Investigating incentive strategies to increase employee engagement at an engineering services entity

LP Pretorius



orcid.org 0000-0002-1871-068X

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Supervisor: Prof RA Lotriet

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Student number: 22078576

NWU BUSINESS SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

The feasibility of a points-based reward incentive scheme with game-like activities was proposed in this study to increase employee engagement. This was done by investigating conventional incentive and reward schemes. A unique incentive scheme aims to increase the engagement and motivation at an engineering services entity. A literature review was conducted to determine the various factors that influence employee motivation and engagement and to what measure it affects employee performance. Management of diversity was researched regarding the multigenerational workforce currently employed by the company. The literature indicated that there is a positive relationship between employee motivation, engagement and rewards in addition to their typical salary. The empirical investigation confirmed through statistical analysis of the data obtained through a questionnaire that the constructs listed in the literature indicated a positive relationship between motivation and engagement. Thus, employees who are motivated in the workplace tend to be more engaged. The respondents, on average, revealed that they would be willing to participate in a corporate points-based reward scheme with game-like activities. In addition, a reward scheme structure was subsequently proposed according to the needs of the multigenerational workforce.

Keywords: motivation, engagement, generations, incentive schemes, gamification, engineering service entity, reward scheme

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

GWA	Gallup Workplace Audit
HR	Human Resources
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
SCS	Statistic Consultation Services
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
UWES	Utrecht Work Engagement Scale
WEIMS	Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale
W-SDI	Self-determination index

1. CHAPTER 1: NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on employee motivation and engagement and investigates whether incentive strategies like Gamification and a points-based reward scheme would be feasible within an organisation. This chapter describes the background to the study and the problem statement. The research objectives will be listed, and subsequently, the research methodology proposed to achieve the objectives set.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The business environment is currently operating in a competitive modern era where factors such as advanced technologies, globalisation, various types of industries with upcoming competitors are dealt with regularly. To maintain a competitive advantage, minimise employee turnover and improve profitability, employees in an organisation must remain motivated, engaged and creative (De Vito *et al.*, 2018; Singh, 2016).

Motivation can be described as the mental willpower, behaviour and determination of an employee when faced with obstacles in the workplace with specific objectives (Abner & Samuel, 2019). There is an increasing trend in employees that are uninterested, with low motivational levels and conducting personal work during working hours (Casimir, 2020). Management and leadership will be responsible for encouraging the employees by creating a positive and productive work environment, as well as to strategise on new innovative ideas to sustain high motivational levels (De Vito *et al*., 2018).

There may be a way to motivate the workforce to do more than what is asked through alternative incentive strategies such as a points-based reward program and Gamification over the conventional methods for example, commission, leave, training, promotions and acknowledgement. This study will focus on non-conventional alternative ways to incentivise employees to motivate them to obtain additional business opportunities. The company that will be investigated in this study operates predominately as a sales and engineering services unit within Southern Africa and has a strong footprint in the engineering, automotive, mining, food and beverage and paper sectors. The business growth is predominantly dependent on the sales team and customer services to obtain new opportunities and maintain current clients.

The current incentive scheme of the organisation comprises an annual bonus which is constructed as follow:

- 50% based on group-level performance
- 25% based on local business unit performance
- 25% based on employee performance

Depending on the employee's position within the company, their annual bonus will range from 15% to 25% of their annual basic salary. This, however, means that the difference between employees who achieve their performance goals and those who do not, essentially receive the same amount of bonus each year. This can be very unmotivating to some employees who try their utmost best to achieve their goals.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

From the preceding background, it is evident that sufficient employee motivation and retention is critical to success in the modern age of business strategies (Aguenza & Som, 2012). To avoid low employee motivation and engagement, companies should investigate alternative approaches to motivate employees by utilising non-conventional incentive strategies over conventional methods. Conventional methods can include but are not limited to, the following: annual bonus and leave, health benefits and company discount (Cerasoli *et al.*, 2014).

Employee rewards are a crucial part of any organisation, and human performance could be improved through motivation (Muogbo, 2013). The reward system of a company will influence both the employer and the employee and should be updated and continuously improved. The preferred reward of an employee can change from day-to-day according to the needs of the employee. For example, additional renumeration could be preferable in one month, while additional leave is preferred the next month (Chintalloo & Mahadeo, 2013).

There may be a way that organisations can continuously motivate employees through alternative methods, rather than commission or additional company discount to keep them continually motivated. For example, loyalty programs are primarily aimed towards economic benefits utilising points that can be redeemed by clients of the service (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015). Gamification is a new trend that indicated that people are more engaged in their activities when exposed to a game-like environment (Ergle, 2015). There is also evidence

that Gamification has excellent potential to increase intrinsic needs of an employee and when strategically aligned with employee motivation, can increase day-to-day employee engagement (Perryer *et al.*, 2016; Xi & Hamari, 2019).

Therefore, this study will investigate whether a points-based rewards scheme with game-like activities will be feasible within an engineering services entity to increase employee engagement and motivation.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

The research objectives related to this study are divided into primary and secondary objectives.

1.4.1. Primary objective:

The primary objective of this study is to ascertain whether a points-based reward incentive scheme with game-like activities would be feasible within the company investigated to encourage employees to be more engaged and motivated in their daily objectives.

1.4.2. Secondary objectives:

To achieve the primary objective, the following secondary objectives were derived.

- To determine the current motivational and engagement levels within the company.
- To investigate the relationship between employee engagement and motivation.
- To investigate reward schemes and Gamification as incentive strategies based on the literature.
- To determine whether the company would be open to a corporate reward scheme and Gamification.
- To investigate reward preferences according to employee age.
- To determine the relationship between employee motivation levels and participants who actively try and meet their goals with reward schemes like Vitality and eBucks?
- To propose a feasible points-based reward scheme with game-like activities.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to determine whether a points-based reward incentive scheme with game-like work activities will be feasible within a South African engineering services entity. This could aid in improved employee engagement and motivation within the company and subsequently, employee performance.

1.5.1. Delimitations (Scope)

The study will be limited to the current staff of the company regarding the South African operations. Their objective opinions regarding their current motivation, engagement and incentive preferences will be required for this study. The study will also be limited to a points-based reward scheme, Gamification and conventional incentive strategies found in the literature and practised by the company.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section will contain the methodology that will be followed to conduct this research study and will mainly consist of two sections namely a literature overview regarding previous research and an empirical study.

1.6.1. Literature review

A comprehensive literature review of this study was conducted using relevant academic journals, articles, thesis and books. The university librarian conducted a complete database search to obtain previous research on the relevant topic. The literature was further obtained by also consulting the following databases:

- EbscoHost: International journals on Academic Search Premier
- ProQuest: International dissertations in full text
- ScienceDirect: Peer-reviewed articles
- Internet: Google Scholar

1.6.2. Empirical investigation

1.6.2.1. Research design

This study aimed to determine whether a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities would be a feasible incentive strategy over the current incentive scheme to motivate employees to be more engaged in their work activities. A quantitative approach will be followed in this study. It can be defined as the process of conducting a study that starts with an idea or research questions/objectives that would later be evaluated using a set of structured questionnaires (Choy, 2014). A survey was utilised at a single point in time to obtain the data from the employees. This method of study conforms to the definition of descriptive cross-sectional research design (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019).

The conclusions drawn from the study were used to propose an incentive strategy to the company to motivate and engage the employees, and in turn, this strategy also boosts employee performance. However, because of the narrow scope of this study, generalisations were not inferred to operationalise the results to a wider audience.

1.6.2.2. Target population

The study will be limited to the current employees of the company in question. The study population will include the employees over all the business units in the company, including finance, engineering, customer services, Human Resources (HR) and field services.

All the participants were briefed on the study's purpose. They were assured that the results will remain anonymous, whereafter they were requested to complete the questionnaire honestly. They were also required to complete a consent form to adhere to the ethical requirements for this investigation.

1.6.2.3. Sample type

In this study, a convenience sample type will be used to obtain the required data from the participants. A convenience sample includes participants that are the most accessible; this method will not be able to produce generalisable results (McCombes, 2020).

The target sample was all the employees working for the company in South Africa over all business units. The company has approximately 219 employees in sub-Saharan Africa, including Zambia and Mozambique. Only South African employees were targeted, and the

sample ranged from professional to semi-skilled employees. The sample was targeted to participate via an online questionnaire.

1.6.2.4. Data collection

The study was mainly focused on a quantitative point of view, and it was predominantly be collected using a dichotomous scale in the form of "yes" and "no" and a 7-point Likert rating scale questionnaire as follow:

- 1 (Very Strongly Disagree)
- 2 (Strongly Disagree)
- 3 (Disagree)
- 4 (Neither)
- 5 (Agree)
- 6 (Strongly Agree)
- 7 (Very Strongly Agree)

All the respondents were required to complete the same questionnaire. The data was collected using an online questionnaire tool (SurveyMonkey) and emailed to the participants to participate.

1.6.2.5. Measuring instrument

Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are two crucial factors when evaluating measuring instruments of a study. Validity can be defined as to what degree a concept is accurately measured in a quantitative study (Leung, 2015). For example, a study intended to measure employee ethics that measures motivation would not be valid. Reliability can be defined as the repeatability of the study; in other words, how consistent are the results of the study (Taherdoost, 2016). When employee motivation is measured in a survey, it should return a degree of consistent results when repeated. Reliability is measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient and is the most widely used method (Bonett & Wright, 2015). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient should, however, be a minimum of .70 (Taherdoost, 2016). For this study, no pilot study was conducted to verify the measuring instruments as the entire population will be targeted and previously validated questionnaires used.

Measuring instrument

In this empirical investigation, a total of three questionnaires were used to determine the feasibility of a corporate reward scheme with game-like activities. Firstly, the population demographics were obtained in the first section that will include the participant's age group, education, years of employment and department within the company. This information was used to profile the respondents without asking for sensitive information. The respondent profiles were used to identify the opportunities within the company.

The following three questionnaires were used to determine the current motivation and engagement levels within the company and also to determine the preferred incentive methods to propose a feasible strategy.

- The first questionnaire measured motivational work levels and developed by Tremblay *et al.* The scale is divided into six sub-levels of motivation, namely, Intrinsic Motivation, Integrated Regulations, Identified Regulations, Introjected Regulations, External Regulations, and Amotivation (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). The scale consists out of 18 questions is scored from 1 to 7 from very strongly disagree to very strongly agree.
- The second questionnaire used in this study is the *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES),* which measured the work engagement levels of the participants (Seppälä *et al.*, 2009). This scale is divided into three dimensions, namely, Dedication, Vigour and Absorption. A total of 17 questions is used to measure the three dimensions and is scored from 1 to 7 from very strongly disagree to very strongly agree.
- The third questionnaire measured the preferred incentive methods and likelihood to participate in alternative methods to justify the feasibility for a corporate reward scheme with game-like activities.

1.6.2.6. Data analysis

The Statistic Consultation Service (SCS) of North-West University was consulted to analyse the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. This was done using statistical software programs, for example, IBM SPSS 26 or SAS. The results were interpreted in detail to draw conclusions for the study (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to determine the effect and correlation between the constructs of the questionnaire.

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The ethical factors regarding this study were assessed, and the participants and company involved in this study will remain anonymous. The questionnaire will be distributed to the participants via email link to the Google forms or SurveyMonkey site where they would complete the questions. Nature and objectives will be well explained in the email body and assured that they would remain anonymous.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcome of this study will indicate whether it is beneficial for organisations to motivate their employees using a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities that do not necessarily include any monetary value. This could enable companies to motivate employees and simultaneously grow business opportunities. The employees could be incentivised according to their preference and needs as a result of their additional efforts. The employee turnover could also reduce as a result of more engaged employees, and overall morale would increase in the workplace. A points-based reward scheme would also allow employees to be continuously reviewed instead of once per annum.

1.9 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The study comprises the following chapters.

Chapter 1: Nature and scope of the study

This chapter describes the introduction, a brief research background, research objectives (primary and secondary) as well as the scope of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter describes all the relevant fields of literature required to conduct this study.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology used to obtain the required results from the study. Aspects of the research design include the measuring instruments, data analysis and procedures.

Chapter 4: Empirical investigation

This chapter will contain the results and discussions regarding the outcome of the study.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter contains the conclusions reached from the empirical study and any recommendations regarding the study outcome to the company management team and future research.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided the necessary introduction, background, problem statement and research method to be utilised in this study. The following chapter will contain the literature review regarding employee motivation and engagement and how incentives schemes could improve employee performance.

2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the literature review is to examine previous research conducted regarding the key concepts used in this study. The review firstly examines employee motivation and the relevant factors involved. The Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) developed by Trembley is used in this study to determine the motivational levels of the participants in an engineering entity. Secondly, the various factors regarding employee engagement are discussed, and the importance of highly engaged personnel, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) are used to determine the current engagement factors of the sample population. Thirdly, conventional and alternative incentive strategies are examined as the core focus of this study. The main focus is to determine whether a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities could be used to increase employee motivation and engagement. Lastly, the multigenerational workforce is examined to determine the motivational and engagement factors regarding the three largest generations within the current workforce. This includes the younger Millennial generation, the older Generation X and the retiring Baby Boomers. The following Figure indicates the conceptual framework of the study.

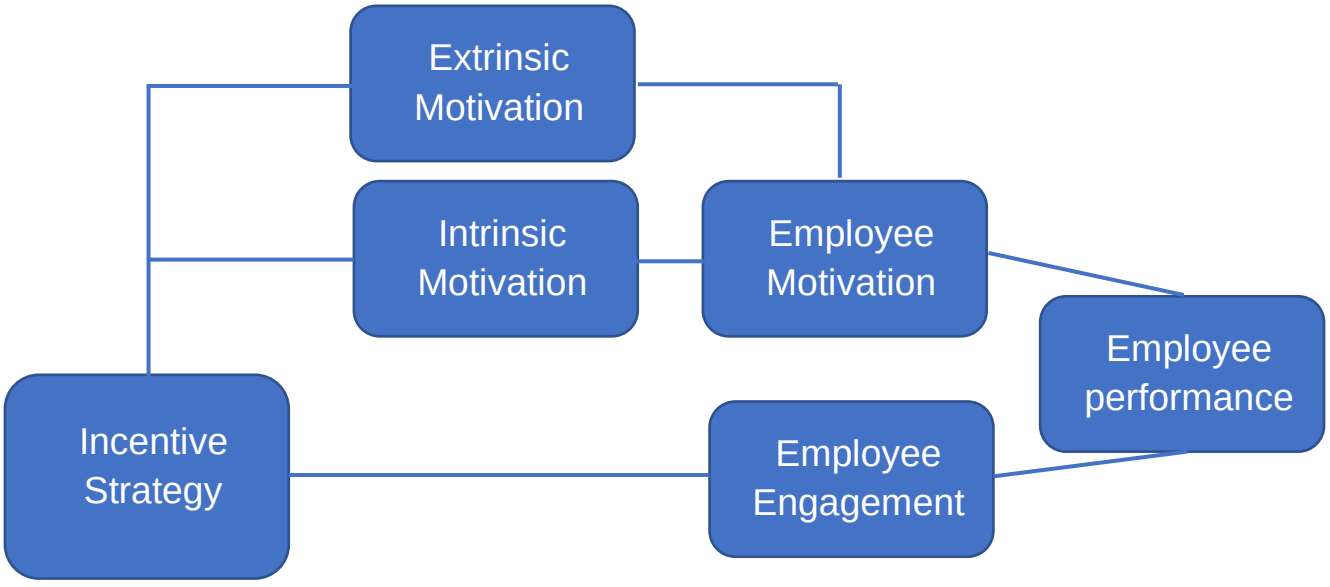


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

(Source: Own compilation)

2.2 EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

In any business environment, employee motivation can be considered crucial to the success and performance of any organisation, being either public or private, large or small and have a direct impact on employee performance (Abbah, 2014; Abner & Samuel, 2019; Ogbonnaya *et al*., 2017). Therefore, it is crucial for organisations and its managing members to fully understand what drives and motivates their employees if they wish to maximise organisational performance (Lee & Raschke, 2016).

2.2.1 Background

In the literature, different variations that define motivation could be found. The main factors identified established that motivation as a vital driving force that engages individuals in any activity as well as the associated commitment, energy and creativity levels (Maduka & Okafor, 2014; Robescu & Lancu, 2016; Shahzadi *et al.,* 2014; Singh, 2016).

Early motivational theories date back to the mid-20th century with the most popular one being the Hierarchy of Needs developed by Abraham Maslow. His theory of needs identified the factors that motivate individuals and presented them in a hierarchy form. The theory primarily suggests that one must first meet the basic level needs such as food and shelter before moving to the higher-level needs such as creativity, love and morality (Kanfer & Chen, 2016).

A more recent and relevant motivational theory to this study was proposed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in the 1970s and is known as the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This primarily focuses on the choices one makes and examines the degree to which human behaviour is self-determined and self-motivated. Within this theory, it states that elevated motivational levels would be obtained when an individual achieves the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Vasconcellos *et al.*, 2020).

Since the SDT applies to actions that individuals find pleasing, stimulating and exciting, activities that do not include these factors would result in low motivation and would not likely be performed optimally unless there is some form of extrinsic reason involved. Work activities can often fall outside this framework and would require extrinsic motivational factors (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). Unmotivated employees would likely spend little to no effort

to achieve their work objectives, provide substandard work quality and prone to change jobs that would result in increased employee turnover (Ganta, 2014).

