Assessing the prevalence of a high performance culture within a selected sales-driven organisation in South Africa

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ABSTRACT AND KEY WORDS

The purpose of this study is to provide insight to the organisation under study as to how the organisation compares to a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics and which of those characteristics need to be reinforced by management to establish or continue to support high performance in a sales-driven environment in South Africa.

The problem that this research aims to address is that the organisation under study does not know how the organisation compares to a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics and which of those characteristics need to be reinforced by management to establish or continue to support high performance in a sales-driven environment in South Africa.

The study adopted a positivist research philosophy and a quantitative research method with a cross-sectional time horizon to census survey 90 sales personnel in the population. A validated structured questionnaire on assessing a high performance culture was used and administered on-line yielding 63 voluntary responses at a 70% completion rate.

The research results demonstrate that high performance organisational culture characteristics are prevalent in the organisation being studied, to a lesser extent in certain dimensions and not at all for the *reward system* dimension. Characteristics relating to the dimensions of *leadership*, *core capability (organisation, group/team and individual level), policies and procedures,* and *stakeholder satisfaction at the customer level* manifested extremely positively, while characteristics related to *vision and strategy*, *stakeholder satisfaction at the supplier, community and people level* was evident to an average degree. The organisation performed poorly in those characteristics related to *performance management* and *reward system*.

The research findings further indicated that the organisation's *leadership* is highly effective in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team, the organisation has to a large extent the requisite *core capability* at all three levels (organisation, group/team, and individual) to support a high performance culture, the organisation lacks an effective *reward system* and *performance management* system, and that *customer stakeholder satisfaction* features to an extremely large extent while s*upplier, community, and people stakeholder satisfaction* features to a much lesser extent as part of the culture in the sales team. Finally, practical recommendations to management have been made to improve certain cultural characteristics and to reinforce positive areas that support a high performance culture in this sales-driven organisation.

The benefits of the research include visibility to the organisation as to how the organisation compares to a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics, insight into

organisational cultural factors that should be enhanced, prioritised, and/or addressed to sustain and elevate organisational sales performance. One of the main benefits of the study is to ultimately improve the performance level of sales personnel and thereby improve business profitability and sustainability, and create shared value. Other organisational benefits include reducing sales personnel turnover and retaining key sales personnel by creating an environment for these individuals to thrive in.

Limitation of the study is the relative small sample size for inferential statistics. Managerial implications of the study were mentioned, as well as recommendations for further studies.

Key Words: High performance teams, Leadership, Organisational culture, Sales-driven organisation.

Definitions for concepts used in this research study are described below:-

- *Business sustainability* "simply means the ability to engage in present activities to achieve business goals without jeopardising the ability to do so in the future" (Ngaia *et al.*, 2018:661). For the purposes of this research, business sustainability relates to the ability of an organisation to sustain higher performance levels to ensure future business stability.

- *Creating shared value* in an organisation relates to actions "that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the community in which it operates" (Porter and Kramer, 2011: 66). Refer to Chapter 1 where the context to this concept is described.

- *Leadership* refers to how individuals in senior positions interact with employees on a daily basis thereby establishing and influencing culture (Amirul and Daud, 2012:193). Refer to Chapter 2, sub-section 2.2.1.

- *Organisational culture* can be described as "… the values, beliefs, and assumptions that are held by members of an organization and which facilitate shared meaning and guide behaviour at varying levels of awareness." (Denison et al., 2014:145). Refer to Chapter 2, sub-section 2.2 for additional detail.

- *Organisational strategy* can be described as "an integrated and coordinated set of commitments and actions designed to exploit core competencies and gain a competitive advantage" (Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson, 2007:4). Refer to Chapter 2, sub-section 2.2.2.

- *Organisational capability* describes the capability residing within the organisation in relation to market and customer knowledge, relationships, competence, and innovation (Huang and Huang, 2019:116). Refer to Chapter 2, sub-section 2.2.3.

- *Organisational work practices* can be described as what "corporate policies, practices, and procedures reward and support employees' development, motivation, and opportunities to contribute to achieve organisational goals" (Hartnell et al., 2019:834). Refer to Chapter 2, sub-section 2.2.4.

- *Human resource management (HRM)* relates to people management practices in organisations and focuses on recruitment and selection; learning, training and development; performance measurement and management; careers and career management; and safety, stress, and health at work (Woods and West, 2016:158). Refer to Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.

- *Stakeholder management* can be described by stakeholder theory which states that an organisation's value and performance is determined by the strategic actions a firm takes to satisfy the different stakeholder expectations (Yoon and Chung, 2018: 89). Refer to Chapter 2, sub-section 2.4.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Organisations have and will continue to face challenges to establish a culture that supports and aligns with the evolving strategic focus of the business. While strategy offers logic for the company's goals and focuses employees around them, organisational culture manifests these goals through values and beliefs, shared assumptions and group norms (Groysberg *et al*., 2018:45). It is known that organisational culture is intrinsically developed and cultivated to support the company's strategic goals (Kaul, 2019:130; Wu and Lin, 2013:6).

At the core of an organisations' culture are its human resources. Organisations are faced with a number of human resource challenges such as personnel turnover, competition for talent, adequate and applicable training and development interventions, and the retention of key personnel (Monaci, 2020:78). If these challenges are not effectively addressed and managed the consequent impact on business sustainability can be significant (Aust *et al.*, 2015:200; Macke and Genari, 2018:811). These adverse human resource impacts are influenced by an organisation's culture which when considered against a backdrop of creating shared value for all stakeholders place organisations at risk (Monaci, 2020:60).

In a sales oriented organisation its revenue growth is largely driven by an organisation's sales team. It is critical that these sales teams (human resources) are nurtured by an appropriate and supportive organisational culture. While successful sales people possess certain innate personality characteristics, obtaining success across an entire sales force is impacted by factors other than personality characteristics (Zoltners *et al*., 2016). The purpose of this study is to assess the prevalence of these organisational characteristics, other than personalities, that are pivotal for a high performance culture in a selected sales-driven organisation. While organisational culture and its impact on organisation performance is well researched (Sengottuvel and Aktharsha, 2016; Lee and Yu, 2004; Chatman and O'Reilly, 2016; Hartnell *et al*., 2019), this study will provide specific insights within the context of a sales-driven environment. The value of understanding the current status with regards to a high performance culture in the organisation under study could enhance sales teams' performance and effectiveness, business revenue, delivery of effective sales cycles, and the retention of key personnel. This in turn can improve an organisation's competitive advantage (Macke and Genari, 2018:807) and help create shared value (Monaci, 2020:60).

1.2   RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

Organisational culture influences human resource capability which when not aligned with organisational strategy, deviates from the creation of shared value for all stakeholders, placing the organisation at risk (Monaci, 2020:60). Therefore, an understanding of the characteristics that support increased performance levels and by reinforcing these characteristics through beliefs, values, and behavioural norms will create a high performance organisational culture (Hartnell *et al*., 2019:844). Company cultures which support high performance can impact all areas of the organisation resulting in increased levels of employee engagement, productivity, and retention (Kontoghiorghes, 2015:1849).

The problem that this research aims to address is that the organisation under study seems not to know how the organisation compares to a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics and which of those characteristics need to be reinforced by management to support high performance in a sales-driven environment in South Africa. Through this study insight will be gained into organisational cultural factors (Van Heerden and Roodt, 2007:22) that should be enhanced, prioritised, and/or addressed to sustain and elevate organisational sales performance in the selected organisation. This study will reveal the degree to which this company complies with a high performance culture, thereby creating the necessary awareness and inform action by the organisations' management for improvement. Management action will comprise specific initiatives to preserve and build on a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics which enhance performance, and initiatives to address those characteristics which are impeding performance.

One of the main benefits of the study is to ultimately improve the performance level of sales personnel and thereby improve business profitability and sustainability, and create shared value (Sengottuvel and Aktharsha, 2016:63). Other organisational benefits include reducing sales personnel turnover and retaining key sales personnel by creating an environment for these individuals to thrive in (Chatman and O'Reilly, 2016:23).

1.3   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

This research aims to assess the prevalence of those specific characteristics that are needed to establish or support a high performance organisational culture in order for a sales team to perform in a highly competitive environment. The main research objective is therefore to:-

- Assess the prevalence of high performance organisational culture characteristics as experienced by sales employees in a selected sales-driven organisation within South Africa.

The sub-objectives of this research are to:-

- Determine the effectiveness of the *organisation's vision and strategy* in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team.
- Determine the effectiveness of the *organisation's leadership behaviour* in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team.
- Determine the *core capability* present at organisation, team and individual levels to support a high performance culture.
- Determine the effectiveness of the organisation's *reward and performance management practices* in the sales team.
- Determine how *stakeholder satisfaction* features as part of culture in the sales team.

The corresponding primary research question that guides this study:-
- What is the prevalence of high performance organisational culture characteristics as experienced by sales employees in a selected organisation in South African?

The corresponding secondary research questions are:-

- To what extent is the organisation's *vision and strategy* aligned with high performance culture in the sales team?
- To what extent is *leadership behaviour* aligned with a high performance culture in the sales team?
- To what extent is the *core capability* present at organisation, team and individual levels to support a high performance culture?
- To what extent is the organisation's *reward and performance management practices* relevant to the sales team?
- To what extent does *stakeholder satisfaction* feature as part of the culture in the sales team?

