are Senior Lecturers in the Department of Human Resource Management towards a Master of Commerce degree in Business Management at the University of South Africa.

You were selected to participate in this study because you can provide insights regarding succession planning and employee performance at the South African Police Service (SAPS). By participating in this study, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes, including dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and conference proceedings.

It is anticipated that the information we gain from this study will help us to understand succession planning and its relationship to employee performance. You are, however, under no obligation to participate and you can withdraw from the study prior to starting the interview. If you choose to participate the interview will take approximately 45 minutes of your time.

You will not benefit from your participation as an individual, however, it is envisioned that the findings of this study will benefit SAPS by developing a succession planning and employee performance strategy. We do not foresee that you will experience any negative consequences by participating in the interview, apart from only the inconvenience of time, however a suitable time that will best suit you will be arranged for the interview. The researcher undertakes to keep any information provided herein confidential, not to let it out of our possession and to report on the findings from the perspective of the participating group and not from the perspective of an individual.

The interview will be recorded and audio recorder device will be used. The records will be kept for five years for audit purposes where after it will be permanently destroyed and electronic versions will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the researcher's computer. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in this study.



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ANNEXURE D: CONSENT FORM



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname..... (please print)

Participant Signature.....Date.....

Researcher's Name & Surname..... (please print)

Researcher's signature.....Date.....



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ANNEXURE E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



Interview Schedule

Primary research objective

The primary objective of this study will be to explore how the SAPS employees perceive succession planning and employee performance and to develop a succession planning and employee performance strategy for the SAPS.

Purpose of the interview

The overall purpose of the semi-structured interview for data collection is for information gathering from participants who have personal experiences, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs relating to the topic being investigated. Researchers can use semi-structured interviews to triangulate other data sources or validate the findings through member checking (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

Interview questions

The participants in the research will be commissioned and non-commissioned Officers.

The questions that will be asked in the interviews will be as follows:

1. What position do you occupy in the organisation and what does it involve?
2. What is your understanding of succession planning?
3. What do you understand about employee performance?
4. Can you explain how leadership positions are filled in SAPS?
5. What is your view on how positions are filled?
6. How is employee performance affected by the way positions are being filled?
7. What effect does a lack of succession planning have on business continuity?
8. Which process in your view, must be followed when filling vacant positions in the organisation?
9. Are there any challenges that SAPS faces with regards to succession planning?
10. Are there any challenges relating to employee performance?
11. Which interventions in your view can be implemented for succession planning?



ANNEXURE F: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

 DR LINDA SCOTT Editing Services and Development Programmes <i>Promoting Linguistic and Cultural Inclusivity</i>	☎ 083 654 4156
	📍 28 Grenache Street, Oude Chardonnay Estate, Paarl 7646
	✉ lindascott1984@gmail.com
	🌐 www.justedit.co.za
PhD: Language Practice MA: Intercultural Communication BA (Hons): Language Practice NPDE and ACE	

20 September 2025

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I, the undersigned, have language edited the **dissertation** of

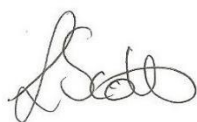
TANKISO INNOCENTIA DHLANGISA

Entitled:

***UNDERSTANDING SAPS EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF SUCCESSION
PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE: DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED
SUCCESSION AND PERFORMANCE STRATEGY***

The responsibility of implementing the recommended language changes rests with the author of the document.

Yours truly,



Dr Linda Scott