On the contrary, extremely motivated employees will result in higher employee performance, increase work quality and willing to be more engaged in their work environment. The literature indicated that motivation could be considered a critical aspect regarding employee performance, and studies have shown that employee motivation directly impacts organisational productivity and growth (Kiradoo, 2014). Humans require some form of motivation or inspiration to achieve organisational or personal goals (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). These goals can be achieved through intrinsic or extrinsic motivation and have become a very debatable topic amongst researchers and employers to find the optimal way to motivate their employees to perform well in their workplace.

The following section will describe the internal and external motivational factors in more detail.

2.2.2 Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation can simply be described as inspirations that come from within. It can also be referred to as actions that bring purposeful and personal enjoyment to one's self and provide enough reason to persist with the associated action (Cerasoli *et al.,* 2014; Ganta, 2014). Intrinsic motivation can also be considered as mainly internal and not associated with any external goals (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015).

It was found in the literature by Singh (2016) that people who are motivated intrinsically are more driven to perform actions than people who are motivated extrinsically. Ganta (2014) has indicated that intrinsic motivation plays a crucial part in any organisation and a critical factor in innovation and employee performance.

2.2.3 Extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation can be referred to as external factors that influence individuals from the outside (Ganta, 2014; Hamari & Koivisto, 2015; Robescu & Iancu, 2016). A lot of external motivators have been identified in the literature such as work promotion, competition, material achievements, recognition and monetary rewards. These factors only encourage employees to work harder due to the compensation they could receive from performing at

their work duties. Additional factors were also listed as extrinsic motivators, such as career advancement and job security (Singh, 2016).

2.2.4 Self-Determination Theory

As discussed previously, this theory suggests that humans require the following three basic psychological needs to sustain interest, development and wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2017):

- **Autonomy**

  Autonomy relates to the need to self-regulate one's experiences and actions. When acting with autonomy, behaviours are engaged wholeheartedly, and an individual will experience the freedom of choice during task performance.

- **Competence**

  Competence refers to the intrinsic feeling or desire to be effective and successful in one's work without feeling inferior in terms of effectiveness (Mills & Allen, 2020).

- **Relatedness**

  Relatedness, on the other hand, refers to an individual's need to feel a sense of connectedness with others and feelings of belonging within a group of people (Butz & Stupnisky, 2017).

Figure 2.2 below describes the SDT as a continuum as proposed by Ryan & Deci (2000), where Amotivation (AMO) and intrinsic motivation are the two extremes. Tremblay *et al.* (2009) also noted from the theory that the continuum should not be seen as developmental, where individuals continuously progress through the various stages. Instead, a new behaviour may be internalised along the continuum at any point depending on organisational factors and previous experiences.

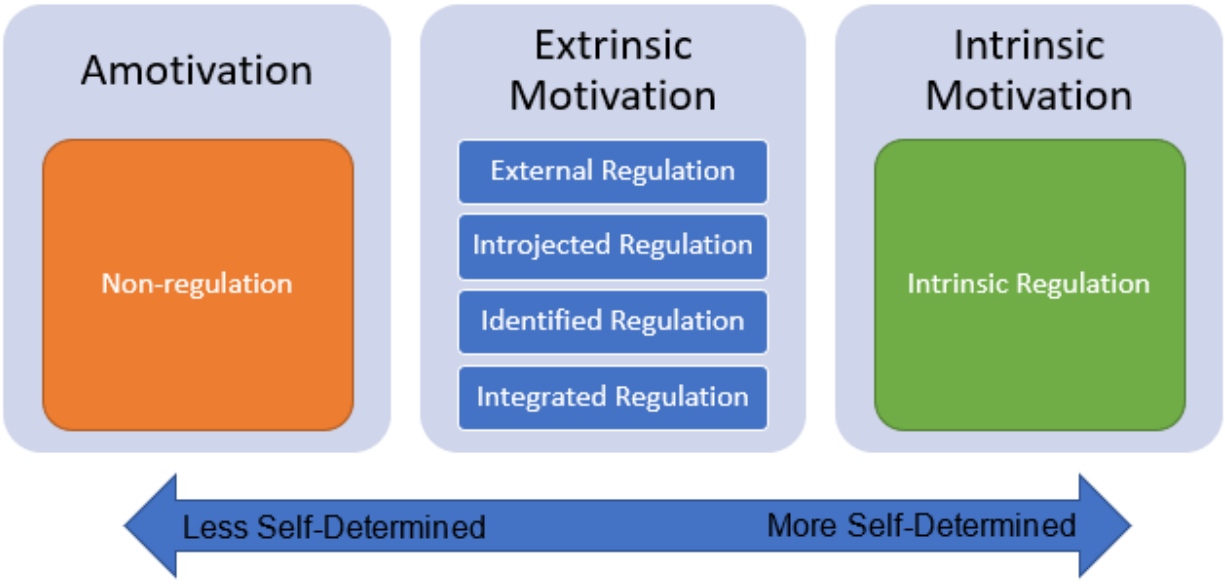


Figure 2.2: Self-Determination Continuum (adapted from Ryan and Deci, (2000))

The SDT differentiates between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, and different types of extrinsic motivational levels are controlled by external factors (Ryan & Deci, 2017). At the low end of the continuum, Amotivation refers to an individual's lack of desire to engage in an activity and can be described in simple terms as the absence of any intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Mills & Allen, 2020). In the centre, lies the extrinsic motivational factors that range from the lowest self-determination stage to the highest. With the first being External Regulation (ER), and can be described as where individuals perform activities purely to obtain a reward (Legault, 2016). The second, Introjected Regulation (INTRO), refers to the behaviour of internal pressure, in other words, behaviour through contingencies of self-worth, for example, self-esteem or guilt (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). The third stage, Identified Regulation (IDEN) refers to the act of engaging in activities due to the nature, meaning and value of the activity that can be seen as one's own (Legault, 2016). Finally, the last stage, integrated regulation (INTEG) refers to employees that engage/identify with activities to the extent of one's self-identity (Mills & Allen, 2020). The last stage of the continuum includes intrinsic motivation where individuals or employees perform activities due to the inherently enjoyable and satisfying nature of the act (Vasconcellos *et al.*, 2020).

Ultimately, with each progressive stage along the continuum, employees will experience increasing levels of ownership and personal acceptance. This will range from the lower self-determined levels (Amotivation) to the more self-determined (intrinsic) motivational levels and would result in good employee performance and wellbeing (MacIntyre *et al.*, 2018).

Most researchers prefer to use a single score to determine the motivation levels of employees. This can be described by the self-determination index (W-SDI) (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). This score can be useful to identify individuals based on where they are along the continuum of the SDT.

2.2.5 Employee motivation in context

According to the expectancy theory, employees would be more motivated when they believe that their work efforts will result in desired rewards and positive outcomes (De Vito *et al.*, 2018). This study aims to investigate reward strategies to obtain a higher motivated workforce. Literature has shown that reward systems consist of both intrinsic and extrinsic reward factors needed for optimal employee performance (Hassan & Ndegwa, 2019). Reward systems and motivation has been a popular research topic and a concern for organisations in the uncertain business environment, especially to retain talented employees (Riaz *et al.*, 2018). Riaz *et al.*, (2018) also found in their study that there exists a strong relationship between employee motivation, performance and reward systems. Thus, reward systems would incorporate both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that will address the psychological needs of employees. This would be achieved using financial rewards such as salary and commission as well as non-financial rewards such as flexible working hours, recognition and promotion (Hassan & Ndegwa, 2019; Riaz *et al.*, 2018).

Based on the literature, employees that experience motivation more towards the right side of the SDT continuum (autonomous) will result in higher motivational levels and tend to perform better in the working environment. To ensure that employees experience the required motivation, organisations could adopt various strategies to obtain the necessary results. As discussed previously, intrinsic motivation can be obtained by working activities that are fun, interesting and challenging. When these feelings are not obtained, incentive contingencies could aid extrinsic motivation (Legault, 2016). However, organisations should be aware that each employee has their own specific needs and requirements and factors such as gender, age group, education and duration of employment would impact the level of motivation (Shahzadi *et al.*, 2014). Employee engagement also plays a crucial role in the performance of employees. The following section will summarise the concepts found in the literature regarding employee engagement.

2.3 WORK ENGAGEMENT

In the literature, different researchers have defined employee engagement in various ways. However, the term can be defined as an employee who can be seen as an ambassador of the company, one who consistently produces results and driven in their work (Chandani *et al.,* 2016).

2.3.1 Background

William Kahn first conceptualised work engagement in the 1990s, where he indicated that employees are emotionally, physically and cognitively involved in their work activities (Knight *et al.*, 2017). Kahn also found that any individual's experience in the work role will differ from one another according to their surroundings and work experience related to the work role (Joo *et al.*, 2016).

Some researchers reported employee engagement as the opposite of burnout due to the associated dimensions that include inefficacy, cynicism and exhaustion (Nimon & Shuck, 2020). The opposite of these negative burnout dimensions can be considered as the core dimensions of engagement and describes feelings of positivity, fulfilment and satisfaction (Martin, 2017). These dimensions can be characterised as vigour, dedication, and absorption. Vigour can be described as the individual's energy levels, willingness to work and personal investment in the job function. Dedication describes the individual's feeling of enthusiasm and pride towards one's work function and absorption as a sense of concentration and difficulty to detach oneself (Schaufeli, 2018).

There were three different levels of employee engagement found in the literature namely, engaged, not engaged and disengaged and can directly relate to the success off an organisation (Chandani *et al.*, 2016; and Ogbonnaya *et al.*, 2017). These three levels are further described by Chandani and Ogbonnaya below.

2.3.2 Categories of employee engagement

2.3.2.1 Engaged

Employees who are engaged in their work, show passion towards their work activities and the goals of the company. They work with pride and indicate strength and actively use their talents in their work activities.

2.3.2.2 Not engaged

Employees who are not engaged will participate in the goals of the company, however, with little energy or passion. They prefer to be told what to do and do not work independently. When they finish tasks, they will rather wait to be delegated than to use their own initiative.

2.3.2.3 Disengaged

Disengaged employees are unhappy in their workplace and show no dedication to the goals of the company. They have a great sense of negativity and produce little results in the company.

The majority of adults spend their time working, and yet, a mere 20% are highly engaged in their work (Ergle, 2015). Employee engagement consists of non-material and material incentives, where both indicate great importance to employee performance (Rakhmanova & Kryukov, 2019). Incentives and rewards have a strong ability to produce highly engaged employees and will be discussed further in the next section (Chandani *et al.*, 2016).

2.3.3 Measuring employee engagement

There were several instruments identified in the literature that can successfully measure employee engagement. According to a study conducted by (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019), they identified the ten most popular instruments based on the number of citations and usage by scholars and practitioners. The top five instruments identified are as follow:

- **Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA)**

  Researchers of The Gallup Organization developed the GAW by conducting qualitative research on focus groups across a wide variety of industries. The model was mainly designed for attitudinal outcomes and to identify factors within management's control that are antecedents to these outcomes. The GWA comprise of 12 questions to measure employee perceptions of their work structures (Jadhav & Bhise).

- **Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)**

  The UWES was developed and introduced by Schaufeli and Bakker in 2003, this scale measures engagement based on three subscales namely, vigour, dedication and absorption in the form of a 17 question Likert-scale questionnaire (Khodakarami *et al.*, 2018).

- **Psychological Engagement Measure**

  The authors based their instrument on the concept of employee engagement having three dimensions, namely, psychological safety, psychological meaningfulness and psychological availability. The instrument comprises of a 13-item questionnaire that was developed to measure three aspects of engagement, namely, cognitive, physical and emotion (Shrotryia & Dhanda, 2019).

- **Job and Organisational Engagement Scale**

  This instrument was initially developed by Saks in 2006 and designed to measure the extent to which an individual is psychologically present in a specific organisational role (Khodakarami *et al.*, 2018).

- **Job Engagement Measure**

  This instrument was developed to measure an individual's physical, cognitive, and emotional energy regarding work activities (Byrne *et al.*, 2016). This instrument utilises an 8-item questionnaire on a five-point scale.

Based on research regarding the instruments mentioned above, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale resulted in the most commonly used instrument and selected for this study. The UWES has been validated in several countries, including China, Japan, South Africa and the Netherlands (Boikanyo, 2012). The literature indicated that there are many ways to measure employee engagement and that there are various stages of engagement of an individual. The following section will describe the necessity of employee engagement in the context of this study.

2.3.4 Employee engagement in context

Work engagement can be considered essential in any business or organisation. Highly engaged employees will subsequently result in increased job satisfaction, performance and ultimately organisational productivity (Singh *et al.*, 2016). Several factors could influence the engagement levels of employees in the workplace. The literature indicated that many researchers had studied these driving factors, and according to a study conducted by (Barik & Kochar, 2017), who based their research on summarising these factors, have identified the following key driving factors:

- Reward System
- Job enhancement
- Effective management
- Scope of advancement & self-development
- Security of employment
- Decision-making authority

From the factors mentioned above and being the core focus of this study, reward systems will be considered necessary in this study.

From the literature, various researchers investigated and reported the effect and importance of an effective reward system within organisations on employee engagement. Barik and Kochar (2017), reported that a reward system should be efficient and effective to achieve organisational goals and to retain and engage employees. Osborne and Hammoud (2017) reported that an effective reward system and recognition directly impact employee engagement and work performance.

From the literature, it is evident that employee engagement can be considered as a vital component that could aid to organisational success and sustainability. The following section will describe various conventional and non-conventional strategies that could be implemented to improve employee engagement and motivation.

2.4 STRATEGIES THAT IMPACT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

2.4.1 Conventional incentive strategies

Incentives can be defined as any promise of some form of a reward based on performance and mainly motivate employees by influencing their behaviour to produce high standard and quality work. Common examples of performance-enhancing incentives include awards, additional paid leave, promotions, praise and recognitions (Cerasoli *et al.*, 2014). Through incentivising employees, they strive to perform better to achieve greater rewards in addition to their regular salary (Ganta, 2014). Incentives are significant to employees, whether they are intrinsically or extrinsically. An employee can be intrinsically rewarded using satisfaction or pride when an objective is reached and satisfied. In contrast, employees can be extrinsically rewarded in the form of pay or benefits at the end of the month (Shahzadi *et al.*, 2014). On the contrary, many employees would prefer recognition from their employers to perform better. A strategy can also act as a recognition system to employees who excel in their work objectives, enabling them to obtain intrinsic motivation from feeling satisfied and recognised.

2.4.1.1 Reward systems

A reward system comprises more than just a basic salary alone, and it can be regarded as intrinsic, extrinsic, monetary and non-monetary (Victor & Hoole, 2017). It will encourage continuous improvement of performance that could lead to enhanced organisational and individual growth and will also aid to improve the overall morale (Noor *et al.*, 2020).

In the world of business, employees want to be rewarded appropriately for their performance and loyalty to their respective companies to fulfil their desires (Khan *et al.*, 2020). A reward system mainly consists of procedures and strategies to recognise employees for their involvement, skills and potential (Noor *et al.*, 2020). Such a system is usually created within organisational policies, reward beliefs and strategies.

Incentives have been identified as a critical factor when it comes to an employee working efficiency and motivation. From a strategic point of view, an incentive or reward scheme must be developed to ensure that organisational sustainability could be achieved and to maintain a competitive advantage (Rakhmanova & Kryukov, 2019). This could be reached by encouraging employees to be more aware of their performance and that of the organisation and to strive for better performance subsequently.

Incentive strategies should, however, be a set of actions created to ensure employees are encouraged to achieve the desired reasonable level of performance. Robescu and Iancu (2016) reported that a meta-analysis on the effects of incentives on performance indicated an average increase performance of 22% using such schemes. Other researchers have also concluded from their studies that incentive strategies have influenced the performance and satisfaction of their employees (Sattar *et al.*, 2015). Nohria *et al.* (2008) indicated through an internal survey that employee satisfaction and engagement have improved using a pay-per-performance reward system, it enabled the best performers opportunities for advancement.

There are also downsides to incentive schemes that involve performance-based pay that could cause lousy behaviour amongst employees and additional work-related stress (Ogbonnaya *et al.*, 2017). In the following section, the most common monetary incentive schemes are discussed.

2.4.1.2 Monetary vs non-monetary incentives

Monetary (financial) rewards or incentives may not necessarily be enough to satisfy an employee to be more motivated and engaged in the working environment, as discussed in Chapter 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 regarding intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Mamdani & Minhaj, 2016). In some cases, depending on individual needs, a combination of both monetary and non-monetary would be required. Monetary incentives could be considered as extrinsic rewards and include any financial gain such as salary, bonus and allowances (Khan *et al.*, 2020). Non-monetary incentives can be considered as intrinsic motivation and include factors such as leave, flexible working hours and excellent working environment. Non-monetary incentives do not provide any direct financial gain to employees and mainly include the feeling of being praised or acknowledged for doing a job well done (Noor *et al.*, 2020). Both will have an impact on the motivational and engagement levels of employees and subsequently their desire to perform well in the working environment. According to a survey

regarding 235 managers, the most used incentive methods to motivate employees in the organisational environment include the following, from the most popular to the least (Mamdani & Minhaj, 2016):

- Employee acknowledgement
- Gift vouchers
- Special events
- Cash rewards
- Merchandise incentives
- Email/print communications
- Training programs
- Work/life benefits
- Variable salary
- Group travel
- Individual travel
- Sweepstakes

In the following section, additional conventional monetary incentive strategies will be discussed.