1.4   RESEARCH SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS

1.4.1   Organisation of Interest

This research is applicable to a private sector sales-driven services organisation located in South Africa providing professional services across the chemical and energy sectors. The organisation of interest has a geographical presence across the country with regional offices located in all major provinces including the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, North West, Free State, Kwazulu Natal, Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. The organisation selected is based on the objectives of this research study and ease of access to the population of concern. Given the time and resource constraints associated with this research study no additional private sector organisations have been included as during the Covid 19 pandemic, during which this study had to be conducted, limited access to organisations and their employees were possible.

1.4.2   Population under study

The functional area of concern is limited to personnel working in a sales functionality only. The population is therefore limited to sales personnel and only these individuals will be surveyed as participants in the study. The population of sales individuals are located across the major provinces in South Africa.

1.4.3   Literature focus

The literature underpinning this research topic is concerned with constructs relating to organisational culture, organisational capability, human resource management with its associated nuances on performance, and stakeholder management. These constructs will be intertwined in the research and forms the frame for the literature review and will subsequently support the findings.

1.4.4   Unit of Analysis

The fundamental intention of this research is not to establish the characteristics for a high performance sales-driven organisational culture at a team level as unit of analysis, but rather to gain an understanding of these characteristics at an individual sales employee level. An alternative unit of analysis is the team (group) of sales people located within a geographic region.

The team, as an alternative unit of analysis, will be possible since the data from an individual level could be aggregated to provide a view of the group to which that individual belongs.

1.4.5 Assumptions and Delimitations

The following assumptions were present in this study:-

- It is assumed that survey respondents will provide answers to the questions in an honest manner.
- It is assumed that this study is an accurate representation of the organisation relating to the characteristic categories explored in this research.

The survey was delimited to focus on the population of sales personnel of a selected private organisation located within South Africa.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OVERVIEW

An outline of the research methodology and methods that was used in answering the research questions stated are provided and are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. To answer the research problem the study employed a positivist research philosophy to develop knowledge which was informed by the following research belief systems:

- Ontology refers to "the nature of social phenomena" (Bryman and Bell, 2017:16) and the ontological assumption is that certain characteristics support a high performance organisational culture in a sales-driven environment which benefits an organisation; and that the organisation is responsible for establishing these characteristics that support a high performance culture with employees being a recipient thereof. The organisation is therefore viewed as a real entity and the ontological position is that of realism (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016:53).
- Epistemology refers to "the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and the process by which knowledge is acquired and validated" (Gall *et al*., 2003:13) and the epistemology of this research is based on factual and/or interpretative knowledge held by employees in the organisation on which characteristics are prevalent to what extent. The focus was therefore on discovering observable and measurable facts which can be analysed in a quantitative way (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016:53).

- Axiology refers to "the role of values and ethics within the research process" (Saunders, 2016:128) and the axiology assumption is that this research study is free of the researcher's and respondents' personal values and any personal beliefs or values will not bias any of the research findings.

A positivist methodology relies on quantitative means (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016:54) and the research approach favoured a deductive method to the relationship between the available theory and the research topic with a strong emphasis on the empirical testing of theory (Bryman and Bell, 2017:31; Saunders *et al.*, 2016:145). The deductive approach allowed the research question to be answered by proposing appropriate tenets of organisational culture theory (in support of high performance), analysing the respondent data set, and explaining causal relationships between concepts and variables to reveal the observed research patterns.

The methodological choice was a mono-method quantitative research study (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:166) with a research strategy based on a survey instrument acquired and used with permission from Van Heerden and Roodt (2007) with a cross-sectional time horizon.

The population of interest included all of the ninety (90) sales individuals employed in the organisation at the time of conducting this research with the unit of analysis being at the individual level. Considering the population size and ease of accessibility to the population, together with the research strategy and data collection method, there was no additional resources required to census sample the population.

The data collection instrument used is an existing pre-developed questionnaire developed in South Africa by Van Heerden and Roodt (2007). The research instrument (Annexure B) comprised of two sections with eighty three (83) questions in total. The first section sought specific respondent information to inform descriptive statistics. The second section sought responses to assess the prevalence of the requisite characteristics for a high performance culture, and to inform a snapshot of the organisation against these characteristics. This second section includes the questionnaire comprising 12 dimensions associated with a high performance culture (Van Heerden and Roodt, 2007:23-24). Each of the 12 dimensions contained specific questions related to assessing a dimension.

The research instrument made use of a 5 point Likert scale (with 1 indicating a strong disagree/negative view, 3 indicating an agree view, and 5 a very strong agree/positive view) to elicit suitable responses. All questions were closed type questions in support of the deductive quantitative research approach for this study. Zikmund (2003:333) highlights that "In contrast to open-ended questions, fixed-alternative questions require less interviewer skill, take less time,

and are easier for the respondent to answer". Closed questions also allow for easier processing of responses, the ability to compare and test relations, and supports an understanding of what is being asked (Bryman and Bell, 2007:200). The questionnaire was self-administered through the use of an online survey platform. Research ethics, relating to employee personal details, were maintained by utilising an employee list controlled by the organisations' HR representative to only gain access to the participants for the on-line survey and were not shared or disclosed to the researcher. All responses from the participants were kept confidential with no personal details disclosed or shared with the researcher.

The data analysis methods follow the approach suggested by Saunders (2016:498-551) and included preparing the data from responses for analysis, exploring and presenting the data, and describing and interpreting the data using appropriate statistical methods and software (SPSS).

1.6   CHAPTER LAYOUT

This mini-dissertation is structured in the following chapters:

- Chapter 2 summarises the academic literature and theoretical constructs available in the context of the research topic.
- Chapter 3 explains in detail the empirical research methodologies and methods applied during this research.
- Chapter 4 explains the data analysis techniques employed together with the results from the data analysis, and presents an interpretation of the data analysis.
- Chapter 5 synthesises the results, findings and implications of the research incorporating key tenets from the reviewed literature.
- Chapter 6 details the conclusions, managerial implications, and recommendations from this research.

1.7   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provided an introduction and background to this research study highlighting the research problem and research questions in support of the importance and benefits for conducting this research, the research scope indicating the regional or geographic boundaries in which the organisation operates and describing the population of interest (sales personnel) analysed at an individual level, an overview of the research methods adopted, and an outline of the remaining structure and content of this mini-dissertation.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature and theory reviewed in this chapter aims to provide an overview of the published literature relevant to this study, to create a conceptual theoretical framework for the relevant theoretical aspects associated with this research, and to provide support for the focus of the research problem and questions.

This research study has the following main theoretical constructs pertaining to a high performance organisational culture in support of the study's research objectives, with the relationships indicated in Figure 2-1 derived from the integrated high performance organisational culture model proposed by Van Heerden and Roodt (2007:22):

- Leadership, organisational strategy, organisational capability and work practices,
- Human resources management (HRM) to enable performance, and
- Stakeholder involvement and influence on the organisation.   .

A literature review of these theoretical constructs, mentioned in Figure 2-1, follows in the subsequent sections of this Chapter.
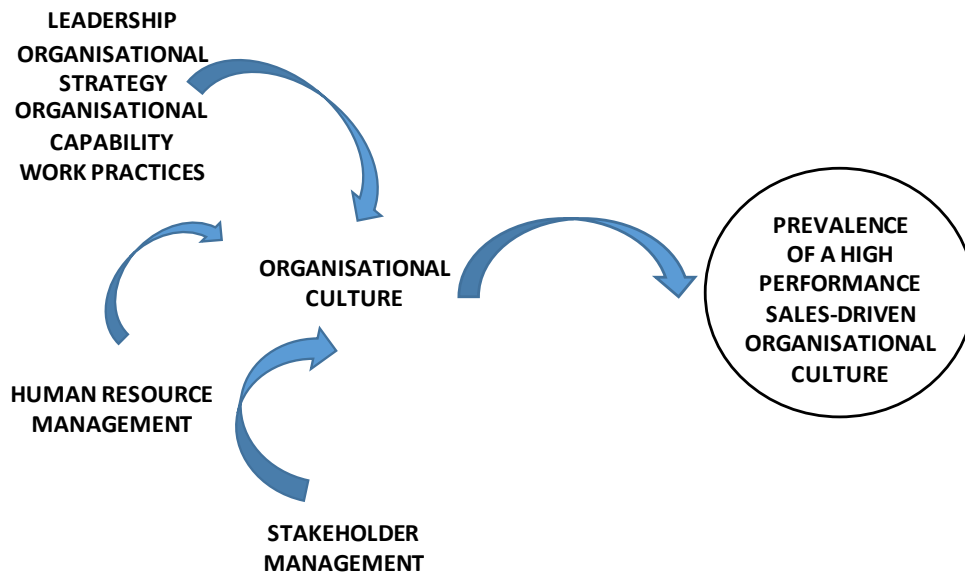
2.2   ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON PERFORMANCE

Organisational culture manifests goals through values and beliefs, shared assumptions and group norms (Harvard Business Review, 2018). Denison *et al*. (2014:145) describe the basis of organisational culture as "the values, beliefs, and assumptions that are held by members of an organisation and which facilitate shared meaning and guide behaviour at varying levels of awareness."