2.4.1.3 Conventional monetary incentives

The most common methods of monetary incentive strategies include the following:

- **None**

  Employees do not receive any form of additional compensation above their typical monthly salary. With incentives being an essential factor in organisational performance, the disappointment from no further benefits would most likely result in high employee turnover rates and poor performance (Chepkemoi, 2018; and Yousaf *et al.*, 2014). The idea that an employee would be rewarded additionally by any means would boost their overall morale in the working environment.

- **Profit-related pay (company performance-profit sharing)**

  Employees will receive a percentage of their annual cost to company based on the company performance over the year. When a company did not indicate enough profit, the employees would not receive any additional compensation. A study by Ogbonnaya *et al.* (2017) found that profit-related pay incentives did not have any positive effects on employee performance, but rather impacted employee commitment in a negative manner.

- **Performance-related pay (individual performance)**

  This form of incentive is based on the performance of the individual during the year, and according to the company policy and employee package, the employee will be rewarded accordingly. They may feel pressured to perform better to obtain extra compensation for their efforts. Performance-related pay plays a crucial role in employee motivation and can be linked directly to the efforts of employees in the workplace (Ikäheimo *et al.*, 2018). It will thus be the responsibility of the employee to increase their performance and efforts to receive additional compensation.

2.4.2 Alternative incentive strategies

There were various alternative methods found in the literature that other business environments use to improve employee motivation and engagement. These methods are listed below.

2.4.2.1 Loyalty programs

Loyalty programs are widely used in the retail, travel and consumer industry and involve factors such as reward cards, tiered service levels and support contracts (Bruneau *et al.*, 2018). Loyalty programs aim to engage customers in long-term relationships where consumers would be able to earn and spend their loyalty points (Chang & Wong, 2018).

Most of the loyalty programs are aimed towards economic benefits using points to be redeemed by clients of the service (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015). A few examples of such programs within South Africa include eBucks from FNB, Vitality from Discovery medical services and Pick and Pay smart shopper. For example, Discovery medical services will reward their clients when they exercise regularly, purchase healthy food items and go for regular health check-ups. Clients can then spend their earned points on cheaper flight

tickets, fitness devices and cashback on healthy food items, while the medical provider ensures that their clients are in better overall health. This will subsequently result in an organisational advantage to Discovery because fewer people are in the hospital or experiencing health-related problems that could be avoided by living healthy.

2.4.2.2 Gamification

With monetary incentives being a pivotal contributor to extrinsic motivation, a trending strategy to motivate and engage employees, intrinsically was found to be through game-like activities in the working environment. This strategy can be described as Gamification, and the concept entails the transformation of working activities into gaming experiences (Stoyanova & Iliev, 2017). This will subsequently motivate employees to be more engaged in their workplace activities (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015; Klevers *et al*., 2015; Ruhi, 2015). Studies have shown in various scenarios that Gamification has successfully increased the motivation of users and increased their engagement in working activities (Morschheuser *et al.*, 2017).

Every human being has participated in some form of game-like activities throughout their lives, being sports, video games or board games. The literature suggests that by playing games, people tend to get competitive, more engaged and willing to take extra steps in the activity being exercised with the objective to win (Ergle, 2015). Ruhi (2015), indicated through their research into Gamification, that organisations could have advantages by driving Gamification strategies. Klevers *et al.* (2015) also reported that Gamification could be a useful strategy to motivate employees to drive performance in business activities. Rivers (2016), found that Gamification had a significant impact on social engagement, overall engagement and affective engagement. Additionally, it also reduced employee turnover and increased the overall morale within organisations.

As discussed in Chapter 2.2, there are two types of motivational factors, namely intrinsic and extrinsic. Gamification has the potential to simultaneously drive the behaviour of both employee motivational factors (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015; and Huotari & Hamari, 2017).

Gamification can subsequently be used in the organisational environment as an alternative motivational strategy by implementing game-like experiences for the employees to motivate them to be more engaged in their work activities. This strategy could have the potential to create a more motivated and engaged workforce.

2.4.2.3 Other methods of employee incentives (rewards)

There are many other unique ways to incentivise employees. Companies could provide employees with gifts, based on their performance (Du, 2020). Examples of these could include company-branded coffee mugs, music subscriptions to gift cards. Additional incentives could also have pets at work-days or holiday packages (Gard, 2019). One article mentioned that companies could incentivise according to employee performance rating. Higher performing employees will benefit from more generous incentives such as unlimited paid off-days, while less performing employees will benefit from recognition (Salcido, 2020). There are many creative ideas on how to increase the overall morale within the work environment. However, this would also be subjected to the type of company and culture. Large corporations would differ from small start-ups and mainly where strict rules apply.

2.4.3 Incentive strategies in context

There is a growing demand in the modern organisational working environment for alternative strategies to motivate and engage employees that do not necessarily include cash rewards or gift cards (Conmy & Melvin, 2019).

Mamdani and Minhaj (2016) found that greater levels of incentives resulted in improved employee performance and also their commitment towards their respective companies. Their study revealed that both non-monetary and monetary incentives impacted the motivational levels of employees. It was also found in the literature that there is a need for proper reward systems to improve the performance of employees and not to rely solely on basic salary structures (Chandani *et al.*, 2016). According to a report, a manufacturing firm used 23% of its after-tax profit to incentivise employees for their efforts to reach their annual goals and subsequently created a positive and driven workforce (Barik & Kochar, 2017). It is crucial that organisations understand and can predict the behaviour of their employees when implementing incentive strategies (Norberg, 2017). It might be necessary to combine a loyalty program and to gamify some of the operational activities to obtain optimal results.

The current workforce consists of a combination of different age groups that could require other incentive methods or combinations thereof to be more motivated and engaged in the working environment. The following section will describe the three largest generations found in the workforce.

2.5 MULTIGENERATIONAL WORKFORCE

2.5.1 Background

Businesses of the modern world are facing a unique challenge since the current workforce comprises of various employee generations. Employee age diversity can be considered an essential component regarding diversity management and thus regarded as crucial for this study (Gordon, 2018). Organisations have a workforce that comprises of three different generation groups namely the young Millennials (born after 1982), the older Generation X (born between 1961 and 1981) and the retiring Baby Boomers (born between 1943 and 1960) (Calk & Patrick, 2017). The younger Millennial generation can already be considered as the largest generation joining the workforce. For this study, Generation Z was not considered relevant. Organisations will have a competitive advantage by leveraging their employee's skills and knowledge by providing them with a motivating work environment (Canedo *et al.*, 2017).

Although there was no specific consensus found in the literature pertaining the precise birth years for each generation, the following data was obtained from Stats SA regarding the largest and most relevant age groups for this study within the South African workforce.

Table 2.1: Workforce age breakdown according to Stats SA (Adapted from Stats SA, 2020)

Generation	Age Group	Percentage
Millennials	25-34	31.64%
Generation X	35-54	57.79%
Baby Boomers	55-64	10.56%

With the above-mentioned taken into consideration, it is evident that the older generation is slowly entering retirement while the Millennial group is constantly growing. Each of the employee generations mentioned above could have different motivational factors associated with their specific generation and upbringing. The following section will describe the three largest generations in the workforce and their motivational factors.

2.5.2 Millennials

The Millennial generation is currently entering the workforce at an increasing tempo as the older generations start to exit the work environment. This brings new and challenging factors to management. Millennials have a strong desire for success, praise and tend to be more motivated using career development (Alonso-Almeida & Llach, 2019). They want a life outside of their work environment, and they are not likely to sacrifice their happiness for the sake of the company. They are motivated through praise, recognition, rewards and require a collaborative team-based work environment rather than a predictable salary, retirement and benefits (Calk & Patrick, 2017). According to Alonso-Almeida (2019), Millennials were found to be extrinsically motivated, rather than intrinsically.

On the contrary, Gerard (2019) found that Millennials have a strong desire for meaningful work that relates more with intrinsic motivation. However, they also face strong external pressures. Millennials are a very optimistic generation and work well in teams, indicating great spirit to get things done (Gursoy *et al.*, 2013). They are also quickly bored with the absence of diversity in their workplace and require a variety of objectives. As a result of low motivation, Millennials are prone to switch between jobs very easily (Pînzaru *et al.*, 2016).

2.5.3 Generation X

Generation X, being the parents of the Millennials, were found to be more intrinsically motivated than other generations, and want their work and personal life to balance (Kraus, 2017). Due to the older age of Generation X to the Millennials, they prefer flexible working hours and a competitive salary rather than recognition or praise (Valickas & Jakštaitė, 2017). They may be motivated using funded holiday packages, adequately paid leave and job security to focus on their family and kids (Nnambooze & Parumasur, 2016).

2.5.4 Baby Boomers

Boomers are the oldest amongst the generations noted in this study and nearing retirement. They are established in their professions and generally in high positions and viewed as workaholics (Clark, 2017). They strive for work-related challenges, and they are perceived to be interested in material success. They are also very loyal and willing to wait their turn for any promotions (Gursoy *et al.*, 2013). Baby Boomers are primarily motivated by means of great health benefits and better retirement plans (Nnambooze & Parumasur, 2016).

2.5.5 Multigenerational workforce in context

In order to ensure that all the generations are highly motivated, employers must understand the dynamics and needs of the employees within the workforce. This will ensure that individual and organisational effectiveness and performance could be impacted positively (Basic, 2018). By developing a strategic reward program that could positively impact the motivation and engagement of a multigenerational workforce, organisations could have a significant competitive advantage and positive growth (Fahy & Moylan, 2019). It will thus be the responsibility of the management team and leaders to fully understand the various factors that influence the different generations to enjoy the benefit associated.

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

One of the questions that arise from the literature is whether monetary methods are preferred over non-monetary methods to motivate employees, and what alternatives would be preferred (Robescu & Iancu, 2016). Employees will be more motivated to perform their work activities when they believe that their efforts will ultimately result in some reward (De Vito *et al*., 2018). Loyalty programs are actively being used in the healthcare and banking services and indicated a great potential to retain customers. It enables the user of the service to redeem points collected using exercising and living healthy in the medical-health industry and signing loans and home/vehicle finance in the banking sector. This strategy could be implemented in the business sector where employees could obtain points-based on their Key Performance Indicators (KPI) performance and redeem these points whenever they feel the need to do so.

The literature review provided a base of knowledge that will be used to determine whether a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities would be a feasible incentive strategy to motivate employees to be more engaged in their work activities. The following Chapter describes the methodology used regarding the empirical study.

3. CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to determine the feasibility of a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities in an engineering services entity. The results from the proposed strategy could result in a more engaged and motivated workforce within the company. This chapter provides detail regarding the structured methodology followed during the empirical research. This includes the research approach, design and methods of analysis that were used within this study.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

Research approach defers to the plan or procedure that will be followed in a research study. This includes the steps from the initial assumptions to the data analysis and interpretation (Creswell, 2014). For this study, a quantitative research approach was utilised, as mentioned in Chapter 1, whereby data will be collected, analysed and evaluated to satisfy the primary and secondary research objectives. To satisfy the quantitative research approach regarding numerical data analysis and observations, a questionnaire was utilised, and responses quantified using a 7-point Likert-scale. The data obtained from the questionnaires were tested regarding the validity and reliability of the responses. The study was purely exploratory in nature, and the data obtained were statistically analysed and presented to conclude the findings.

3.3 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

Research philosophy can be described as a method that is unique to each researcher, and when applied, will allow researchers to generate new ideas into knowledge regarding their respective field of research (Moon *et al.*, 2019). This includes the beliefs and assumptions regarding the development of knowledge. The four primary dimensions of scientific research philosophy identified in the literature include positivist research, interpretivist research, pragmatist research and realistic research philosophy (Žukauskas *et al.*, 2018). For this study, interpretivist research was a more appropriate approach due to the author trying to understand what methods of rewards will motivate and engage employees within an engineering service entity. Similarly, the definition of interpretivism suggests that research into a specific field will allow the researcher to gain insight and interpret the meaning of

human behaviour, rather than to predict causes and effects (Edirisingha, 2012). It was important for this study to understand the motivation and engagement levels within this organisation to propose a new method to increase overall performance and enhance workplace enjoyment.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design can be described as the method or strategy to which the research method will be executed to solve the research problem (Sovacool *et al.*, 2018). The research design also stipulates the data collection framework that will be used after the research problem has been defined.

A quantitative research design approach was used to obtain the data for this study, and to draw the final conclusions. A structured survey was utilised at a single point in time to obtain the data from the employees. This method of study conforms to the definition of descriptive cross-sectional research design (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019).

3.4.1 Population and sample

The research population can simply be defined as a group of people that a researcher wants to generalise the results of the study from, and the sample as the group selected to participate (Serhan, 2020). For this study, the sample population comprised all employees within the South African operations of the company. The company originated in the early 1900s and started its operations in South Africa soon after. The head office in South Africa is situated in Gauteng with a vast distribution network across the country.

The sample includes the employees across all business units from finance, engineering, customer services, HR and field services technicians. The company employs approximately 219 employees in sub-Saharan Africa, including Zambia and Mozambique. Only about 119 employees are employed permanently in the South African operation. All employees were allowed to participate in this study and aimed to measure the current motivation and engagement levels as well as the preferred incentive methods.

3.4.2 Data quality

Data quality can be determined by two fundamental features, namely, reliability and validity (Mohajan, 2017).

3.4.2.1 Validity of quantitative data

Data validity can be defined as the construct an instrument intends to measure and how well it does so, it also describes the degree to which the data is relevant, meaningful and logical to the study (Cypress, 2017; Mohajan, 2017). The two types of validity are known as internal and external. External validity refers to the process of generalising the findings of a study to different groups of people. This means that the data could be obtained in other settings than the one assessed within this study. Internal validity is mainly dependent on the amount of error in measurements and addresses the reasons involved, including exposure to disease or other unanticipated occurrences (Singh, 2017).

There are three approaches that could be followed when assessing internal validity, namely content validity, criterion validity, and construct validity (Pallant, 2017). Content validity refers to suitability with which a measure has sampled data from the intended domain of content and can be tested using a pilot study. Criterion validity, on the other hand, relates to the correlation between two similar measurement instruments intended to measure similar constructs. Finally, construct validity involves the correlation between the theoretical aspects regarding the concepts and the instrument and the results where it was used. A common way of measuring construct validity is known as factor analysis and involves the statistical relationship between a set of items within a questionnaire (Knekta *et al.*, 2019).

Due to the small sample size (low response rate) and the nature of this study, no factor analyses were performed to assess construct validity and no generalisations will be made regarding the outcome of this study.

3.4.2.2 Reliability of quantitative data

Reliability can be described as a measure of the repeatability, stability and consistency of the results obtained when an instrument is applied to record data (Mohajan, 2017). In simple terms, data reliability ultimately assess the consistency of results over time (Hayashi Jr *et al.*, 2019).

Two of the most frequently used indicators of reliability are test-retest reliability and internal consistency (Pallant, 2017). The test-retest reliability can be referred to as the temporal stability of data and mainly assess the results from a questionnaire when the same participants partake in a study on two different occasions. When the results indicate a high correlation between the two tests, it indicates a high reliability of the scale. The second indicator, known as internal consistency refers to the degree to which an instrument can consistently measure a single construct within a questionnaire (Cronbach, 1951). There are two methods that can be used to calculate the internal consistency reliability of a questionnaire, namely, the split-half and coefficient alpha (Pallant, 2017). The split-half method randomly splits responses into two sets, the scores subsequently added, and the correlation between the two sets indicate reliability. The coefficient alpha method splits all the possible responses into halves, and the average correlation between these halves indicate the reliability of the construct; this is known as the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Subsequently, this study utilised Cronbach's alpha index to determine the reliability of the data. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with the latter indicating higher reliability (Pallant, 2017). A more widely accepted value should, however, be greater than 0.70 (Taherdoost, 2016). Due to the nature of the convenience sample and the use of previously validated questionnaires, a pilot study was not conducted to test the reliability.

3.4.3 Measuring instrument

The questionnaires used in this study consisted of the sections described below to determine the required data regarding the biographical information of the respondents and their current motivation and engagement. Their incentive preferences were also obtained regarding a self-constructed questionnaire.

3.4.3.1 Biographical information

To profile the respondents, a biographical questionnaire (see Appendix D, Section A) was developed and used to capture the participant's age group, education, years of employment and department within the company. This information was subsequently used in conjunction with the rest of the questionnaire to conclude on possible relationships.

3.4.3.2 Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS)

As discussed in Chapter 2.2, motivation can be considered as a vital driving force that engages individuals in any activity as well as the associated commitment, energy and creativity levels (Maduka & Okafor, 2014; Robescu & Lancu, 2016; Shahzadi *et al.,* 2014; and Singh, 2016). It was thus necessary for this study to determine the current motivational levels within the organisation to propose an alternative strategy to improve the motivational levels.

The Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) is an 18-question measure (See Appendix D, Section B) based on the Self-Determination Theory proposed by Ryan and Deci, (2000), as discussed in Chapter 2.2.4. The WEIMS was subsequently developed by Tremblay *et al.*, in 2009, to measure the amount of motivation employees experience in the workplace. This instrument is divided into six sections to measure the respective constructs of motivation (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). These constructs of the WEIMS include Amovitation (three-items), External Regulation (three-items), Introjected Regulation (three-items), Identified Regulation (three-items), Integrated Regulation (three-items) and Intrinsic Motivation (three-items).

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix D, Section B and the related constructs questions summarised in the table below. The participants were required to answer the questions by means of a 7-point Likert-scale that range between 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree) according to their work motivation levels.

Table 3.1: WEIMS subscales and related questions (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009)

Constructs	**Related Items**
Intrinsic Motivation	B4, B8, B15
Integrated Regulation	B5, B10, B18
Identified Regulation	B1, B7, B14
Introjected Regulation	B6, B11, B13
External Regulation	B2, B9, B16
Amotivation	B3, B12, B17

A study conducted by Pekelharing (2018) regarding the relationship between leadership styles, motivation and engagement that utilised the WEIMS within a South African context, resulted in the following alpha coefficients:

Table 3.2: Alpha Coefficients

Constructs	Alpha Coefficients
Amovitation	0.778
External Regulation	0.685
Introjected Regulation	0.778
Identified Regulation	0.745
Integrated Regulation	0.787
Intrinsic Motivation	0.787

Since the WEIMS was already validated in various countries, including different cultures and used within the organisational setting, the scale rendered appropriate for this study. As discussed in Chapter 2.2.4, the motivation level of the sample respondents or individuals can be calculated by a single score that will indicate the level of self-determination (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). This formula to calculate the score is:

W–SDI = (+3 X IM) + (+2 X INTEG) + (1 X IDEN) + (-1 X INTRO) + (-2 X EXT) + (-3 X AMO)

A score with a negative value indicates that the sample or individual is non-self-determined, and a positive score indicates more self-determined.

3.4.3.3 Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

As discussed in Chapter 2.3.3, there are various instruments available that could be utilised to measure work engagement levels. A study conducted by Shrotryia and Dhanda in 2019, listed the top five most used instruments based on the number of citations. These included the Gallup Workplace Audit (GWA), the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), the Psychological Engagement Measure (PEM), the Job and Organisational Engagement Scale (JOES) and the Job Engagement Measure (JEM). As discussed in Chapter 2.3, work engagement refers to the extent to which employees are emotionally, physically and cognitively involved in their work activities. Based on the most common instrument and the one used in this study, the UWES characterise these factors using vigour, dedication and

absorption. These are measured through a 17-item questionnaire (See Appendix D, Section C) that is subsequently divided into sections to measure each construct (Khodakarami *et al.*, 2018). Six items determine vigour, and individuals who score high indicates high levels of energy, willingness to invest in work activities and resilience. Five items assess the amount of dedication and those who score high perceive their work as meaningful and challenging. The last six items assess the amount of absorption an employee experience and high scores indicate that an individual is deeply immersed in his/her work and can sometimes struggle to detach themselves form work activities.

The instructions on the UWES given at the beginning of the section will guide the participant through the questionnaire. The participants are required to answer the questions using a 7-point Likert-scale that range between 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree) according to their feelings regarding work activities. The score of each construct (vigour, dedication and absorption) is added respectively, and the average score of the dimension indicate the amount experienced. Typical alpha coefficients were obtained in the literature using the UWES within a South African accounting firm that rendered 0.78 for Absorption, 0.87 for Dedication and 0.84 for Vigour 0.84 (Matthysen & Harris, 2018). The table below indicates the constructs and corresponding questions about the UWES.

Table 3.3: UWES subscales and related questions

Constructs	**Related Items**
Absorption	C3, C6, C9, C11, C14, C16
Dedication	C2, C5, C7, C10, C13
Vigour	C1, C4, C8, C12, C15, C17

3.4.3.4 Employee incentive preference

The last section (See Appendix D, Section D) aimed to determine whether employees are aware of points-based reward schemes and to which extent they actively try to reach their goals. Some examples of monetary and non-monetary rewards were listed to assess the possibility of such a strategy. The respondents were also asked whether they are competitive to some degree to participate in a corporate Gamification strategy. This will be necessary to determine whether there is a correlation between competitiveness and the motivational constructs.

The results of this section will be used to propose a new incentive strategy aimed to increase the overall employee motivation and engagement. Due to this unique section in the measuring instrument, the validity and reliability cannot be confirmed and will be used to aid with the strategy design.

3.5 EMPIRICAL STUDY PROCEDURE

The following steps were executed as a requirement to obtain the data for this study.

3.5.1 Initial arrangements

It was required to firstly meet with the HR manager of the company investigated to discuss the purpose and objectives of the study and to obtain permission to distribute the questionnaire amongst the employees (see Appendix B). Permission was subsequently granted, and the data capturing could commence.

3.5.2 Ethical considerations

The ethical factors regarding this study were addressed, the participants and the company's identity will remain anonymous for confidentiality reasons. The questionnaire was distributed to the participants via email link to the SurveyMonkey webpage where they completed the questionnaire. The nature and objectives of the study were explained in the email body in the form of a cover letter, and all participants were assured that they would remain anonymous.

3.5.3 Administration of the questionnaire

To aid maximum participation, a cover letter was compiled (see Appendix A) and attached to the questionnaire. In this letter, the purpose of the study was described and what was expected from the participants. It was also indicated that all respondents would remain anonymous, and the data will remain confidential.

The administration of the questionnaire remained the responsibility of the researcher, and any queries were attended to.

3.5.4 Data capturing and feedback

The questionnaire was distributed to the South African employees using an electronic survey by utilising an online platform named SurveyMonkey. Online data capturing was required due to human contact restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The data was captured and exported to an Excel spreadsheet to aid statistical analysis. Feedback regarding the outcome of the study will be provided to the senior management of the organisation.

3.6 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The statistical data analysis was completed with the support of the Statistical Consultation Services of the University. For this study, IBM SPSS was used to analyse the data obtained from the questionnaires.

3.6.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics can be defined as a statistical method by which a large set of information can be summarised in a simple manner (Mishra *et al.*, 2019). Three common types of descriptive statistics include the measure of frequency, central tendency and variation. The frequencies, means and standard deviation about the constructs of the questionnaire were subsequently summarised and discussed in this section.

3.6.2 Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics is another method for analysing data and can subsequently be used to identify differences between two sets of data or groups (Thomas, 2019). This was subsequently used to report and discuss the results obtained regarding the difference between means and correlations from various factors. Due to the sample being selected at non-random (convenience sample), the p-values were not interpreted and only reported for completeness sake. Thus, the interpretations were based on the effect sizes.

Effect size can be considered as a guide to the extent to which findings have practical significance within the sample population (Hojat & Xu, 2004). Effect sizes can thus be used to quantify the estimated significance of an effect between two constructs of a questionnaire, regardless of the sample size (Hanel & Mehler, 2019). These size estimates can be calculated for various statistical indices, namely, mean differences (t-test), correlation coefficient, and the difference between two constructs. The value obtained can range between being negative or positive. However, positive values are more common in practice.

There are three different categories developed by Cohen (1987), that can be used to interpret the effect size, namely small (d > 0.2), medium (d > 0.5), and large (d > 0.5) (Aarts *et al.*, 2014).

Spearman's rho correlations were calculated and interpreted in this study to measure the statistical difference between constructs. This coefficient can be described as a non-parametric statistical measure to determine the strength between two ranked variables (Xiao *et al.*, 2016). This relationship (correlation) is symbolised by the letter r and quantified with a number that varies between -1 and +1. When the correlation returns a value of 0, it implies that there is no correlation and one a perfect correlation. A negative value suggests that the variables are inversely related (Akoglu, 2018).

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter described the methodology utilised to complete this study. The sample population was discussed, and the measuring instruments used in order to determine the current employee motivation and engagement levels. This data will be used in conjunction with the preferred incentive methods to assess whether Gamification and a points-based corporate reward strategy could be feasible within the organisation. The statistical data analysis procedure was provided, along with the reliability factors. The following chapter contains the results from the statistical analysis.

4. CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the framework of the research methodology used regarding the empirical investigation of this study. This chapter contains the results obtained from the empirical investigation regarding the constructs discussed in the previous chapter. The data regarding the questionnaires will be presented, the reliability established, and the results from the descriptive and inferential statistics.

4.2 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

As discussed in Chapter 3.4.3, the measuring instrument used in this study is divided into four sections and can be found in Appendix D. The following summarises the measuring instrument:

- **Section A: Demographic information**

  This section comprises four questions to obtain necessary information regarding the respondents. This includes factors such as the participant's age group, education, years of employment and department within the company.

- **Section B: Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale**

  In this section, the motivational constructs of the employee will be measured according to the scale developed by Tremblay *et al.* (2009) using an 18-item questionnaire.

- **Section C: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale**

  The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale is a 17-item questionnaire that measures the employees level of engagement in their working environment (Khodakarami *et al.*, 2018).

- **Section D: Incentives**

  To determine the feasibility of a corporate points-based reward scheme with game-like activities, the respondents were required to complete a 7-item questionnaire. This section aimed to measure whether the respondents would be willing to participate in such a scheme as well as their preferred incentive methods.

4.3 RESPONSE RATE

The questionnaire was sent out to the entire company consisting of 181 employees within the South African operation. A total of 78 questionnaires were received, representing a response rate of 43.09%. The main contributing factor to the low response rate of this study was due to the COVID-19 pandemic, where the majority of employees were required to work from home and some not having access to emails, especially the technical and warehousing employees. According to a study conducted by Young *et al.*, (2020), regarding typical response rates with emailed questionnaires, reported a rate of 36%. Thus, the response rate of 43.09%, can be regarded as valid under the current circumstances. Due to the small sample size, no factor analyses were performed to assess construct validity.

4.4 DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

In this section, the results from the demographical questionnaire (see Appendix D, Section A) are presented and described. This includes factors such as the participant's age group, education, years of employment and department within the company.

4.4.1 Age of respondents

Regarding the age of the respondents, there was almost an equal split of respondents between the ages of 18 to 38 (n = 38) and 39 to 59 (n = 37), the remainder were of the age of 60 to 77 (n = 3). According to Chapter 2 (in Section 2.5), individuals between 18 and 38 years of age, are classified as Millennials. Millennials accounted for 49% of the respondents. Similarly, individuals between 39 and 59 can be classified as Generation X employees and accounted for the second-largest group of 47%. Finally, the smaller group, the Baby Boomers, accounted for the remainder 4%. The figure below depicts the age groups of the respondents.

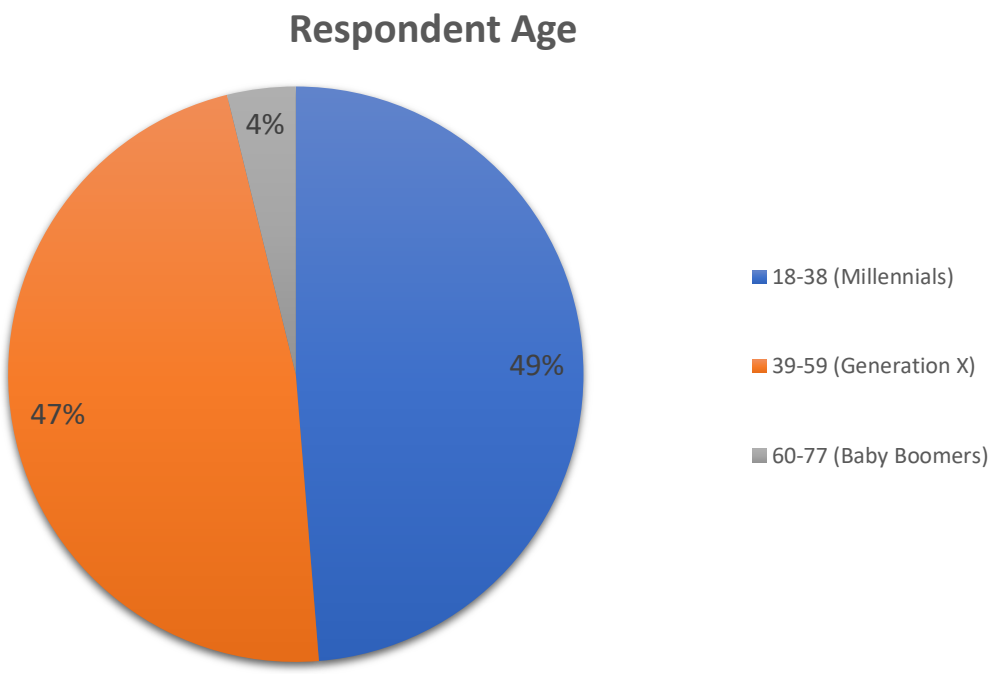


Figure 4.1: Respondents by age (generation)

(Source: Own compilation)

4.4.2 Duration of employment

Regarding the duration of employment of the respondents, an equal number indicated that their duration of employment is 0-3 years (n = 13) and 4-6 years (n = 13). The second highest number of respondents indicated that their years of employment are 7-10 years (n = 16), with another thirteen indicating that that have been working 11-15 years (n = 13) and the highest number indicating that their duration of employment is 16 or more (n = 23). The figure below depicts the years of employment of the respondents.

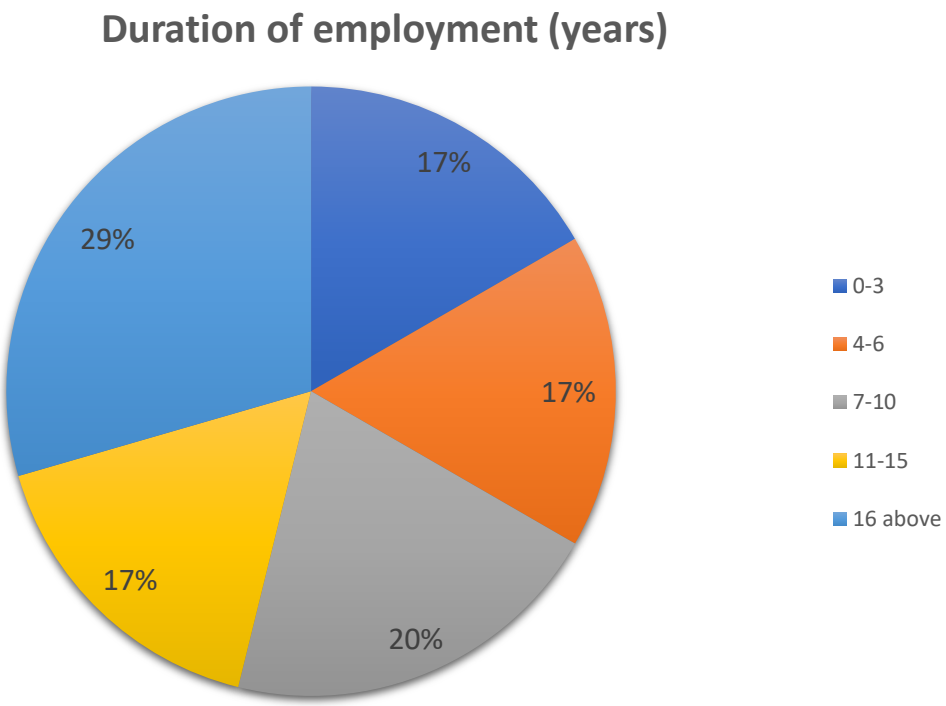


Figure 4.2: Respondents duration of employment

(Source: Own compilation)

4.4.3 Qualification of respondents

Regarding the qualification of the respondents, grade 10 accounted for five employees, and an equal number indicated that they either have grade 12 (n = 22) or a diploma (n = 22). Regarding professional education, four employees indicated that they have an Honours degree, 16 a Bachelor's degree and 6, a Master's degree. The remainder indicated that they did some additional certification after school for personal development. The graph below depicts the education of the respondents.

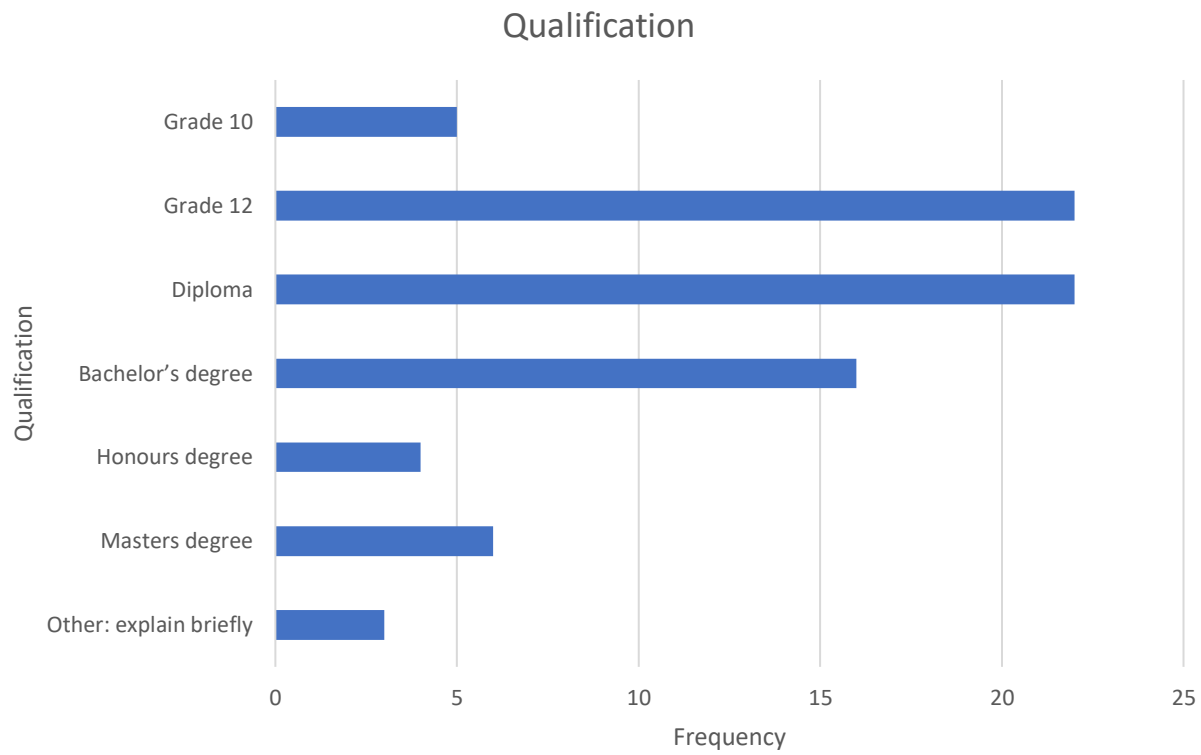


Figure 4.3: Qualifications of respondents

(Source: Own compilation)

4.4.4 Respective departments of respondents

As described in Chapter 3.3.1, the company consist of various departments. The majority of the customer-facing respondents indicated that they are within the Sales division (n = 21) and customer services department (n = 14) of the company. The smallest number of respondents are working in the HR and Finance department (n = 6), with the second smallest being logistics and warehousing (n = 7). The technical departments, engineering (n = 17) and technicians (n = 13) rendered the second-largest group of respondents within the company. The table below summarises the number of respondents from their respective departments.

Table 4.1: Respective employee departments

Department	Frequency
Customer Services	14
Engineering	17
HR & Finance	6
Sales	21
Technical	13
Warehouse and logistics	7

(Source: Own compilation)

The figure below visually depicts the data from Table 4.1.

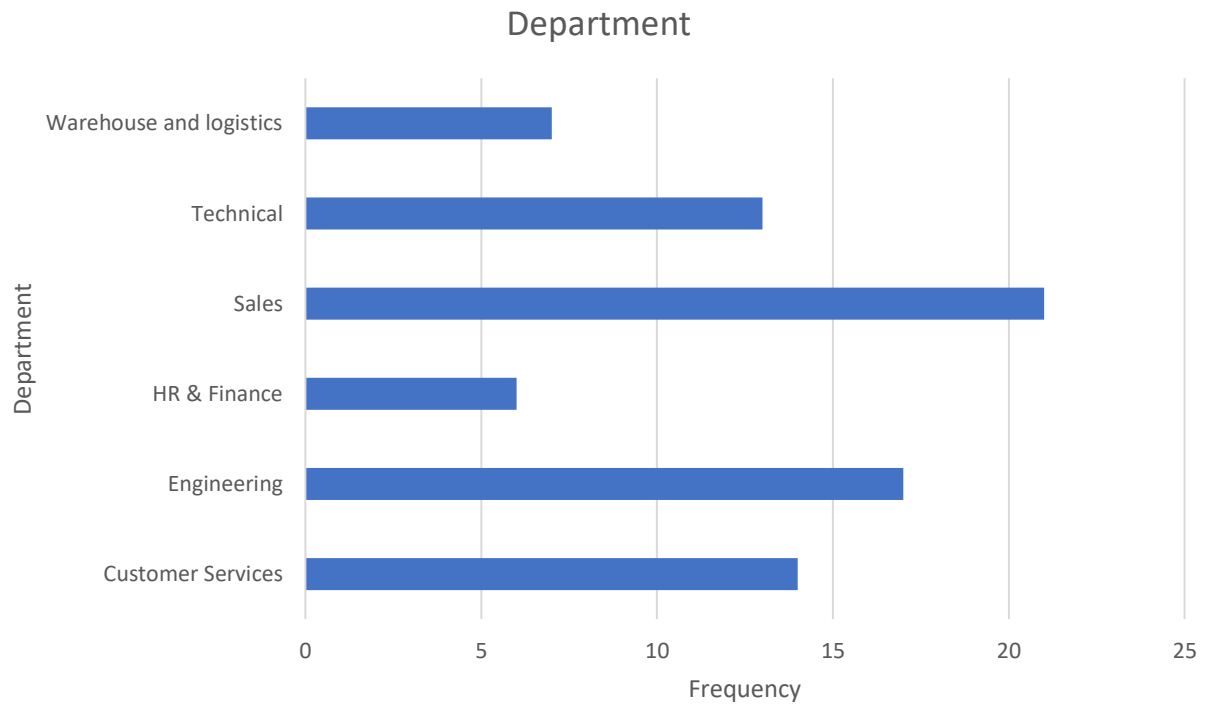


Figure 4.4: Respective employee departments

(Source: Own compilation)

This subsequently concludes the demographic section of the respondents. The following section describes the evaluation of the data obtained in this study.

4.5 EVALUATION OF DATA QUALITY

4.5.1 Evaluation of reliability

To evaluate the reliability of the data regarding the employee motivation and engagement questionnaires, the Cronbach's alpha index was subsequently applied to the respective constructs, and the results tabulated below.

Table 4.2: Reliability of measuring instruments

Constructs for WEIMS and UWES	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
WEIMS: Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale	**18**	**0.88**
Intrinsic Motivation	3	0.87
Integrated Regulation	3	0.77
Identified Regulation	3	0.78
Introjected Regulation	3	0.79
External Regulation	3	0.72
Amotivation	3	0.63
UWES: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale	**17**	**0.94**
Vigour	6	0.86
Dedication	5	0.86
Absorption	6	0.82

(Source: Own compilation)

From the table above, it is evident that all the reported Cronbach Alpha values were above the guideline value of 0,7, except for Amotivation in the WEIMS. However, values between 0.6 and 0.7 still indicate acceptable levels of reliability (Ursachi *et al.*, 2015).

4.6 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

4.6.1 Employee motivation

The results of the WEIMS are presented in Table 4.5 and the recorded mean and standard deviation in Table 4.3. The constructs, as described in Chapter 2.2.4 regarding the Self-Determination Theory, were subsequently determined using the following:

- Intrinsic Motivation = Mean (B4, B8, B15)
- Integrated Regulation = Mean (B5, B10, B18)
- Identified Regulation = Mean (B1, B7, B14)
- Introjected Regulation = Mean (B6, B11, B13)
- External Regulation = Mean (B2, B9, B16)
- Amotivation = Mean (B3, B12, B17)

Table 4.3: Mean values of the WEIMS

Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation
Intrinsic Motivation	5.61	1.17
Integrated Regulation	5.09	1.02
Identified Regulation	4.95	1.08
Introjected Regulation	5.52	1.09
External Regulation	5.00	0.99
Amotivation	3.35	0.94

(Source: Own compilation)

The following figure visualises the results obtained from the WEIMS.

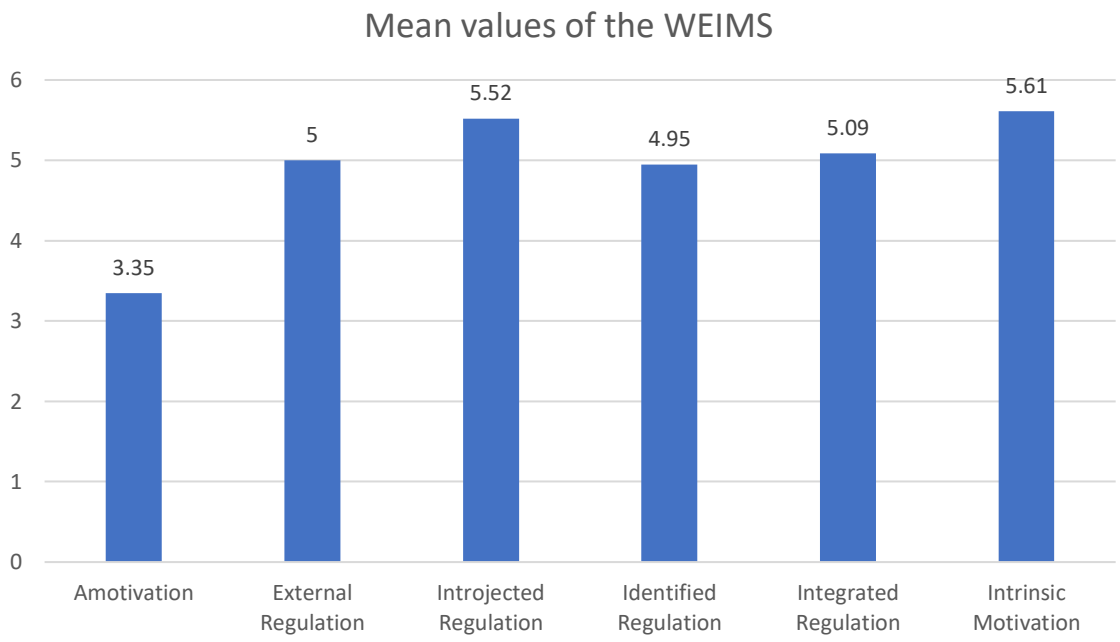


Figure 4.5: Mean values of the WEIMS

(Source: Own compilation)

From the data provided in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.5 above, it is evident that the highest construct to why the respondents are presently involved in their work was Intrinsic Motivation with a mean value of 5.61. This suggests that the sample found their work activities as inherently satisfying and interesting. The second highest construct was Introjected Regulation with a mean value of 5.52. This means that the sample is also motivated through contingencies of self-worth, for example, self-esteem or guilt. The third highest construct resulted in Integrated Regulation with a mean value of 5.09, which indicated that the sample engaged and identified with activities to the extent to their self-identity. External Regulation and Identified Regulation were slightly lower with respective mean values of 5 and 4.95. This suggests that the sample was also motivated purely just to obtain a reward and because they found some value in their work activities. It was also noted that to some extent, the sample indicated moderate levels of Amotivation; which means that some lack any form of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The data indicated that the sample group was slightly more towards the right of the Self-Determination continuum as discussed in Chapter 2.2.4, this suggests that the employees are more self-determined.

From the literature described in Chapter 2.2.4, the level of self-determination can be presented by a single score known as the self-determination index (W-SDI) (Tremblay *et al.*, 2009). This score was subsequently calculated for the sample group to determine the overall level of self-determination. The results are tabulated below and indicated that the minimum level of self-determination was negative 13.33. This indicated that some employees are less self-determined (toward the left of the continuum, see Figure 4.5). The maximum score was obtained at 17.33 which indicated that others are more intrinsically motivated; the mean value of 6.38 (SD = 5.79) indicated that the overall sample is more toward the right of the continuum of self-determination.

Table 4.4: Sample group motivation index

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Motivation Index	73	-13.33	17.33	6.38	5.79

(Source: Own compilation)

From the table below (see Table 4.5), the highest mean was reported for question B15 (mean = 5.68, SD = 1.35) indicating that respondents on average strongly agreed that they are presently involved in their current work for the satisfaction they experience when they are successful at doing difficult tasks. The lowest was reported for question B3 (mean = 2.60, SD = 1.10) indicating respondents on average disagreed that they do not seem to be able to manage the important tasks related to their jobs.

Table 4.5: Results of the WEIMS

I am presently involved in my work...		Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
B1	…Because this is the type of job I chose to do to attain a certain lifestyle	2	5	10	8	27	16	5	73	4.66	1.46
B2	…For the income it provides me	1	3	6	7	34	15	7	73	4.96	1.27
B3	…I ask myself this question, I do not seem to be able to manage the important tasks related to this work	9	28	25	7	3	0	1	73	2.60	1.10
B4	…Because I derive much pleasure from learning new things	3	0	2	3	22	26	17	73	5.56	1.34
B5	…Because it has become a fundamental part of who I am	2	2	4	4	30	24	7	73	5.16	1.29
B6	…Because I want to succeed at this job, if not I would be very ashamed of myself	1	3	4	4	18	29	14	73	5.44	1.36
B7	…Because I chose this type of work to attain my career goals	1	1	5	9	30	22	5	73	5.08	1.15
B8	…For the satisfaction, I experience from taking on interesting challenges	2	1	2	1	22	32	13	73	5.58	1.24
B9	…Because it allows me to earn money	1	2	4	6	33	17	10	73	5.18	1.24
B10	…Because it is part of the way in which I have chosen to live my life	0	0	9	11	31	15	7	73	5.00	1.12
B11	…Because I want to be very good at this work, otherwise I would be very disappointed	0	1	6	3	25	18	20	73	5.55	1.25
B12	…I do not know why we are provided with unrealistic working conditions	3	13	20	19	15	2	1	73	3.55	1.27
B13	…Because I want to be a "winner" in life	2	0	1	7	22	22	19	73	5.59	1.27
B14	…Because it is the type of job I have chosen to attain certain important objectives	2	1	4	8	28	24	6	73	5.12	1.25
B15	…For the satisfaction, I experience when I am successful at doing difficult tasks	3	0	2	2	18	28	20	73	5.68	1.35
B16	…Because this type of work provides me with security	0	5	5	9	33	17	4	73	4.88	1.21
B17	…I do not know, too much is expected of us	4	8	14	18	24	4	1	73	3.90	1.35
B18	…Because this job is a part of my life	1	3	3	10	26	22	8	73	5.12	1.28

4.6.2 Employee engagement

The results of the UWES are presented in Table 4.7 and the recorded mean and standard deviation in Table 4.6. The three constructs regarding this scale were Vigour, Dedication and Absorption. The scores were subsequently determined using the following:

Vigour = Mean (C1, C4, C8, C12, C15, C17)
Dedication = Mean (C2, C5, C7, C10, C13)
Absorption = Mean (C3, C6, C9, C11, C14, C16)

Table 4.6: Mean values of the UWES

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Vigour	5.06	0.95
Dedication	5.36	0.95
Absorption	5.23	0.90

(Source: Own compilation)

The following figure visualises the results obtained from the UWES.

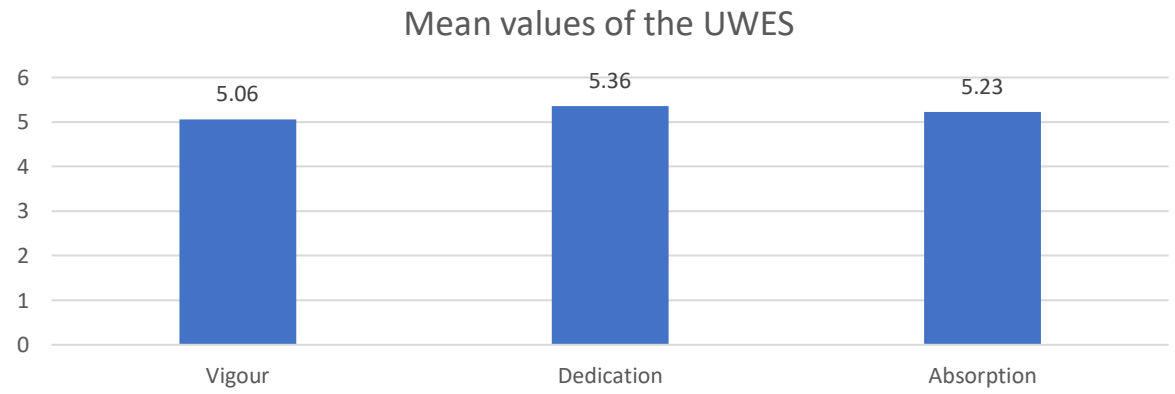


Figure 4.6: Mean values of the UWES

(Source: Own compilation)

Although the data resulted in very similar results, from the data provided in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.6 above, it is clear that the highest construct regarding employee engagement is dedication. Dedication refers to intense feelings of inspiration, being challenged and meaningfulness towards their work activities (Matthysen & Harris, 2018). The majority of the respondents indicated that they agree towards feelings that describe dedication. The second highest construct was absorption, where the sample leaned towards the lower side of agreeing towards these feelings at work. This means that the respondents are happy in their

workplace and agree that they struggle to detach themselves from work. The lowest construct was found to be vigour, where the respondents agreed that they have energy and stamina in the workplace.

From the following table, the highest mean was reported for question C3 (mean = 5.82, SD = 1.09) indicating that respondents on average strongly agreed that time flies when they are working. The lowest was reported for question C1 (mean = 4.57, SD = 1.17) indicating respondents on average agreed that they are bursting with energy at work. The following table summarises the results of the UWES.