Considering that organisational culture encompasses and is engrained in most aspects of an organisation, and being a central tenet to this research, it is important that the notion of culture and its impact on performance in an organisation is addressed (Hartnell *et al*., 2019:832).

Lee and Yu (2004:357) researched possible relationships between corporate culture and organisational performance, and to investigate the validity of the culture construct to assess how culture affects organisational performance. Culture was found to impact a variety of organisational processes and performance. Similarly, research by Sengottuvel and Aktharsha (2016:63) revealed that positivity in the various dimensions of organisational culture produced a healthy impact on organisational performance.

In a critical analysis of the state of research into organisational culture Chatman and O'Reilly (2016:23) concluded "that culture can have significant positive and negative effects on individual and organisational outcomes, including employee fit, job satisfaction, commitment and turnover as well as important organisational outcomes such as customer satisfaction, product quality, and organisational financial performance."

From the reviewed literature and evidence above it can be established that organisational culture impacts the performance of organisations.

Organisational culture is related to and is largely influenced by elements of an organisation's system which are: leadership, strategy, structure, and work practices. The relationships between organisational culture and these elements are interdependent, and these elements serve to form and reinforce the organisation's culture (Hartnell *et al*., 2019:844). Each of these elements of organisational culture impact the performance of the organisation and are explored in more detail in the following sections.

2.2.1 Leadership

Leadership in an organisation plays an important role in establishing the mission and values of an organisation, and simplistically refers to how individuals in senior positions interact with employees on a daily basis thereby establishing and influencing culture (Amirul and Daud, 2012:193).

Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transforming leadership to define the ideal condition between political leaders and their followers to achieve higher levels of morale and motivation to create significant change in people and organisations (Hoch, 2018:504). Transactional leadership according to Burns (1978) was on the opposing end of the continuum and assisted in the drive to ensure efficiency in achieving organisational goals (Laureani and Antony, 2019:61). Further work by Bass (1985) around transformational leadership (TL) highlighted the four facets of a transformational leader as including personal charisma, capacity to inspire and motivate, encouragement for problem-solving, and personal attentiveness to employees (Makka, 2019:86). These facets have evolved into four behavioural types that transformational leaders display: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration (Laureani and Antony, 2019:66). TL can therefore be contextualised as leadership behaviour which seeks to influence, inspire, stimulate, and build relationships with followers which results in increased (individual and team) levels of performance and results.

A study by Brown (2014:11) examined the effects of emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership styles on sales performance. Transformational and transactional leadership styles were considered with the premise that a transformational leader has the capacity to develop individuals by enabling them to buy in to the vision, goals and aspirations while the transactional leadership style is more suited to compliance, rules, policies and procedures. The research findings suggested a positive link between EI, transactional and transformational leadership styles and sales performance.

Similar studies (Qadir and Yeşiltas, 2020:8; Magada and Govender, 2016:214; Sethibe and Steyn, 2015:334) found that transformational leadership, as opposed to transactional leadership, had a larger positive effect on organisational performance. Magada and Govender (2016:214) further asserted that transformational leadership behaviours are effective for improving individual performance through culture.

The notion of inspiration and leadership converges when leaders are expected to inspire action to raise individual and team performance, and encourage creativity and innovation to accomplish goals and objectives (Steinmann *et al*., 2018:2). Oleynick *et al*. (2014:436) described inspiration

as "a motivational state that compels individuals to bring ideas into fruition". Laureani and Antony (2019:66) described inspirational motivation (IM) as "the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers". In this context leaders express confidence about the future and communicate to employees with enthusiasm that the vision is achievable. TL leaders use IM to articulate a vision which is clear, can be understood, and supported by the organisation. These leaders engage and persuade, thereby creating the necessary motivation for followers to envision and work towards more attractive future organisational states (Giddens, 2018:118).

A review of the literature revealed the following transformational leadership traits which serve to inspire and motivate others:-

- *Charisma* - James and Lahti (2011:108) found that leader charisma was significantly and considerably related to employee inspiration, describing charisma as creating "compelling organisational visions and then embodying them through charismatic behaviour in order to promote employee inspiration" (James and Lahti, 2011:109).
- *Communication and interaction* - Organisational factors such as the level of communication from leaders regarding the organisation's vision and goals and the level of interaction (behavioural distance) between leaders and employees at an individual level were significantly related to employee inspiration (James and Lahti, 2011:108). Traits such as effective communication and relationship building with employees are therefore significant (Hoffner, 2018:54).
- *Self-confidence* – Transformational leaders exhibit a high level of self-confidence which is key to lobbying and inspiring followers to rally behind the vision or goal (O'Reilly and Chatman, 2020:19).
- *Willingness to challenge the status quo and take risks* - Transformational leaders exhibit a willingness to challenge existing norms and in doing so incur risks commonly associated with charting a new or different path (O'Reilly and Chatman, 2020:19).
- *Integrity* – Transformational leaders act with integrity and inspire through consistent actions serving as a role model for followers ((Hoffner, 2018:54).
- *Energetic, enthusiastic and passionate* - Transformational leaders talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished, demonstrating passion, and energy when setting high expectations for followers to achieve (Hoffner, 2018:54).

A review of the literature revealed the importance of transformational leadership with the following positive beneficial organisational outcomes:-

- *Performance (individual/team/organisation)* - it has been found that inspirational motivation influenced employee job performance with several studies supporting a positive correlation of TL and employee job performance in various settings and context (Langat *et al.* 2019:5; Matar and Aldaheri, 2019:290). A meta-analysis (Giddens, 2018:118) found that TL is positively related to individual performance, performance among teams and organisations, and enhances team and organisational performance to a larger extent than transactional leadership.

- *Financial outcomes* – it has been established that a TL style is positively related to firm performance with the sub-dimensions of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation having the strongest effects (Jensen *et al*., 2020:842).

- *Creativity and organisational innovation* - TL positively affects employee creativity and organisational innovation with inspirational motivation being a key factor in promoting and encouraging employee creativity (Shafi *et al*., 2020:174).

- *Employee turnover and talent retention* – TL can directly decrease an employee's intention to leave an organisation and significantly influences talent retention in an organisation (Mangisa *et al*., 2020:10). Paltu and Brouwers (2020:9) examined the link between what the authors termed "toxic" leadership and its impact on employee turnover and organisation culture. "Toxic" leadership was described as the demonstration of behavioural attributes by leaders such as being abusive and undermining, authoritarian, and narcissistic. The findings of the study indicated a direct impact on the potential of employee turnover when these leadership traits existed. Further, it was found that when leaders are experienced as toxic by employees the organisational culture is negatively influenced.

From the literature reviewed it is evident that leadership traits impact on organisational performance and certain leadership characteristics can inspire and motivate people .However, it is also evident that certain extreme leadership traits which can be described as "toxic" impact organisational stability through increased employee turnover with a negative impact on organisational culture.

2.2.2   Organisational Strategy

Organisational strategy is a key part of an organisation's system (Hartnell *et al*., 2019:844) and can be described as "an integrated and coordinated set of commitments and actions designed to exploit core competencies and gain a competitive advantage" (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2007:

4). Organisational strategy and its influence on organisational performance and culture is explored in more detail below.

Kaul's research (2019:130) into culture and strategy concluded that in general strategy preceded culture and that culture should be aligned with the strategic intent of the organisation. While culture strongly influences strategy it does not imply that culture precedes strategy but rather that strategy can thrive on and benefit from a supportive culture.

Wu and Lin (2013:6) found in their research that business strategies have a significant positive link to job satisfaction, organisational objectives and job performance (organisational performance). Their research also found that organisational culture has a slight moderating effect for the relation between organisational strategy and performance.

Bayraktar *et al*. (2017:49) investigated the link between strategy, innovation and firm performance in the manufacturing sector finding that specific strategic approaches focusing on (for example) cost-leadership and differentiation can lead to innovation which enhances organisational performance. Similarly, Prodromos *et al.* (2018:62) researched the strategic orientation of an organisation and its impact on organisational performance finding that strategy is a significant mediating factor between organisational capabilities and resources on an organisation's performance.

From the literature reviewed it is evident that there is a clear positive relation between organisational strategy and its influence on organisational performance. Further, organisational strategy generally precedes culture though both concepts are closely related in terms of bi-directional influence.

2.2.3   Core Capability

Core capabilities will be explained on three levels – Organisational, Group and Individual.

2.2.3.1   Organisational

Huang and Huang (2019:116) found that organisational capability (which the authors related to market and customer knowledge, relationships, capability, and innovation) significantly determined the level of intellectual capital in the organisation, which in turn positively influenced organisational performance.

In relation to organisational culture, a study by Johannsen and Zak (2021:9) established that organisational trust increased productivity and earnings by employees, improved employee job satisfaction, reduced job turnover, and generally resulted in happier and healthier employees. Research into organisations which encouraged diversity and commitment found that race (Moon and Christensen, 2020:141) and gender (Fernando *et al*., 2020:484) diversity, and employee commitment (Sabir *et al.*, 2015:12), has a direct influence on overall capabilities and results in positive organisation performance.

2.2.3.2 Group/Team

Fay *et al.* (2015:261) examined the effect of teamwork on organisational innovation concluding that where teamwork was more prevalent and widespread for appropriate work tasks, higher levels of organisational innovation existed.

Within the context of performance management and the devolvement of human resource departmental activities to line management (Perry and Kulik, 2008:262), the clear setting of performance goals and working in teams to achieve these goals is critical. Van der Hoek *et al*. (2018:492) found that in support of goal setting theory where individuals perform better if goals that guide work are clear and specific, the authors also concluded that goal clarity positively affects team performance.

Considering the manner (respect and communication) in which teams work together, LaGree *et al*. (2021:19) investigated how respectful communication and engagement affected employees where engagement was described as the "state of being treated politely or being properly recognised for behaviour" (LaGree *et al*., 2021:4). The authors concluded that respectful engagement and communication positively benefitted employees' wellbeing (resilience) and improved long-term business results.

2.2.3.3 Individual

In terms of individual capability and employee competency, Salman *et al*. (2020:430) found a positive and significant impact between employee competencies and organisational performance. Similarly Puteh *et al*. (2015:335) revealed four critical competency clusters that are required by employees which makes employees an asset to the organisation. The authors described these as functional (task or job) competency, leadership competency, communication competency, and cognitive (analytical and decision making) competency.

Research exploring employee empowerment and accountability and its association with organisational improvement found that employee empowerment (Ribeiro, 2018:65) and employee

accountability (Han and Hong, 2019:21) improves the competitive position of an organisation. Han and Hong (2019:22) also concluded that employee autonomy amplified the positive impact of accountability on performance.

2.2.4 Work Practices

Organisational work practices can be described as what "corporate policies, practices, and procedures reward and support employees' development, motivation, and opportunities to contribute to achieve organisational goals" (Hartnell *et al.*, 2019:834). The impact of these practices on organisational culture and performance is discussed in more detail below.

Den Hartog and Verburg (2004:73) studied the link between work practices and performance, and the relationship between work practices and organisational culture. Their research determined that practices such as personnel selection, employee development, autonomy, remuneration linked to performance, incentives such as profit sharing, and effective knowledge management (information sharing) were positively linked to an employee's willingness to put in extra effort, and to the perceived performance of the organisation. Further, it was determined that there were also positive relationships between work practices and organisational culture dimensions.

Hartnell *et al.* (2019:844) found that work practices that enhance motivation (performance management, compensation, incentives, benefits, career development, and job security), and practices that enhance opportunity (flexible job design, work teams, employee involvement, and information sharing) have a positive impact on organisational aspects such as innovation, customer, and financial outcomes. A meta-analysis completed by Yongmei Liu *et al*. (2006:524) also confirmed the existence of a substantial positive link between organisational performance and the adoption of effective work practices. Reward management work practices in the form of compensation, incentives, benefits, career development, and job security were prevalent.

It is evident from the literature reviewed that these findings have an underlying association to motivational theory. Earlier theories of motivation include Herzberg's motivation-hygiene (two-factor) theory which describes certain hygiene factors that result in either employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors enhancing employee motivation include, amongst others, achievement and recognition (Robbins and Judge, 2007:212). Studies have indicated that employee rewards and recognition have an important and constructive effect, while job stress has a negative effect on employee performance (Hussain *et al*., 2019:69). Even intrinsic (non-financial) rewards such as professional respect, personal development and growth, performing work that is enjoyable, and learning something new have a positive impact on employee motivation and performance (Manzoor *et al*., 2021:10).

From the literature reviewed organisational work practices have a positive effect on both organisation culture and on individual/organisational performance. Taking cognisance of employee motivation, and within the context of sales performance, the need to motivate sales individuals like any other employee in an organisation highlights the importance of creating the right levels of motivation through the application of effective work practices. This will ultimately result in enhanced levels of performance.

2.3   HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Human resources management (HRM) is central to an organisation and influences how an organisation operates within the global business environment, and further within its specific business sector. A study by Bakator *et al.* (2019:11) found that the majority of research on HRM and business performance indicated that there was an undisputable positive link between good HRM practices and key business performance metrics (employee wellbeing, productivity, and organisational climate). HRM can therefore be seen as a key enabler of performance.

HRM comprises of various focus areas with Woods and West (2016:158) describing the achievement of good people management practices in organisations through a strong focus on recruitment and selection; learning, training and development; performance measurement and management; careers and career management; and safety, stress, and health at work. Historically, the functionality for developing and imbedding practices in these areas resided with specialists within the human resource (HR) function. This norm has evolved over the recent past with line management becoming more involved and taking more accountability for the development and application of HRM activities within the organisation. Activities that were previously reserved for HR specialists are consciously being devolved to line management and can include recruitment, personnel development and career planning, occupational health and safety compliance, and the shaping and embedding of organisational culture practices (Perry and Kulik, 2008:262). Since line management is at the frontline of the interaction with the workforce the ability to shape and influence performance is significant.

Ramlall and Melton (2019:12-16) identified various HRM dimensions and practices for line management relating to establishing and maintaining a high performance culture. These include:-

- *Employee wellbeing* - supporting employees from a wellness perspective (emotionally and physically) either through personal interaction or by providing access to specialised services. Employee wellbeing manifests in reduced absenteeism and higher productivity.

- *Employee engagement* - endeavouring to keep employees stimulated and interested in the job or work content by supporting actions and practices that create enthusiasm and dedication in the workplace.

- *Employee retention* - applying HR policies and practices in a consistent manner that aim to retain employees with key skills and experience, and those who contribute to business profitability and sustainability.

- *Learning and development* - adopting a frontline approach to coaching and developing employees to improve overall performance. Continuous learning and development initiatives are essential to skills development and support enhanced employee engagement levels.

- *Performance management* - playing an instrumental role in defining work targets and assessing performance. This manifests practically by conducting fair performance appraisals with each employee and to provide relevant feedback to improve the performance of individuals.

- *Succession planning* – scheduling of regular career development discussions with employees to plan and ensure that high potential employees are exposed to different work opportunities to gain the necessary experience required to occupy future senior positions.

- *Diversity and inclusion* - managing employees in a fair and transparent manner while ensuring that the contribution from differing racial groups and gender are included and valued in the workplace.

- *Workplace safety* – ensuring a safe work environment for employees which foremost sends out a positive message of care.

From the literature reviewed it is evident that HRM is a key influencer of performance, and is being effected more frequently through front line management. Positive management employee interaction, relating to the HR dimensions and practices highlighted, is therefore critical to establishing and maintaining a high performance culture.

2.3.1   HRM in a Sales Context

An understanding of the sales environment and the factors that influence sales performance is relevant to this study considering the context for this research and the research objectives. A meta-analysis completed by Verbeke *et al.* (2011:421) to understand the drivers of sales performance determined the following antecedents as the most important (listed in rank order):

- Selling-related knowledge which includes both product and customer knowledge that is required to present and co-create solutions for customers.

- Degree of adaptiveness refers to the ability of sales people to read customer intention and needs and to adapt their behaviour and sales strategy accordingly.

- Role ambiguity occurs when sales people have insufficient information to perform effectively and when there is uncertainty around expectations.

- Cognitive aptitude describes the ability of sales people to tailor their communication to help customers better understand their needs, and to substantiate the sales message with quantitative data.

- Work engagement refers to sales people's personal networks, the depth thereof relating to strength of relationships, communication and knowledge transfer.

A study by Farrel (2007:271) into the effect of a market oriented organisational culture on sales force behaviour and attitudes found that market oriented values affect role conflict, role ambiguity, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

From the literature reviewed it is evident that sales people will be required more so to function as knowledge advisors, who are knowledge based and able to transfer knowledge to customers. Correspondingly effective sales people are required to have cognitive abilities to absorb knowledge, be able to function with diverse team members, adapt messages to various stakeholders, and be able to shape the intentions and needs of their customers.

2.4 STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

Stakeholder theory states that an organisation's value and performance are determined by the strategic actions a firm takes to satisfy the different stakeholder expectations (Yoon and Chung, 2018: 89). Therefore effective stakeholder management ensures that organisations are aware of and able to evaluate key stakeholder inputs that can affect the organisation's operation and performance. The theoretical constructs associated with the management of internal people stakeholders (employees) is discussed under HRM in Section 2.3 above. External stakeholders (community, customers and suppliers) and their impact on organisational performance are discussed below.

Wang and Sengupta (2016:5566) found a positive relationship between the quality of stakeholder relations and brand equity, and that brand equity facilitated the association between stakeholder relations and organisation performance. Similarly, a study by Yoon and Chung (2018:94), in a

corporate social responsibility context, found that considering the needs and input from the community enhanced an organisation's market value.

Grekova *et al*. (2015:1869) concluded that collaborating with suppliers can improve firm performance as collaboration encourages cost savings. The authors also found that collaboration with customers resulted indirectly in better performance by stimulating firms to implement process improvements that resulted in cost reduction initiatives and market gains. Vaitoonkiat and Charoensukmongkol (2019:879) found that in a market uncertainty condition a strong focus on customer orientation significantly explained higher organisation performance.