Table 4.7: Results of the UWES

		Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
C1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy	1	5	5	15	34	11	1	72	4.57	1.17
C2	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose	1	2	4	4	29	29	7	72	5.24	1.20
C3	Time flies when I am working	1	0	1	4	17	29	20	72	5.82	1.09
C4	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous (full of energy)	1	2	7	7	33	15	7	72	4.97	1.26
C5	I am enthusiastic about my job	1	0	5	5	22	28	11	72	5.43	1.18
C6	When I am working, I forget everything else around me	1	1	12	12	18	22	6	72	4.88	1.35
C7	My job inspires me	1	1	7	6	28	21	8	72	5.14	1.25
C8	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	3	3	7	14	28	13	4	72	4.61	1.38
C9	I feel happy when I am working intensely	1	1	2	5	34	25	4	72	5.24	1.03
C10	I am proud of the work that I do	1	0	2	2	21	29	17	72	5.74	1.09
C11	I am immersed in my work	1	0	2	2	25	25	17	72	5.68	1.10
C12	I can continue working for very long periods at a time	1	3	7	6	18	21	16	72	5.28	1.48
C13	To me, my job is challenging	1	1	4	7	25	26	8	72	5.28	1.19
C14	I get carried away when I am working	1	0	9	11	20	24	7	72	5.07	1.27
C15	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally	1	0	2	6	31	26	6	72	5.33	1.01
C16	It is difficult to detach myself from my job	1	4	15	5	24	16	7	72	4.71	1.48
C17	At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well	1	0	2	0	28	29	12	72	5.63	1.01

4.6.3 Incentive strategy

As discussed in Chapter 2.4, incentives can be defined as any promise of some form of a reward based on performance and mainly motivate employees by influencing their behaviour to produce high standard and quality work (Cerasoli *et al.*, 2014). The following section will determine whether the respondents will be willing to participate in a corporate points-based reward scheme with game-like activities as well as their preferred incentive methods.

4.6.3.1 Point-based reward scheme

A reward system comprises more than just a basic salary alone. It can be regarded as intrinsic, extrinsic, monetary and non-monetary (Victor & Hoole, 2017). Many organisations offer their customers great rewards for being loyal to their company or brand. This could subsequently result in higher customer satisfaction towards the company and aid the company profitability and market share.

From the questionnaire, 97.77% of the respondents indicated that they are familiar with reward schemes like FNB eBucks and Discovery Vitality and 69% of the respondents indicated that they are members of such reward schemes. These respondents (n=49), on average (mean = 4.57, SD = 1.46) indicated they sometimes try to meet their goals. The following table contains the descriptive data from the questionnaire.

Table 4.8: Respondents who actively try to reach their goals

	Never	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Always	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
Do you actively try to reach your goals?	2	1	7	15	10	9	5	49	4.57	1.46

(Source: Own compilation)

On average, the respondents indicated that they would, however, be willing to participate in a corporate points-based reward scheme within the organisation. The table below summarises the respondent's willingness.

Table 4.9: Respondent's willingness to participate in a corporate reward scheme

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
Will you be willing to participate in a corporate reward scheme?	3	3	3	2	36	16	8	71	5.04	1.398

(Source: Own compilation)

Table 4.10 below indicates a list of possible incentive preferences provided to the respondents to determine how a point-based reward scheme could be structured within the company. From the data, the most preferred method would be in the form of paid leave (mean = 5.82, SD = 1.16). Secondly, the respondents indicated that flexible working hours (mean = 5.70, SD = 1.56) would also be preferred. The least preferred method was meal vouchers (mean = 4.14, SD = 1.88) and secondly, cell phone perks (mean = 4.79, SD = 1.58).

Table 4.10: Preferred incentive methods

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
Health benefits	1	1	1	8	21	21	18	71	5.56	1.24
Paid leave	1	0	1	5	19	21	24	71	5.82	1.16
External training funds	1	3	2	11	23	17	14	71	5.24	1.37
Commission based bonus	4	4	5	11	14	13	20	71	5.06	1.79
Staff discount	3	6	5	14	17	9	17	71	4.85	1.74
Cell phone perks	3	6	1	16	23	11	11	71	4.79	1.58
Flexible working hours	3	2	2	3	13	21	27	71	5.70	1.56
Car allowance	1	2	2	13	13	19	21	71	5.48	1.42
Fuel perks	2	3	5	13	15	13	20	71	5.18	1.62
Meal vouchers	11	3	7	21	13	5	11	71	4.14	1.88

(Source: Own compilation)

In order to visualise the results from Table 4.10, Figure 4.7 clearly indicate the most preferred incentive methods.

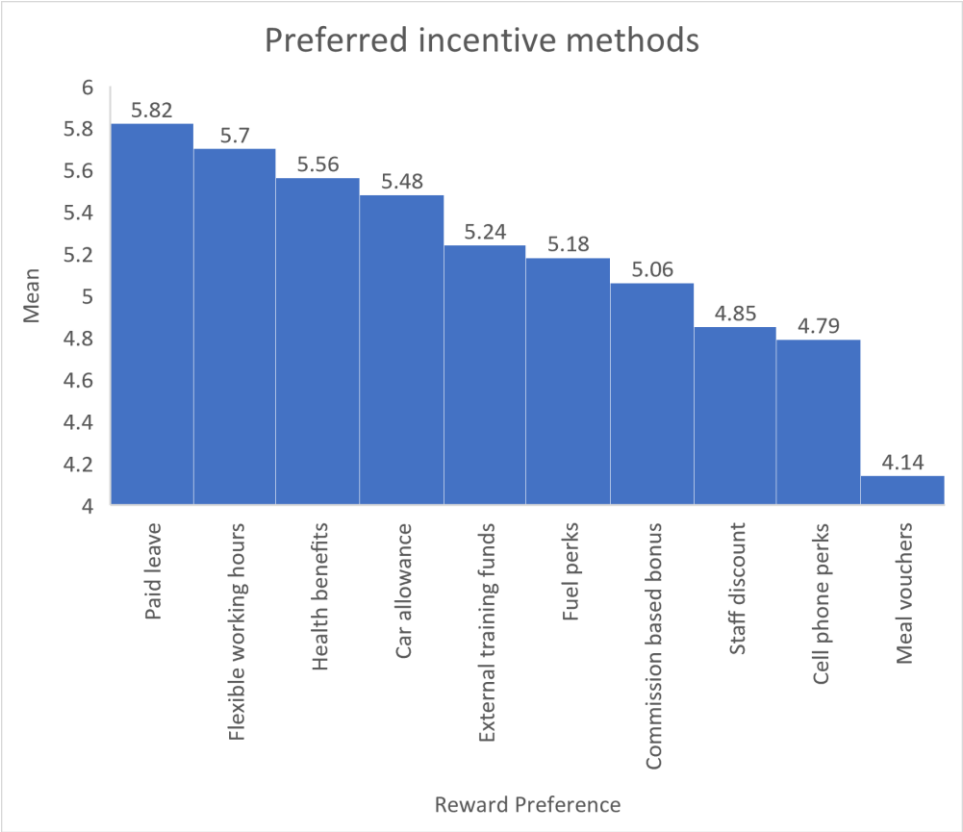


Figure 4.7: Preferred incentive methods

(Source: Own compilation)

4.6.3.2 Gamification

Gamification can be described as the concept where working activities are transformed into game-like activities to motivate employees to be more engaged in the workplace (Stoyanova & Iliev, 2017). To determine whether the respondents would be willing to participate in such a strategy, their competitiveness factor was firstly determined. They subsequently agreed (mean = 5.51, SD = 1.28) that they are competitive in person and that they agreed (mean = 4.77, SD = 1.39) to participate in such activities in the workplace. Table 4.11 summarise the data obtained from the respondents.

Table 4.11: Gamification

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
Are you a competitive person?	1	1	3	5	25	18	18	71	5.51	1.28
Will you be willing to participate in a Gamification strategy?	2	3	8	9	30	12	7	71	4.77	1.39

(Source: Own compilation)

To conclude the findings from the descriptive statistics, the following can be summarised.

4.6.4 Summary of descriptive statistics

From the results of the descriptive statistics, the first secondary objective was determined regarding the current motivation and engagement levels within the company. The sample indicated relatively high levels of intrinsic motivation. However, some still indicated feelings of Amotivation. The sample group indicated an average W-SDI score of 6.38, which suggests that they are more towards being self-determined in the working environment. The results also indicated that the sample group were on average, actively engaged in the working environment with the most significant factor being dedication. The majority of the respondents indicated that they are familiar with reward schemes, while only 69% of the sample members of such programs and sometimes try to reach their goals.

On average, the respondents indicated that they would be willing to be part of a corporate reward scheme and also partake in game-like activities in the workplace. This answers the fourth secondary objective of the study. The employees would prefer to spend their points earned by reaching their organisational goals, they would prefer to spend them on paid leave, and flexible hours, they were the least interested in meal vouchers at work. The following section aims to determine any correlations and significant difference between the constructs of the questionnaire. The results will subsequently be used to propose a points-based reward scheme.

4.7 INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

Inferential statistics were used to determine whether there are correlations and significant effects between employee motivation and engagement, and how the employees wish to be rewarded. This information could then be used to propose a points-based reward strategy with game-like activities. As discussed in Chapter 3.5.2, the effect size can be used for various statistical indices, namely, mean differences and correlation coefficient and was subsequently used to determine any practical significance.

4.7.1 Differences between means

Cohen's recommended cut-off points regarding interpretations of differences between means and effect size are as follow (Khalilzadeh & Tasci, 2017):

- Small effect (no practical significant relationship) = 0.2
- Medium effect (medium practical significant relationship) = 0.5
- Large effect (large practical significant relationship) = 0.8

4.7.1.1 Effect size between motivation and employee age

As discussed in Chapter 2.5, employers must understand the dynamics and needs of the employees within the workforce in terms of their age groups (generations). This will aid with the development of a strategic reward program that could positively impact the motivation and engagement of the multigenerational workforce (Fahy & Moylan, 2019).

In Chapter 4.2.2, the age distribution of the employees within the company was discussed and resulted in 49% Millennials (18-38), 47% Generation X (39-59) and 4% Baby Boomers (60-77). To ensure sufficient group sizes for analysis, the Baby Boomers and Generation X samples were combined to form a single group called the "older generation".

The table below indicates the effect regarding the Self-determination factors and employee age groups. The most significant reported effect size indicated that a difference leans towards being practically visible (d = 0.35) between the means of the Millennials and the older generations with regards to the amount of Amotivation experienced. The Millennials leaned towards disagreeing (mean = 3.18, SD = 0.86) regarding Amotivation while the older generations leaned towards being indecisive (mean = 3.53, SD = 1.00). The significance between the remained of the self-determination factors, and the generation groups indicated practically small differences.

Table 4.12: Effect size between motivation and employee age

WEIMS	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
Intrinsic Motivation	18-38	37	5.631	1.259	0.864	0.04
	39-77	36	5.583	1.085		
Integrated Regulation	18-38	37	5.126	1.120	0.798	0.05
	39-77	36	5.065	0.911		
Identified Regulation	18-38	37	5.099	1.206	0.246	0.24
	39-77	36	4.806	0.920		
Introjected Regulation	18-38	37	5.432	1.251	0.465	0.15
	39-77	36	5.620	0.909		
External Regulation	18-38	37	5.108	0.994	0.372	0.21
	39-77	36	4.898	1.001		
Amotivation	18-38	37	3.180	0.859	0.117	0.35
	39-77	36	3.528	1.006		

(Source: Own compilation)

4.7.1.2 Effect size between engagement and employee age

Similarly, the effect between employee generations and the three engagement constructs can be determined to establish whether there are any significant differences. The table below indicates the results obtained. The most significant difference reported was the level of Vigour at 0.33, where Millennials indicated lower (mean = 4.88, SD = 1.11) levels of energy and resilience towards their work activities in comparison with the older generations (mean = 5.25, SD = 0.73). The levels of dedication and absorption indicated small significant differences.

Table 4.13: Effect size between engagement and employee age

UWES	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
Vigour	18-38	36	4.884	1.107	0.108	0.33
	39-77	36	5.245	0.731		
Dedication	18-38	36	5.222	1.144	0.210	0.25
	39-77	36	5.506	0.702		
Absorption	18-38	36	5.120	1.064	0.297	0.21
	39-77	36	5.342	0.690		

(Source: Own compilation)

4.7.2 Spearman's rho correlation

For Cohen's standard regarding correlation coefficients, values between 0.1 and 0.29 can be considered small, with no practical significance from 0.3 to 0.49, the significance will be medium, and above 0.5, will have a large practical significance. The data below tabulates the correlation between the motivation index and the engagement constructs.

In all three constructs, a medium significance is practically visible with Vigour (r = 0.393), Dedication (r = 0.355) and Absorption (r = 0.337). This indicates that employees who are more self-determined (motivated) tend to be more engaged in the workplace.

Table 4.14: Correlation between engagement and the motivation index

	Engagement constructs		Motivation Index
Spearman's rho	Vigour	Correlation Coefficient	.393**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
		N	72
	Dedication	Correlation Coefficient	.355**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002
		N	72
	Absorption	Correlation Coefficient	.337**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.004
		N	72

(Source: Own compilation)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.7.2.1 Relationship between the types of motivation and those who are part of a reward scheme

For this study, it was important to examine whether there is a correlation between the types of motivation and how actively employees try to meet their goals. Only the employees who are currently part of a reward scheme were considered. From the table below, it was noted that there is a negative correlation (r = -0.183) with a small to medium significance between Amotivation and how actively they try to reach their goals. This is expected because Amotivation is described by a lack of any intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The most significant positive correlation (0.198) indicated was External Regulation with a small to medium significance. This was also expected because this type of motivation relates to activities done purely just to obtain a reward. The other motivation types resulted in no

practical significance. This indicates that the employees who are part of reward systems only try to achieve their goals to obtain additional extrinsic rewards.

Table 4.15: Correlation between motivation and those who are part of a reward scheme

		Intrinsic Motivation	Integrated Regulation	Identified Regulation	Introjected Regulation	External Regulation	Amotivation
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	0.073	-0.081	0.026	-0.013	0.198	-0.183
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.617	0.580	0.858	0.928	0.172	0.207
	N	49	49	49	49	49	49

(Source: Own compilation)

4.7.2.2 Relationship between the types of motivation and those willing to be part of a corporate reward scheme

In order to determine whether a corporate reward scheme will be feasible within the company, it was required to determine the correlation between the types of motivation and the willingness to partake in a corporate reward scheme. The table below indicates that there is a positive correlation between intrinsic motivation (r = 0.223) and integrated regulation (r = 0.250) with a significance that leans toward being practically visible to a medium extent. These two motivation types are classified as being more self-determined than the other types, which indicated a relatively small practical significance. It can thus be concluded that a corporate reward scheme will attract more self-determined employees.

Table 4.16: Correlation between motivation and those willing to be part of a corporate reward scheme

		Intrinsic Motivation	Integrated Regulation	Identified Regulation	Introjected Regulation	External Regulation	Amotivation
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	0.223	0.250	0.192	0.176	0.158	0.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.062	0.035	0.108	0.142	0.188	0.497
	N	71	71	71	71	71	71

(Source: Own compilation)

4.7.2.3 Relationship between the types of motivation and those willing to be part of a Gamification strategy

The literature indicated in Chapter 2.4.2 that a Gamification strategy would provide and attract more intrinsically motivated employees and extrinsic to some degree. This would result in a higher motivated workforce and could affect company performance (Klevers *et al.,* 2015). The results obtained confirmed the statements made in the literature with a positive correlation between both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation types and Gamification strategies. The more self-determined employees indicated a medium practical significant relationship with Gamification (intrinsic, r = 0.304 and integrated regulation, r = 0.314). Amotivation resulted in a negative correlation (r = -0.120) with Gamification that indicated that the less motivated employees would not partake in such a strategy.

Table 4.17: Correlation between motivation and those willing to partake in Gamification

		Intrinsic Motivation	Integrated Regulation	Identified Regulation	Introjected Regulation	External Regulation	Amotivation
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	0.304	0.314	0.271	0.200	0.289	-0.120
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.010	0.008	0.022	0.095	0.015	0.320
	N	71	71	71	71	71	71

(Source: Own compilation)

4.7.3 Structure of the incentive strategy

In order to ensure that the correct constructs are included in the points-based reward scheme, the effect between the preferred reward methods and the different generations was calculated. The most significant reported effect size indicated a difference that leans towards being practically visible (d = 0.37) between the means of the Millennial group and the older generations with regards to staff discount being a preferred incentive method. The Millennial group on average leaned toward being indecisive (mean = 4.47, SD = 2.05) that it is a preferred incentive method and the older generation group agreed (mean = 5.23, SD = 1.26). The second most significant effect size indicated that the Millennial group leaned towards agreeing (mean = 5.36, SD = 1.33) that health benefits would be preferred, while the older generations leaned towards strongly agreeing (mean = 5.77, SD = 1.11). The remainder of the preferences indicated small differences between the two groups.