A brief literature review has indicated that effective stakeholder management of customers, suppliers, and the community is important for organisations considering the benefits derived and the subsequent positive impact on organisational performance.

Further, it is evident from this literature review that the influence of organisational culture on performance has not been studied and remains unexplored in a sales-oriented organisation in South Africa, which consequently provides the rationale for this research study.

2.5   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Based on the literature reviewed the following key tenets of organisational culture, elements of an organisation's system, and its impact on performance are evident:-

- Organisational culture does impact the performance of an organisation (Lee and Yu, 2004:357; Sengottuvel and Aktharsha, 2016:63; Chatman and O'Reilly, 2016:23).
- Organisational culture is related to and influenced by other elements of an organisation's system consisting of leadership, strategy, structure, and work practices. These elements form and reinforce the organisation's culture and impact the performance of the organisation (Hartnell *et al*., 2019:844).
- Studies have found that transformational leadership has a larger positive effect on organisational performance (Brown, 2014:11; Qadir and Yeşiltas, 2020:8; Magada and Govender, 2016:214; Sethibe and Steyn, 2015:334) with certain leadership characteristics serving to inspire and motivate others (James and Lahti, 2011:109; Hoffner, 2018:54; O'Reilly and Chatman, 2020:19). "Toxic" leadership traits (abusive and undermining, authoritarian, and narcissistic) directly impact employee turnover and negatively influence organisational culture (Paltu and Brouwers, 2020:9).

- Culture strongly influences strategy and strategy can thrive on and benefit from a supportive culture (Kaul, 2019:130). Strategy has a significant positive link to job satisfaction, organisational objectives and job performance (Wu and Lin, 2013:6). Specific strategic approaches can lead to innovation which enhances organisational performance (Bayraktar *et al*., 2017:49). Strategy is a significant mediating factor between organisational capabilities and resources on an organisation's performance (Prodromos *et al*., 2018:62).

- Organisational capability determined the level of intellectual capital in the organisation, which in turn positively influenced organisational performance (Huang and Huang, 2019:116). Diversity in the form of race (Moon and Christensen, 2020:141) and gender (Fernando *et al*., 2020:484), employee commitment (Sabir *et al*., 2015:12), teamwork (Fay *et al*., 2015:261; LaGree *et al*., 2021:4), and goal clarity (Van der Hoek *et al*., 2018: 492) have a direct influence on overall capabilities and result in positive organisation performance. At the individual level, employee competency (Salman *et al*., 2020:430; Puteh *et al*., 2015:335), employee empowerment (Ribeiro, 2018:65), employee accountability and autonomy (Han and Hong, 2019:21) improve the competitive position of an organisation.

- Effective work practices that enhance motivation and opportunity are positively linked to an employee's willingness to put in extra effort and to the performance of the organisation (Den Hartog and Verburg, 2004:73; Yongmei Liu *et al*., 2006:524), with positive relationships between work practices and organisational culture dimensions (Hartnell *et al*., 2019:844).

Based on the literature reviewed the following key tenets of HRM and stakeholder management are relevant:-

- There is a positive link between good HRM practices and key business performance metrics with HRM seen as a key enabler of performance (Bakator *et al*., 2019:11). People management practices to establish and maintain a high performance culture include employee wellbeing, engagement, retention, learning and development, performance management, succession planning, diversity and inclusion, and workplace safety (Ramlall and Melton, 2019:12-16).

- HRM is a key influencer of performance and is being effected more frequently through front line management. Positive management employee interaction is therefore crucial to establishing and maintaining a high performance culture (Perry and Kulik, 2008:262). Taking cognisance of the concept of motivation, and the need to motivate sales individuals, highlights the importance of creating the right levels of motivation through the

application of effective work practices which ultimately lead to enhanced levels of performance.

- Within the context of a sales environment, sales people will be required to function as knowledge advisors requiring cognitive abilities to absorb knowledge, be able to effectively function with diverse team members, adapt messages to various stakeholders, and be able to shape the intentions and needs of their customers (Verbeke *et al*., 2011:421).

- Customer, supplier, and community stakeholder management are imperative considering each dimension's positive impact on organisational performance (Wang and Sengupta, 2016:5566; Yoon and Chung, 2018: 94; Grekova *et al*., 2015:1869; Vaitoonkiat and Charoensukmongkol, 2019:879).

The next chapter presents and discusses the rationale around the research methodology and methods used to conduct this research study.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the choices made for the research methodology to investigate and address the research problem presented in Chapter 1. The research "onion" proposed by Saunders *et al.* (2016:124) was used to guide the research methodology in relation to the research philosophy, research approach, data collection technique, and data analysis procedures. The subsequent sections of this Chapter are presented and intend to explain and substantiate the adopted research methodology as described by Saunders *et al.* (2016:124) and depicted in Figure 3-1 below.
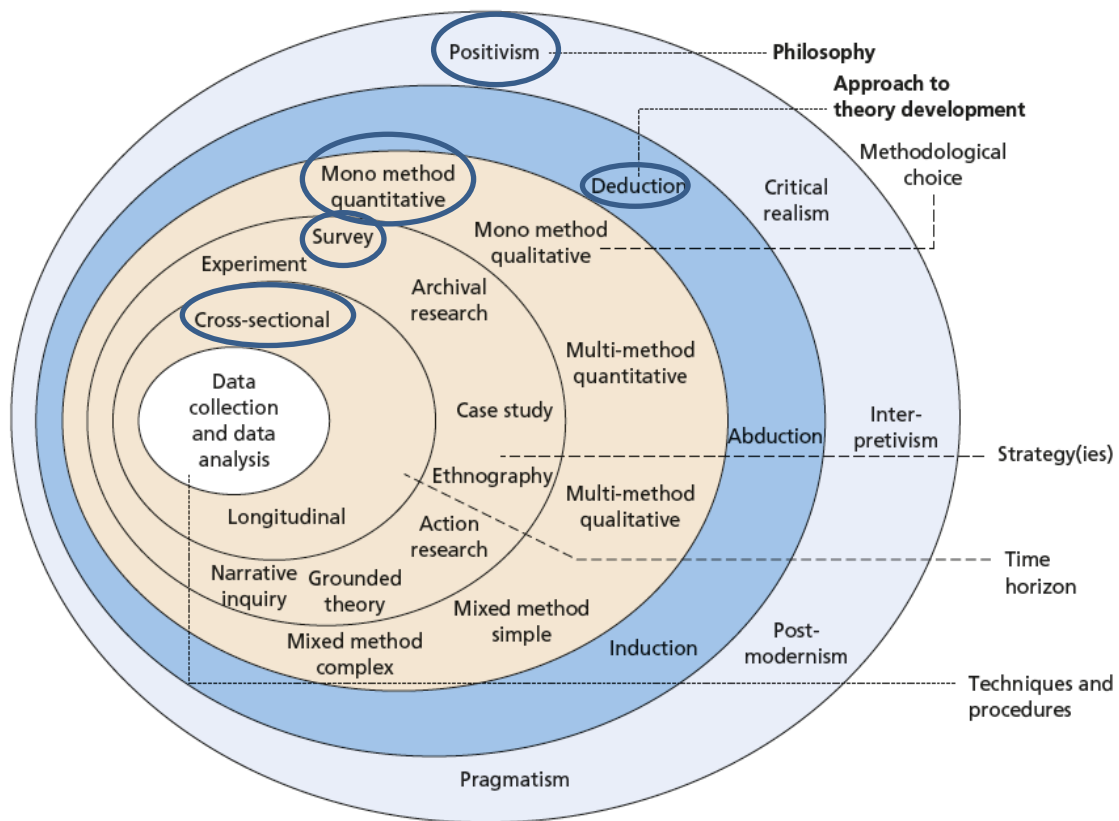
Figure 3-1:   The research "onion" (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:124)

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

There are five major philosophies in business and management: positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism (Figure 3-1). The assumptions relevant to the development of knowledge associated with the research influence the research philosophy which

Saunders *et al.* (2016:124) define as referring to a "system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge." The research philosophy therefore refers to the knowledge development approach undertaken to answer the research problem that the organisation under study does not know how the organisational compares to a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics and which of those characteristics need to be reinforced by management to establish or continue to support high performance in a sales-driven environment in South Africa.

The types of assumptions relevant to selecting this study's research philosophy include:-

- Ontology refers to "the nature of social phenomena" (Bryman and Bell, 2017:16). The ontological assumption is that certain characteristics support a high performance organisational culture in a sales-driven environment which benefits organisations; and that the organisation is responsible for establishing these characteristics that support a high performance culture with employees being a recipient thereof. The organisation is therefore viewed as a real entity and the ontological position is that of realism (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016:53).
- Epistemology refers to "the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and the process by which knowledge is acquired and validated" (Gall *et al*., 2003:13). The epistemology of this research is based on factual and/or interpretative knowledge held by employees in the organisation on which characteristics are prevalent to what extent. The focus is therefore on discovering observable and measurable facts which can be analysed in a quantitative manner (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016:53).
- Axiology refers to the role of values and ethics within the research process (Saunders, 2016:128). The axiology assumption is that this research study is free of the researcher's and respondents' personal values and any personal beliefs or values will not bias any of the research findings.

These assumptions underpin the research philosophy relevant to the research problem and this research was therefore investigated in a positivist manner.

3.3   RESEARCH APPROACH

This research approach commenced with a review of the academic literature followed by a research strategy to test the theory. The research approach favours a deductive method to the relationship between the reviewed theory and the research topic with a strong emphasis on the

empirical testing of theory (Bryman and Bell, 2017:31; Saunders *et al.*, 2016:145). The deductive approach allowed the research question to be answered by proposing appropriate tenets of organisational culture theory (in support of high performance), analysing the respondent data set, and explaining causal relationships between concepts and variables to reveal the observed research patterns.

3.4   RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to the conceptual structure associated with answering the research question (Patel and Patel, 2019:51) and "provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data" (Bryman and Bell, 2017:100). Considering the research philosophy of positivism this research followed a quantitative research method as it is focused on the "what" (as opposed to the "how" and "why") in terms of assessing the prevalence of key organisational culture characteristics that will propel performance in a sales-driven organisation.

The quantitative research method employed structured data collection by collecting primary data from the population through a single data collection technique for further quantitative data analysis and testing. As such the methodological choice was a mono method quantitative study (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:166).

A survey research strategy was employed in support of a deductive research approach to assess the prevalence of high performance organisational culture characteristics. The survey strategy used a questionnaire to collect data for economical purposes and to offer more control over the entire research process (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:181). The data were then analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Given the nature of the research topic and deductive approach, together with the associated time constraints, research data were collected on "more than one case and at a single point in time" (Bryman and Bell, 2017:106). This study therefore provides a snapshot of the phenomena at a given point allowing causal relations to be observed with the time horizon being cross-sectional in nature (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:201).

3.5   POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.5.1   Population

Population in a research study refers to the entire set of cases or group that the research aims to draw conclusions about (Taherdoost, 2016:18). The functional area of concern was limited to employees working in a sales functionality only. Considering that the fundamental intention of this research was to assess the characteristics prevalent for a high performance organisational culture at a team level, the study population consisted of all sales individuals performing a sales functionality within the various geographic based sales teams. These sales individuals specialise in offering industrial water treatment solutions to the energy and chemicals sectors in South Africa.

Personnel information (names, contact information, location etc.) about these sales individuals reside within the organisation in the centralised corporate HR department. The population included all ninety (90) sales individuals in the employ of the organisation at the time of the survey during the 2021 calendar year. The sales regions in the organisation are spread throughout South Africa, with sales individuals being present in eight (out of nine) provinces including the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, North West, Free State, KwaZulu Natal, Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga.

3.5.2   Sampling

Sampling in quantitative research refers to obtaining a subset of the population that is representative and enables generalisation about the population (Taherdoost, 2016:20). The ideal strategy for this research was to complete a census of the population with the target population being well defined and known (identifiable) in the organisation. The usual drawbacks (cost, time and practicality) associated with a census were not applicable to this research considering the population size, ease of access to the population, and survey method (Saunders *et al*., 2016:274). Correspondingly a census was feasible in that no excessive resources (time and money) were required to enable access to the population list. Further no additional effort was needed with the research design being quantitative and conducted using a survey.

The benefits of a census include more significant statistical results if a large portion of the population responds; inclusion for each unit of analysis across the different strata (experience and geography); and the avoidance of over or under representation of certain experience levels or geographic locations. This strategy also allowed the possibility to generalise these research findings to the population given the more robust sampling approach (Zikmund, 2003:398).

Considering sampling error as part of the sample strategy the total error is comprised of random (sampling) error and systematic (bias) error (Daniel, 2011:23). One of the benefits of adopting a census approach is the elimination of random sampling error because a sample is not selected from the population. Systematic error or bias is also largely reduced since the bias associated with selecting units of analysis and collecting data from these units is removed (Daniel, 2011:25).

3.5.3   Sample Size

In quantitative research sample size is the number of participants or observations included in a research study (Taherdoost, 2016:23). The total population which included all ninety (90) of the sales individuals in the employ of the organisation at the time of the research survey in July 2021 are included - which refers to a census. Since this research was undertaken using a census, where all units in the population are studied (Bryman and Bell, 2017:171), the sample size was the same as the population size.

3.5.4   Unit of Analysis

Miles (2019:2) describes the level of analysis as the primary unit of measurement in the research that will be analysed. These differing levels consist of individuals, groups, organisations, and societies. Given the research topic, research purpose, and the associated focus on elevating performance of individuals in a sales functionality, the unit of analysis for this research is at an individual level and therefore includes all sales individuals in the organisation. Further characteristics relevant to this unit of analysis include:-

- Diversity (age, sex) of the individuals;
- Experience of individuals (corresponding to an inferred level of expertise); and
- Geographic focus of the individual.

These unit of analysis characteristics were important when analysing the research survey data to understand if there were any material or significant differences based on age or sex from a diversity perspective. Similarly, it was also relevant to understand, if based on the experience range of the individual whether this characteristic influenced the analysis of the data. For this characteristic experience was used as a proxy to infer the level of expertise of the sales individual.

Given that the (sales) individuals are active in different industrial sectors (e.g. the energy and chemical sectors) it was of interest to understand if the industry characteristic had any influence on the data analysis. In addition to the sectors, the (sales) individuals work in different geographic regions within South Africa which could also have an impact.

There were no issues relating to access and availability of the unit of analysis. Participants in the study (sample population) were accessible via the researcher's current employer with the HR department controlling and providing access to a full employee list filtered to individuals directly involved in the sales functionality. Permission was requested and approved from the executive committee of the organisation relating to access to the population and a permission letter was received to conduct the research (Annexure A).

3.6   DATA COLLECTION

3.6.1   Data collection method

The nature of the primary data collected was aligned to the research topic, objectives, and answering the primary and secondary research questions. A survey data collection method was deemed most appropriate for this research in support of a mono-method quantitative methodology (Patel and Patel, 2019:49), and its effectiveness at eliciting responses from large samples via a census relatively quickly (Ponto, 2015:168). Data were collected in the form of a survey using, with authors' permission, an existing validated questionnaire developed in South Africa by Van Heerden and Roodt (2007) to assess the prevalence of the requisite characteristics, viewed as appropriate by the respondents, which enable a high performance sales-driven organisational culture. The questionnaire used in this research study is included in Annexure B.

The use of questionnaires was selected based on the following factors (Saunders *et al*., 2016:441):-

- The method's congruency with the characteristics of the population in terms of literacy and internet access,
- Improvement in the confidence level of reaching the right respondent,
- Decreasing the likelihood of respondents' answers being contaminated or distorted,
- Possibly enabling a large sample size, and
- Permitting the use of closed type questions.

3.6.2 Process of data collection

The questionnaire used to collect data was self-completed and administered to the respondents using an online survey platform (SurveyMonkey®) due to the advantages of online surveys being low cost, faster response rates, and no restrictions relating to geographical coverage (Bryman and Bell, 2017:293).

Email contact details for the population were controlled by the organisation's HR department, observing the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act (2020) and an email was distributed from the HR department to the population which contained a hyperlink for respondents to access the questionnaire via their web browser. The use of email as the communication medium was considered effective since all respondents have email access.

Responses from the online survey platform were aggregated by the organisation's HR department with no respondent's identity details included to ensure anonymity of respondents and the confidentiality of data.

3.6.3 Research instrument design

Data were collected in the form of a questionnaire to assess the requisite characteristics, viewed as appropriate by the respondents, which enable a high performance sales-driven organisational culture. The literature review revealed a study by Van Heerden and Roodt (2007) which included the development of a measuring instrument to assess high performance culture. Permission was obtained from the corresponding author to use the measuring instrument (Annexure F) for this research study. The instrument (Van Heerden and Roodt, 2007) was considered useful since the questions in the instrument were well suited to addressing this research study objectives discussed in Chapter 1, and supported the testing of the theoretical constructs and literature associated with a high performance organisational culture (Chapter 2).

The questionnaire comprises two sections with eighty three (83) questions in total:

- Section A: Demographics – recorded specific respondent information to inform descriptive statistics.
- Section B: Survey - recorded responses to assess the prevalence of the requisite characteristics for a high performance culture, and to inform a snapshot of the organisation against these characteristics. Section B of the survey comprised of 12 dimensions associated with a high performance culture including: vision and strategy, leadership, core

capability of the organisation, core capability of the group/team, core capability of the individual, reward system, performance management, policies and procedures, customer stakeholder satisfaction, supplier stakeholder satisfaction, community stakeholder satisfaction, and people stakeholder satisfaction. Each of the 12 dimensions contained specific questions related to assessing that construct.

The research instrument made use of a 5 point Likert scale (with 1 indicating a strong disagree/negative view, 3 indicating an agree view, and 5 a very strong agree/positive view) to elicit suitable responses. All questions were closed type questions in support of the deductive quantitative research approach for this study. Zikmund (2003:333) highlights that "In contrast to open-ended questions, fixed-alternative questions require less interviewer skill, take less time, and are easier for the respondent to answer". Closed questions also allow for easier processing of responses, the ability to compare and test relations, and supports an understanding of what is being asked (Bryman and Bell, 2007:200).