Table 4.18: Age effect on rewards preference

Preferred rewards	Age Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Effect size
Health benefits	18-38	36	5.36	1.33	0.164	0.31
	39-77	35	5.77	1.11		
Paid leave	18-38	36	5.69	1.37	0.370	0.18
	39-77	35	5.94	0.91		
External training funds	18-38	36	5.36	1.57	0.449	0.16
	39-77	35	5.11	1.13		
Commission based bonus	18-38	36	5.22	1.85	0.431	0.18
	39-77	35	4.89	1.73		
Staff discount	18-38	36	4.47	2.05	0.065	0.37
	39-77	35	5.23	1.26		
Cell phone perks	18-38	36	4.64	1.91	0.418	0.16
	39-77	35	4.94	1.14		
Flexible working hours	18-38	36	5.67	1.82	0.838	0.04
	39-77	35	5.74	1.27		
Car allowance	18-38	36	5.44	1.56	0.837	0.04
	39-77	35	5.51	1.29		
Fuel perks	18-38	36	4.97	1.76	0.266	0.24
	39-77	35	5.40	1.44		
Meal vouchers	18-38	36	3.83	2.22	0.163	0.28
	39-77	35	4.46	1.42		

(Source: Own compilation)

4.7.4 Summary of inferential statistics

The inferential statistics indicated that the older generations (ages from 39-77) are more Amotivated than the Millennials. However, the older generations were more vigorously engaged (levels of energy) in the workplace. To establish whether motivated employees are more engaged in their working environment and to satisfy the second, secondary objective, the correlation between these two factors was calculated. The result indicated that there is a significance between high levels of motivation with regards to the dimensions of engagement that are practically visible. In all three constructs of engagement, a medium significance is practically significant with Vigour (r = 0.393), Dedication (r = 0.355) and Absorption (r = 0.337) with regards to the W-SDI score of motivation. This indicates that employees who are more self-determined (motivated) tend to be more engaged in the workplace.

For this study, it was important to examine whether there is a relationship between the types of motivation and how actively employees try to meet their goals (only the employees who are currently part of a reward scheme were considered). The results indicated that there is a negative correlation (r = -0.183) with a small to medium significance between Amotivation and how actively they try to reach their goals. This was expected because Amotivation is described by a lack of any intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The most significant positive correlation (0.198) indicated was External Regulation with a small to medium significance. This was also expected because this type of motivation relates to activities done purely just to obtain a reward. This subsequently satisfies the sixth secondary objective of this study.

The fifth secondary objective required the investigation of the reward preferences regarding the different generations within the company. The results indicated that the most desired reward preference of all the employees was flexible working hours, health benefits and paid leave. The most significant difference between the Millennials and the older generations indicated that the Millennials were indecisive regarding staff discounts. In comparison, the older generations agreed that this would be a preferred method. The second most significant difference indicated that health benefits were more significant to the older generations than the Millennial group. The remainder of the preferences indicated no significant differences between the two generations.

In addition to the fourth secondary objective, the correlation was determined between the types of motivation and the willingness to partake in a corporate reward scheme. The results indicated that there is a positive correlation between those who would partake and intrinsic motivation and integrated regulation with a significance that leans toward being practically visible. These two motivation types are classified as being more self-determined than other types of motivation. It can thus be concluded that a corporate reward scheme will attract more self-determined employees.

To meet the last secondary objective of this study, the proposed points-based reward scheme should subsequently include, but not limited to the following in preferred order according to employee generation:

- Paid leave
- Flexible working hour
- Additional health benefits
- Car allowance
- External training
- Fuel perk
- Commission based bonus
- Staff discount
- Cellular phone perks
- Meal vouchers

Gamification should also form part of the incentive strategy to attract more self-determined employees. This was confirmed with a medium practical significant relationship between Gamification (intrinsic, r = 0.304 and integrated regulation, r = 0.314) and the most self-determined motivational dimensions.

4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The results regarding the empirical investigation were reported and discussed in this Chapter. The demographical information was discussed, and the reliability of the questionnaire evaluated. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the frequencies and means of the questionnaire. Inferential statistics were used to report and discuss the difference between means and correlations from various factors within the questionnaire to determine the feasibility of a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities. The most preferred reward methods were also determined according to the respective generation of the employees, and a reward scheme was proposed.

Chapter 5 provides conclusions regarding the literature and empirical investigation. The limitations and the recommendations to the company investigated, and future research is also discussed.

5. CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the concluding factors regarding the results obtained from the constructs discussed in the literature and the empirical investigation. These conclusions are discussed with regards to the primary and secondary objectives of this study. The limitations about this study are also discussed, and the recommendations to the company investigated regarding the proposed incentive strategy, and for future research.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

The methodology described in Chapter 3 was implemented, and the results discussed in Chapter 4. The following conclusions could be made regarding the constructs of the measuring instrument and the conceptual framework of the study.

5.2.1 Demographical information

The first section of the measuring instrument, as discussed in Chapter 4.2, aimed to record the required demographical information of the respondents. The following conclusions can thus be made from the data obtained.

- **Employee age**

  There was almost an equal split of respondents between the ages of 18 to 38 (n = 38) and 39 to 59 (n = 37), the remainder were of the age of 60 to 77 (n = 3). To aid with the statistical analysis, the oldest group was added to the middle age group. They were subsequently referred to as the Millennials and the older generation. The Millennial group (18 - 38) resulted in the largest age group within the company.

- **Duration of employment**

  The results obtained indicated an equal number of 0-3 years (n = 13) and 4-6 years (n = 13) of employment. The second-highest number of respondents indicated that they are employed for 7-10 years (n = 16), with another 13, indicated that have been working for 11-15 years (n = 13). The longest working employees indicated that their duration of employment is 16 or more (n = 23).

- **Qualifications of employees**

  Five employees indicated that they have a grade 10 qualification, while an equal number indicated that they either have grade 12 (n = 22) or a diploma (n = 22). Regarding professional education, four employees indicated that they have an Honours degree, 16 a bachelor's degree and 6, a Master's degree. The remainder of the respondents indicated that they did some additional certification after school for personal and professional development.

- **Respective department of employees**

  With the various departments within the company, as described in Chapter 3.3.1. The Sales division (n = 21) and customer services department (n = 14) of the company resulted in the largest group of the respondents. The smallest group indicated that they are working in the HR and Finance department (n = 6) and the second smallest from the logistics and warehousing departments (n = 7). On the technical side, engineering (n = 17) and technicians (n = 13) resulted in the second-largest group of respondents within the company.

5.2.2 Employee motivation

As discussed in Chapter 4.6.2, the WEIMS obtained the following results regarding the constructs of employee motivation.

- The highest construct to why the respondents are presently involved in their work resulted in intrinsic motivation. This suggests that the sample found their work activities inherently satisfying and interesting.
- The second highest construct was Introjected Regulation. This meant that the sample was also motivated through contingencies of self-worth, for example, self-esteem or guilt.
- Integrated Regulation resulted in the third-highest construct, which indicated that the sample engaged and identified with activities to the extent to their self-identity.
- The levels of External Regulation and Identified Regulation were slightly lower which suggested that the sample was also motivated purely just to obtain a reward and because they found some value in their work activities.

- There were also levels of Amotivation that suggested that some employees lack any form of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Overall, the sample resulted in a Self-Determination Index score of 6.38 that indicated that they were slightly more towards the right of the Self-Determination continuum, as discussed in Chapter 2.2.4.

5.2.3 Employee engagement

The results from the UWES, as discussed in Chapter 4.6.2, resulted in very similar results regarding the employee engagement constructs. The highest construct of employee engagement was found to be dedication, that indicated strong feelings of inspiration, being challenged and meaningfulness towards work activities. The second highest construct was absorption, and this indicated that the sample was happy in their workplace and agreed that they struggled to detach themselves from their work. The lowest construct was found to be vigour, where the respondents agreed that they have energy and stamina in the workplace.

5.2.4 Employee incentives

In order to determine whether a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities would be feasible, the respondents were requested to complete Section D of the questionnaire. The data indicated that 97.77% of the respondents are familiar with reward schemes like FNB eBucks and Discovery Vitality and 69% of the respondents indicated that they are currently members of such reward schemes. These respondents indicated they sometimes try to meet their goals to obtain reward points. Regarding a corporate reward scheme, on average, they indicated that they would be willing to participate in such a scheme within the organisation.

To propose the structure for a corporate points-based reward scheme with game-like activities. A list of possible rewards was provided to the respondents to determine the most preferred methods. The results indicated that overall, the sample would prefer paid leave and flexible working hours the most and meal vouchers the least. The respondents also indicated that on average, they agreed that they are competitive persons and that they would be willing to participate in corporate game-like activities to obtain additional rewards.

5.2.5 Findings regarding the study framework

From the conceptual framework as introduced in Chapter 2.1, the literature review and the empirical investigation confirmed that there is a correlation between employee motivation, engagement and employee performance. The statistical analysis indicated that the average employee is moderately self-determined (mean = 6.38) according to the Self-Determination Index. There was also a practically visible, positive correlation with a medium significance between the three engagement constructs and employee motivation (Vigour = 0.393, Dedication = 0.355 and Absorption = 0.337). Thus, according to the literature, when employees are more motivated and engaged in their working environment, their performance would also increase. To achieve higher levels of motivation and engagement, a corporate points-based reward scheme with game-like activities could be implemented where employees would obtain points on an annual basis based on their performance and spend them as they wish. The structure of the incentive strategy will be discussed in the following section regarding the evaluation of the study.

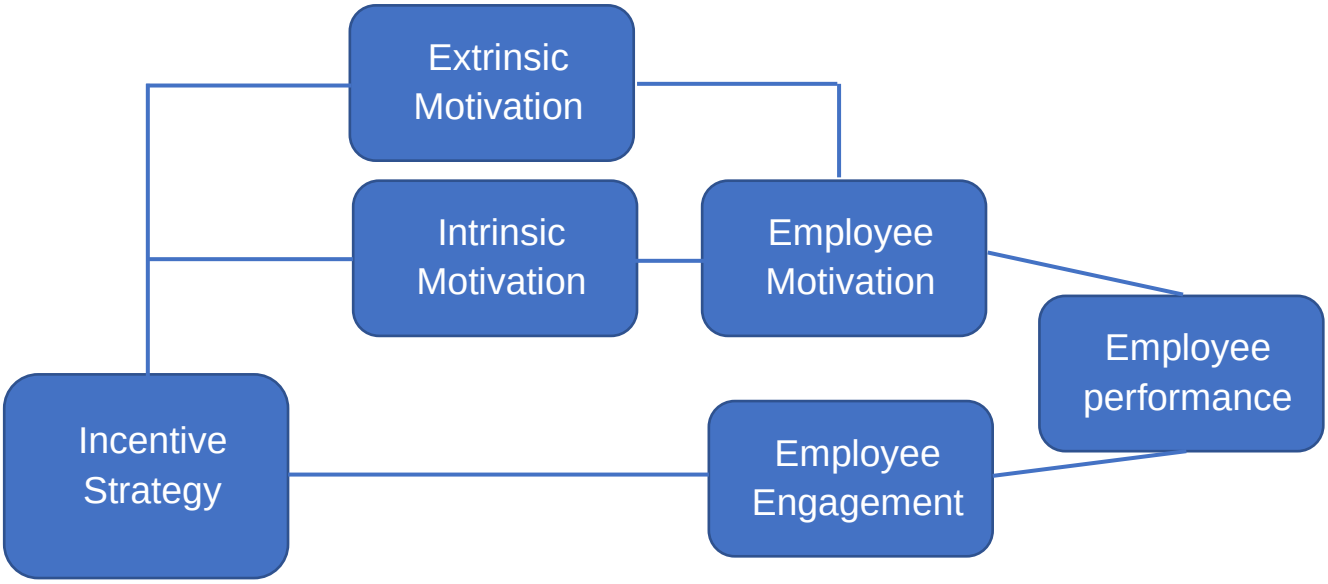


Figure 5.1: Study framework

(Source: Own compilation)

5.3 EVALUATION OF THE STUDY

The conclusions regarding the primary and secondary objectives pertaining to this study will be discussed below. The objectives were constructed to determine the current levels of employee motivation and engagement and whether they would be willing to participate in a corporate points-based reward scheme with game-like activities.

5.3.1 Primary objective

The primary objective of this study was to ascertain whether a points-based reward incentive scheme with game-like activities would be feasible within the company investigated to encourage employees to be more engaged in the workplace. From the literature review, it was confirmed that employees strive to perform better when they could achieve greater rewards in addition to their regular salary (Ganta, 2014). This could be obtained using an incentive strategy and would subsequently lead to continuous performance improvements and enhanced organisational and individual growth (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015; Klevers *et al*., 2015; Ruhi, 2015). This has the potential to increase the overall engagement and motivational levels of the employees. The literature also indicated from various scenarios, that game-like activities has led to the successful increase in the motivational levels of users and increased their engagement in working activities (Morschheuser *et al.*, 2017). Thus, a reward scheme could include both a points-based reward scheme and game-like activities through a Gamification strategy. The literature confirmed that both these strategies have a direct impact on the engagement and motivational levels of a multigenerational workforce.

The statistical analysis confirmed the constructs described in the literature regarding motivation and engagement, where the results indicated a positive correlation between the sample motivational and engagement levels. Similarly, the analysis revealed that people would actively try to reach their goals to obtain a reward. Thus, it implies that a corporate points-based reward scheme with game-like activities would be feasible within the engineering services entity. This has the potential to increase the overall motivation and engagement levels within the organisation.

The structure of the proposed incentive strategy will be discussed in the section below.

5.3.2 Secondary objectives

For this study, seven secondary objectives were defined. These were explicitly formulated to determine whether there are specific correlations between the constructs described in this study. The following conclusions could be made regarding the secondary objectives of the study.

- **To determine the current motivational and engagement levels within the company.**

  The first secondary objective was to determine the current motivational and engagement levels within the company. The results indicated that the highest construct to why the respondents are presently involved in their work was intrinsic motivation with a mean value of 5.61, which suggested that the employees found their work activities inherently satisfying. Introjected Regulation resulted in the second-highest construct with a mean value of 5.52, which indicated that they also found motivation through contingencies of self-worth. The third highest construct indicated motivation through integrated regulation with a mean value of 5.09, which subsequently indicated that they identified with their work activities to the extent of self-identity. External Regulation and Identified Regulation were slightly lower with respective mean values of 5 and 4.95. This suggests that the sample was also motivated purely to obtain a reward and because they found some value in their work activities.

  The employees indicated some level of Amotivation, which suggests that there is a lack of any intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Overall, the sample indicated a self-determination index of 6.38, which indicates that the sample was more towards the right of the self-determination continuum. The results regarding the engagement constructs indicated that the sample experience the highest levels of dedication, which indicated that they are inspired and find meaning in their work activities. The second highest construct indicated that the sample agreed that they sometimes find it difficult to detach themselves from their work. The last construct of engagement resulted in very similar results to absorption. They indicated that they agree to some energy levels and stamina in the working environment. In conclusion, the amount of motivation and engagement of the employees within the company are moderately self-determined and did not

indicate exceptionally high levels of engagement (only agreed on average to the engagement constructs).

- **To investigate the relationship between employee engagement and motivation.**

  The second objective was to investigate the relationship between employee engagement and motivation. This was required to determine whether motivated employees are engaged in the workplace. To determine the correlation, the sample self-determination index was compared to the three constructs of engagement. The results from the Spearman's rho correlation indicated that there is a practically visible significance between high levels of motivation and the engagement constructs. This suggests that employees who are more self-determined (motivated) tend to be more engaged in the workplace.

- **To investigate reward schemes and Gamification as incentive strategies based on the literature.**

  The third objective was to investigate based on the literature available, whether reward schemes and Gamification could be used to increase employee engagement and motivation. The literature indicated that the consumer industry incorporated reward schemes in their business strategy to engage customers in long-term relationships where consumers would be able to earn and spend their loyalty points (Chang & Wong, 2018). The majority of the reward schemes are aimed towards economic benefits using points that could be earned and spent according to the client's preference (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015). The literature indicated that humans that participate in game-like activities tend to be more engaged and willing to take extra steps to win (Ergle, 2015). Ruhi (2015), indicated through their research into Gamification, that organisations could have a strategical advantage with game-like activities. Klevers *et al.* (2015) also reported that Gamification could be a useful strategy to motivate employees to drive performance in business activities. As discussed in Chapter 2.2, there are two types of motivational factors, namely intrinsic and extrinsic. Gamification has the potential to simultaneously drive the behaviour of both employee motivational factors (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015; Huotari & Hamari, 2017).

- **To determine whether the company would be open to a corporate reward scheme and Gamification.**

  The fourth objective was to determine whether the employees would be open to a corporate reward scheme and Gamification. The results indicated that on average, the respondents agreed to participate in a corporate points-based reward scheme and game-like activities in the workplace. Additionally, the relationship between those willing to partake in such a scheme, and the constructs of motivation, was also determined. The results obtained indicated that there is a practically visible positive correlation between those who would be willing and the two most self-determined levels of motivation, intrinsic and integrated regulation. Thus, it can be concluded that a corporate points-based reward scheme will be feasible and could lead to a more self-determined workforce.

- **To investigate reward preferences according to employee age.**

  The reward preferences were investigated according to the generations of the employees to propose the structure of a points-based reward scheme. The results indicated that the most desired reward preference regarding the entire sample was flexible working hours, health benefits and paid leave. The most significant difference between the Millennials and the older generations indicated that the Millennials were indecisive regarding staff discounts. In comparison, the older generations agreed that this would be a preferred method. The second most significant difference indicated that health benefits were more meaningful to the older generations than the Millennial group. The remainder of the preferences revealed no significant differences between the two generations.