Considering that an existing research instrument was used in this research study no additional pretesting (e.g. piloting) of the questionnaire was conducted (Zikmund, 2003:359; Bryman and Bell, 2007:209). The reliability of the instrument was previously tested during the authors' research involving an organisation within the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry in South Africa (Van Heerden and Roodt, 2007:24). The test for internal consistency resulted in an overall Cronbach Alpha of 0.947 indicating a reliable questionnaire (Van Heerden and Roodt, 2007:25).

3.7   DATA ANALYSIS METHOD AND PROCESS

The analysis of the quantitative data collected included the following aspects as described by Saunders *et al*. (2016:498-551):

- Preparation of the data for analysis;
- Selection of suitable tables and diagrams to explore and to present the data; and
- Selection of appropriate statistics in consultation with an NWU statistician using the latest version of SPSS to describe and examine relationships and trends in the data.

These aspects incorporated in the data analysis process are explained in more detail below.

3.7.1 Preparation of data for analysis

An analysis of the quantitative data collected included preparing the data for analysis. The data were entered into a spreadsheet and coded for further analysis. Part of the preparation included checking for missing data, errors or inconsistencies (Bergin, 2018:48). Respondents who did not consent to their response data being shared were excluded from the data analyses. The layout of the data in the spreadsheet took into consideration subsequent software analyses in SPSS (version 27).

3.7.2 Exploring and presenting data

Data analysis considered the use of suitable tables and diagrams to present the data. For the first section of the questionnaire (biographics) which provided a profile of the respondent for descriptive reasons, the relevant variables can be described as dichotomous and nominal variables (Bryman and Bell, 2017:313). Univariate analysis was used to explore and present this portion of data. Analyses included frequency diagrams to summarise the response rate, gender, age, experience levels, and role (level) of the respondents in the organisation.

For the subsequent parts of the questionnaire both univariate and bivariate analysis were used to explore and present the data analysis. For each theoretical dimension, univariate analysis was used to describe the distributions of values per question (a measure of central tendency) and included appropriate pie charts and bar charts to present the number and percentage of responses for each variable. Boxplots (Bergin, 2018:214) were used to highlight the amount of variation (lower and upper quartile, minimum and maximum, average and median) in the data collected.

3.7.3 Describing and examining data using statistics

Appropriate statistical methods were used to describe and present relationships and trends in the data (Zikmund, 2003:485). Comparative data analysis included independent samples test to assess if there were any differences in responses between gender categories (Bergin, 2018:105). Considering that each question was based on a five (5) point Likert scale where ranking was possible, the variables were classified as ordinal in nature. As such the technique that was used to determine the strength of association between the twelve dimensions assessed was the Spearman's rho (ρ) method (Bryman and Bell, 2017:320).

Where the data analysis revealed a number of relationships between variables, a causal direction was explored to understand if causality existed (Bergin, 2018:117; Bryman and Bell, 2017:322). A one-way ANOVA analysis was completed to assess the theoretical dimensions associated with a high performance culture (dependent variables) with sales position role categories (independent variables). It was not deemed appropriate to use any multivariate analysis techniques for further data examination.

The internal consistency approach was adopted to assess survey reliability with a Cronbach alpha result of 0.7 and higher indicating an acceptable level of internal reliability (Bryman and Bell, 2017:38). As part of research instrument validity the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) was used to ensure that the data was adequate for factor analysis, with subsequent exploratory factor analysis using principal component analysis being conducted on each of the twelve theoretical dimensions to explore how many factors were represented by the data for each dimension. Bartlett's test of sphericity incorporated statistical significance testing using the chi-square test (Bryman and Bell, 2017:325) to test for statistically significant relationships.

The analysis techniques were completed using Microsoft Excel for the (simpler) exploratory type data analysis and presentation, combined with the use of a dedicated statistical software package (SPSS version 27) for the remaining inferential data analysis requirements.

3.8   RESEARCH ETHICS

From a business ethics perspective, this research topic does not pose any ethical conflicts between employees and employers in the organisation, and/or any other stakeholder. The main areas of ethical principles (Bryman and Bell, 2017:120) relevant to this research study are discussed below:-

- Informed consent – all participants were made aware of the objectives of the research and the value to be derived. Participants had a choice as to whether to participate or not (Annexure C).

- Harm to participants - this study utilised an employee list controlled by the organisation's HR representative to only gain access to the participants for the on-line survey and was not shared or disclosed to the researcher. All responses from the participants were kept confidential and no personal details were disclosed or shared with the researcher. Therefore, no harm to participants occurred.

- Invasion of privacy – the invasion of privacy is not applicable for this research since communication was conducted via the organisation's assigned business email contact details for the participants.

- Deception – deception is not applicable for this research since the research objectives were clear and non-malicious in nature. Approval was obtained from the organisation's executive committee to proceed with this research (Annexure A).

The researcher is an employee in the organisation under study but had no influence on the employees to complete the questionnaire as the data were collected through a gatekeeper - the Human Resource office without any bias. The researcher conducted this research in accordance with the code of conduct for researchers (Annexure D). Annexure E contains the approved application for ethical clearance required by the NWU Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC).

3.9 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

Chapter 3 explained the research methodology and methods employed using the research "onion" of Saunders *et al.* (2016:124) to structure the research study. Figure 3-2 on next page indicates the key research choices from this Chapter integrated into the overall research process. The data analysis and interpretation of findings, discussion, conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 respectively.
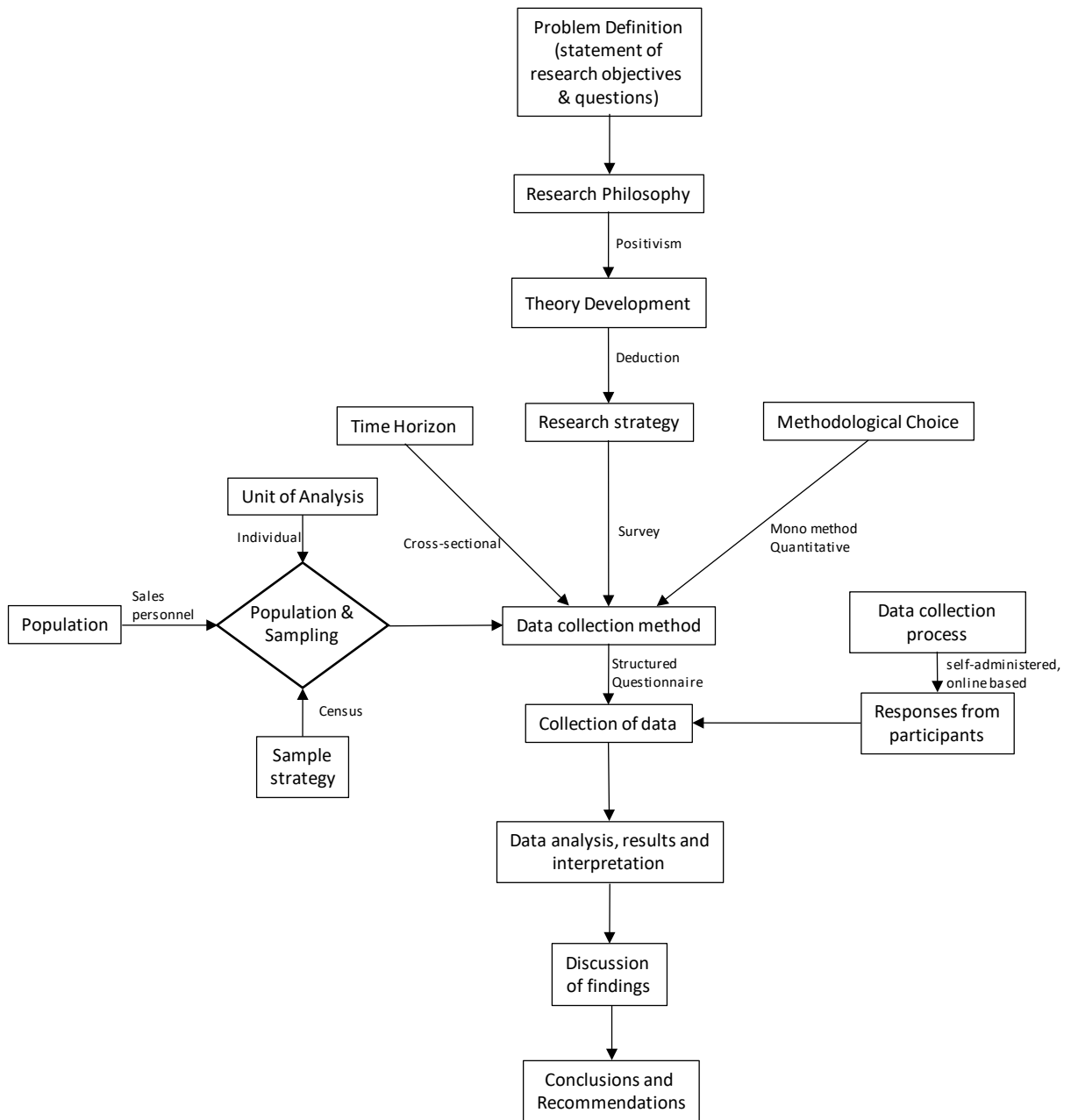
Figure 3-2:   Flowchart of the research process including research methodology and

methods

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses and describes the survey data obtained for this research process. It includes descriptive statistics to provide basic information (profile and context) on the dataset using central tendency, variability and the distribution of the dataset as an indication (Bergin, 2018:77). Inferential statistics were used to analyse the data for relationships between variables to infer causality (Saunders *et al*., 2016:537). Part of the data analysis included testing for statistical significance to confirm the reliability and validity of the survey instrument and that the research findings could be generalised to the population (Bryman and Bell, 2017:38).