- **To determine the relationship between employee motivation levels and participants who actively try and meet their goals with reward schemes like Vitality and eBucks?**

  It was also important to investigate whether there is a relationship between those who are currently part of a reward scheme and actively try to reach their goals and the constructs of motivation. The results indicated that there is a negative correlation with a small, practically visible correlation between levels of Amotivation and those who actively try to reach their goals. This was expected because Amotivation refers to the absence

of any intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The most practically visible positive correlation was external regulation, which indicated that the respondents are trying to reach their goals just to obtain a reward for their efforts. This also confirms the feasibility of a points-based reward scheme due to this fact.

- **To propose a feasible points-based reward scheme with Game-like activities.**

  The overall results from the study revealed that the respondents would prefer to spend their earned points on the following methods in descending order. Thus, the points-based reward scheme could include:

  - Paid leave
  - Flexible working hour
  - Additional health benefits
  - Car allowance
  - External training
  - Fuel perk
  - Commission based bonus
  - Staff discount
  - Cellular phone perks
  - Meal vouchers

  Game-like activities should also be incorporated into the points-based reward scheme in order to attract more self-determined employees. This was confirmed with a medium practical significant relationship between Gamification and the most self-determined motivational constructs.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The primary limitation of the study includes the relatively small sample size (181 target population) that resulted in a low response rate of 43.09%. This was still considered above average for emailed questionnaires, as discussed in Chapter 4.3. With the scope of the study limited to the South African operations to investigate the feasibility of a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities for an engineering services entity. The primary reason for the low response rate was mainly due to the COVID-19 global pandemic where the company suffered a loss of employees during a Section 189. This resulted in a lower

employee count than initially expected with the remainder of employees mainly working from home and the more technical personnel limited access to emails. This also resulted that no factor analysis and generalisations could be performed. For future research, it would be recommended to expand the scope of the study on a continental or global scale to ensure a larger sample size.

A secondary limitation of this study was the limited number of Baby Boomers identified in the company. Therefore, few comparisons could be made regarding the reward preferences of the three generations in the workforce, as specified in Chapter 2.5.

Finally, with the company investigated in this study not made known for confidentiality reasons, it will be difficult to incorporate the findings in this study to similar organisations. Furthermore, the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic on the organisation were not considered as the pandemic is still an ongoing situation and might result in further changes as the pandemic progresses.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommendations include a summary of the primary objective and reason for the study to the company investigated and for future research regarding similar strategies.

5.5.1 Recommendations for the organisation

According to the literature review, there is a connection between employee motivation, engagement and employee performance. When employees are more intrinsically motivated, they tend to be more engaged in their work activities. Low motivation levels (Amotivation) can be considered when employees lack any intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and would subsequently be disengaged in the workplace. The primary objective of this research study was to determine the feasibility of a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities in order to motivate employees to be more engaged within the workplace.

The primary reason for this study pertains to the current incentive/bonus scheme of the company where employees receive an annual monetary bonus in the form of the following structure:

- 50% based on group-level performance
- 25% based on local business unit performance
- 25% based on employee performance

The first two performance measures are interlinked; for example, if the global organisation does not reach its annual performance targets, no bonus will be allocated to the respective business entities and vice versa. The only difference between a highly motivated and engaged employee and a disengaged one is a mere 25%. This can be demotivating to some employees who are driven.

Thus, by implementing a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities, the total employee incentive will solely rely on whether they reach their respective KPI's. This incentive strategy could result in a strategic advantage to the company due to a higher motivated and engaged workforce. The higher motivated and engaged employees will thus be able to earn points-based on their annual performance and can subsequently choose how they wish to spend their points. Based on the results from the empirical study, the three most desired methods include paid leave, flexible working hours and additional health benefits. The game-like activities could be incorporated into the new incentive strategy where each department within the company could have a dedicated dashboard where each respective employee could compete for the top spot. The winner could subsequently be rewarded with a price that could be determined by the company.

In essence, the proposed strategy would ensure that all the employees are more intrinsically motivated because they feel that they have a purpose to work towards and also, extrinsically, due to the reward they would be able to obtain for their performance.

5.5.2 Recommendations for future research

With the limitations of this study in mind, the results obtained indicated valuable suggestions to the company investigated on how to increase overall employee. The suggested strategy can be refined by targeting a larger population on a global scale. It should be noted that there may be a difference between other countries and cultures and that it could not represent the same population as targeted in this study. Further data refinement and sub-investigations could subsequently be conducted to develop a global incentive strategy with regional differences based on cultural and generational differences.

Future research regarding similar incentive strategies could include the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on organisations. Due to more companies working remotely, rewards could be included that will assist employees with their daily tasks from home.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This Chapter described the conclusions made from the literature review and the empirical investigation regarding the feasibility of a points-based reward scheme with game-like activities. The limitations identified in the study were listed and described, and various recommendations were made to the company investigated and for future research regarding similar studies.

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Žukauskas, P., Vveinhardt, J. & Andriukaitienė, R. 2018. Philosophy and paradigm of scientific research. *Management Culture and Corporate Social Responsibility,* 6:121-139. Doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intecopen.70628

APPENDIX A
Participant consent letter

INFORMED CONSENT

My name is Lourens Pretorius, and I am an MBA student at the North-West University Business School. This study aims to determine whether a points-based reward incentive scheme with game-like work activities will be feasible within a South African engineering services entity. This study forms part of a mini-dissertation to be submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Business Administration at the North-West University.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary, and the participant will not be penalised by any means by not completing the questionnaires. The participant can withdraw from the questionnaire at any time. The questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

All participant's identity will remain anonymous, and the results will remain confidential. The results of this study will be used for academic purposes to ascertain whether alternative incentive strategies would be feasible.

The questionnaire is divided into four sections, the first being demographic information required for further statistical analysis. The second part will measure the participant's motivation level at work, and the third section will measure the current work engagement levels. The last section will contain questions regarding the preferred incentive methods.

I hereby give consent to participate and the study and to use the results.

Permission Granted	Yes	No

Kind Regards

LP Pretorius
Lourenspr@gmail.com
082 771 0576

APPENDIX B
Company consent letter

Letter of approval

NWU BUSINESS SCHOOL

MBA- Study: Investigating incentive strategies to increase employee engagement at an engineering services entity

Field of Study: Strategic Management

Dear HR Manager

The purpose of this letter is to request permission to use the company employees to conduct a study regarding alternative employee incentive strategies. This study is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University.

- At the end of the research, results will be made accessible to participants if requested.
- Participation is voluntary.
- No personal details will be required, and participants will remain anonymous.
- The identity of the company will remain unknown for this study.

I declare that I understand the above-mentioned information and give permission to LP Pretorius to use this data in his research project.

Permission Granted	Yes ✓	No

Head of HR & B-BBEE

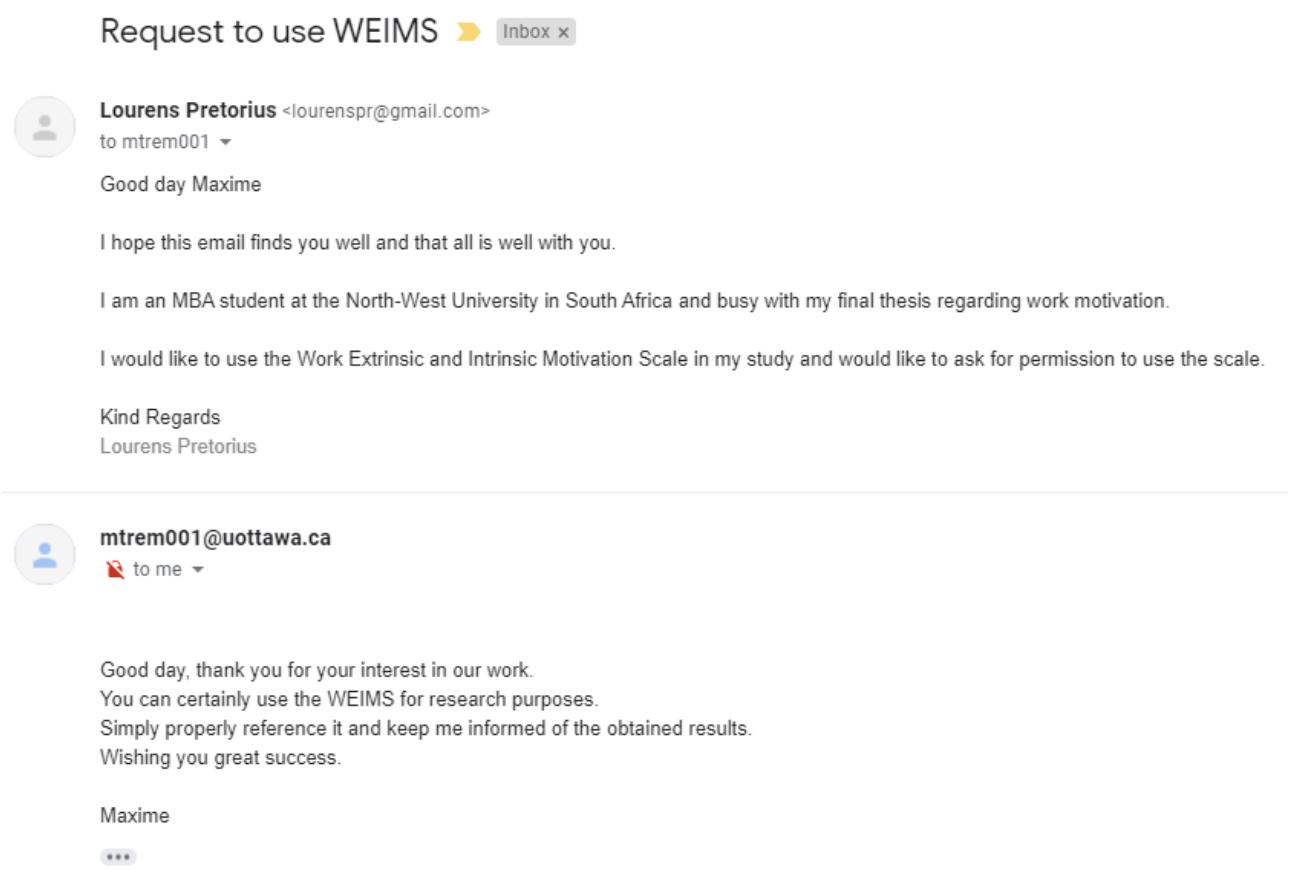
Kind Regards

LP Pretorius
Lourenspr@gmail.com
082 771 0576

APPENDIX C
Data collection instrument(-s) – permission letters

Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS)

Permission to use the WEIMS was obtained from the author as below email.



Request to use WEIMS Inbox ×

Lourens Pretorius <lourenspr@gmail.com>
to mtrem001

Good day Maxime

I hope this email finds you well and that all is well with you.

I am an MBA student at the North-West University in South Africa and busy with my final thesis regarding work motivation.

I would like to use the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale in my study and would like to ask for permission to use the scale.

Kind Regards
Lourens Pretorius

mtrem001@uottawa.ca
to me

Good day, thank you for your interest in our work.
You can certainly use the WEIMS for research purposes.
Simply properly reference it and keep me informed of the obtained results.
Wishing you great success.

Maxime

Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

The UWES is free to use for non-commertial scientific research as below from the published scale.

© Schaufeli & Bakker (2003). The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale is free for use for non-commercial scientific research. Commercial and/or non-scientific use is prohibited, unless previous written permission is granted by the authors

APPENDIX D
Data collection instrument(-s) -

All information will be treated as **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL,** and the data will only be used for **ACADEMIC PURPOSES**.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please answer all the questions as honestly and objectively as possible in order to accurately analyse and interpret the data.
- Please select the correct option most applicable.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1) Age (Years)

1) 18-38	2) 39-59	3) 60-77

2) Duration of employment (Years)

1) 0-3	2) 4-6	3) 7-10	4) 11-15	5) 16 above

3) Qualification

1) Grade 10	2) Grade 12	3) Diploma	4) Bachelor's degree	5) Honours degree	6) Masters degree

7) Other: explain briefly:

4) Department in company

1) HR & Finance	2) Engineering	3) Sales	4) Customer Services	5) Technical	6) Warehouse and logistics

SECTION B: WORK EXTRINSIC and INTRINSIC MOTIVATION SCALE (WEIMS)

Please indicate to what extent you are presently involved in your work by completing the following sentence.

I am presently involved in my work...

		Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
B1	…Because this is the type of work I chose to do to attain a certain lifestyle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B2	…For the income it provides me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B3	…I ask myself this question, I do not seem to be able to manage the important tasks related to this work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B4	…Because I derive much pleasure from learning new things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B5	…Because it has become a fundamental part of who I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B6	…Because I want to succeed at this job, if not I would be very ashamed of myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B7	…Because I chose this type of work to attain my career goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B8	…For the satisfaction, I experience from taking on interesting challenges	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B9	…Because it allows me to earn money	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B10	…Because it is part of the way in which I have chosen to live my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B11	…Because I want to be very good at this work, otherwise I would be very disappointed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B12	…I do not know why we are provided with unrealistic working conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B13	…Because I want to be a "winner" in life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B14	…Because it is the type of work I have chosen to attain certain important objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B15	…For the satisfaction, I experience when I am successful at doing difficult tasks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B16	…Because this type of work provides me with security	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B17	…I do not know, too much is expected of us	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B18	…Because this job is a part of my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION C: WORK ENGAGEMENT SCALE (UWES)

The following statements aim to record your engagement levels at work.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with these statements.

		Very Strongly Disagree	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Very Strongly Agree**
C1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C2	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C3	Time flies when I am working	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C4	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous (full of energy)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C5	I am enthusiastic about my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C6	When I am working, I forget everything else around me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C7	My job inspires me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C8	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C9	I feel happy when I am working intensely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C10	I am proud of the work that I do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C11	I am immersed in my work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C12	I can continue working for very long periods at a time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C13	To me, my job is challenging	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C14	I get carried away when I am working	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

C15	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C16	It is difficult to detach myself from my job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C17	At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION D: INCENTIVES

1) Are you familiar with reward schemes like ebucks and Discovery Vitality?

1) Yes	2) No

2) Are you a member of such reward schemes?

1) Yes	2) No

3) Do you actively try to meet your goals in order to obtain points of such reward schemes?

1) Never	2) Almost Never	3) Rarely	4) Sometimes	5) Often	6) Very Often	7) Always

4) Please complete the following regarding preferred incentive methods:

	Very Strongly Disagree	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Very Strongly Agree**
Health benefits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Paid leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
External training funds	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Commission based bonus	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff discount	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cell phone perks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Flexible working hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Car allowance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fuel perks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meal vouchers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5) Will you be open to a corporate reward scheme to redeem points as you wish in the form of the above-mentioned incentives?

Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6) Are you a competitive person?

Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7) Would you participate in a corporate game-like activity with colleagues to compete for a price reward based on new business opportunities?

Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

APPENDIX E
Statistical Analysis -

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

Statistical Consultation Services
Tel: +27 18 299 2651
Fax: +27 0 87 231 5294
Email: erika.fourie@nwu.ac.za

3 December 2020

Re: Thesis, Mr LP Pretorius, student number: 22078576
Investigating incentive strategies to increase employee engagement at an engineering services entity

We hereby confirm that the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University analysed the data of the above-mentioned student and assisted with the interpretation of the results. However, any opinion, findings or recommendations contained in this document are those of the author, and the Statistical Consultation Services of the NWU (Potchefstroom Campus) do not accept responsibility for the statistical correctness of the data reported.

Kind regards



Dr E Fourie
Senior Consultant: Statistical Consultation Services

APPENDIX F
Ethics number -

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)

30 October 2020

Prof RA Lotriet
Per e-mail
Dear Prof Lotriet,

EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 30102020
Student: Pretorius, LP (22078576)(NWU-00790-20-A4)
Applicant: Prof RA Lotriet - MBA

Your ethics application on, *Investigating alternative incentive strategies to increase employee engagement at an engineering service entity,* which served on the EMS-REC meeting of 30 October 2020, refers.

Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number **NWU-00790-20-A4** is given for one year of ethics clearance.

Due to the Covid-19 lock down ethics clearance for applications that involve data collection or any form of contact with participants are subject to the restrictions imposed by the South African government.

Kind regards,

Mark Rathbone

Digitally signed by Mark Rathbone
DN: cn=Mark Rathbone, o=North-West University, ou=Business management, email=mark.rathbone@nwu.ac.za, c=ZA
Date: 2020.11.05 14:38:55 +02'00'

Prof Mark Rathbone
Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)

APPENDIX G
Language Editing -

Dynamic Language &
Translation Specialists

Antoinette Bisschoff
71 Esselen Street,
Potchefstroom
Tel: 018 293 3046
Cell: 082 878 5183
Language@dlts.co.za
CC No: 1995/017794/23

Thursday, 17 December 2020

To whom it may concern

Re: Confirmation of language edit, typography and technical precision

The MBA dissertation by **L Pretorius**, "**Investigating incentive strategies to increase employee engagement at an engineering services entity**" was edited for language, typography and technical precision. The referencing and sources were checked and comply with the Harvard guidelines specified by the 2020 NWU Reference guide.

Final, last-minute corrections remain the responsibility of the author.



Antoinette Bisschoff

BA Languages (UPE – now NMU); MBA (PU for CHE – now NWU); Translation and Linguistic Studies (NWU)

Officially approved language editor of the NWU since 1998
Member of SA Translators Institute (no. 100181)

Precision ... to the last letter