This chapter concludes with a summary of the data analysis results and leads into the next chapter which discusses the findings.

4.2 RESPONSE RATE AND RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

A total of ninety (90) sales individuals, constituting the population, were contacted to participate in the study by using a census approach. Missing response data were appropriately treated and excluded from any descriptive and inferential statistics. Of those invited to voluntary participate 69 responded including 5 respondents who submitted no data for all questions and one (1) respondent who did not consent to the response data being shared. The effective number of responses were 63 yielding an on-line completion rate of 70%.
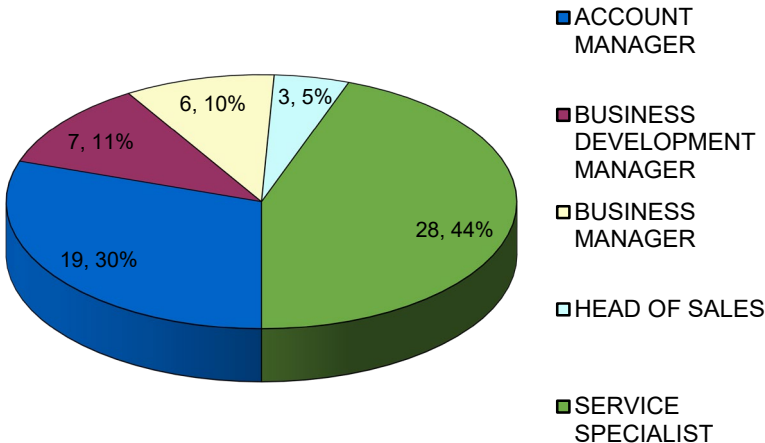
From Figure 4-1 the majority of the respondents were service specialists (44%) followed by account managers (30%). These two role categories accounted for the bulk of the respondents.

Approximately 21% of the respondents were business managers and business development managers. One respondent from the respondent set (64) did not indicate his or her role category.
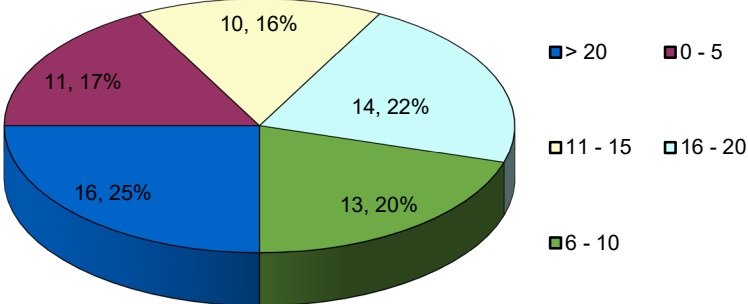
Figure 4-2:   Respondents (number and percentage) by sales work experience (years)

Figure 4-2 indicates that all five experience categories contributed between 16 – 25% of the respondent set. This indicates that the sales force work experience within the organisation is fairly evenly distributed across the work experience categories with most of the sales individuals having more than 20 years of experience.
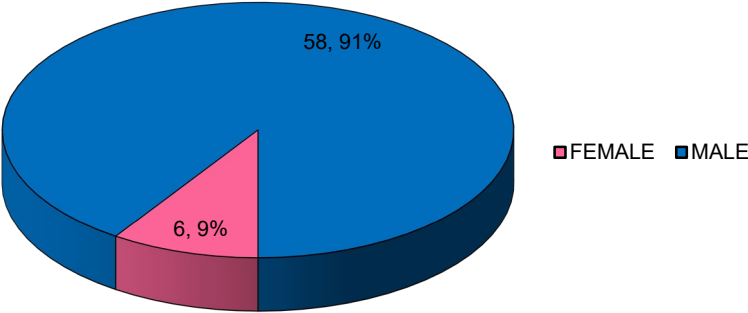
Figure 4-3:   Respondents (number and percentage) by sex

It is evident (Figure 4-3) that the workforce is predominantly male (91%) as opposed to female (9%). Section 4.4 presents the results for the independent samples test which indicated no significant differences between male and female responses.
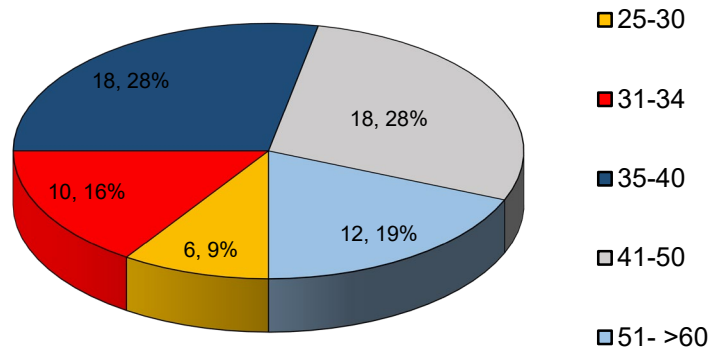
Figure 4-4:   Respondents (number and percentage) by age group

It is evident (Figure 4-4) that the majority of the workforce is above 35 years (75%) with 9% in the 25-30 age group and 16% in the 31-34 age group.
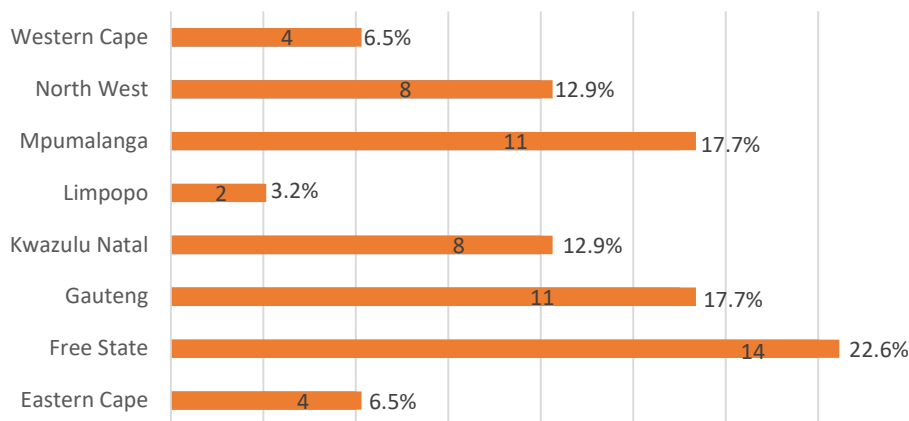
Figure 4-5:   Respondents (number and percentage) by region

Figure 4-5 indicates the regional spread of respondents. Most of the respondents are based in the Free State region, followed by Gauteng and Mpumalanga. These three regions account for 58% of the respondents, with North West and KwaZulu Natal contributing 25.8% of the respondents. Two respondents from the respondent set (64) did not indicate his or her region/province of work.

4.3   DESCRIPTIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive data analysis was completed on all twelve theoretical dimensions to describe and summarise the dataset (Bergin, 2018:77). All subsequently presented descriptive analysis bar charts include the number of responses for each Likert scale, and the associated response percentage that each scale represents.

4.3.1   Vision & Strategy

The vision and strategy dimension of the questionnaire comprised of six questions (Q7 – Q12) assessing management's balance between long term and short term goals, employee optimism about management plans for the future, level of communication on the organisation's strategy, how inspired employees are about management's vision, management's belief in the future of the organisation, and the alignment between people development and the business strategy. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-6 to Figure 4-11.

Q7 How well does management focus simultaneously on long term sustainability as well as short term goals?
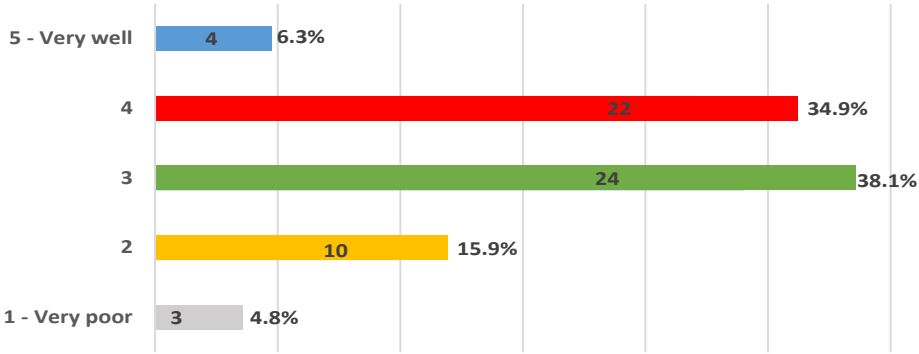
Figure 4-6:   Focus on long term sustainability as well as short term goals

79.3% of responses (Figure 4-6) indicated a positive balance by management between short term goals and long term sustainability as opposed to 20.7% of respondents who felt otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-12) indicates that most of the response data for Q7 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q8 How optimistic are you about management plans for the future?
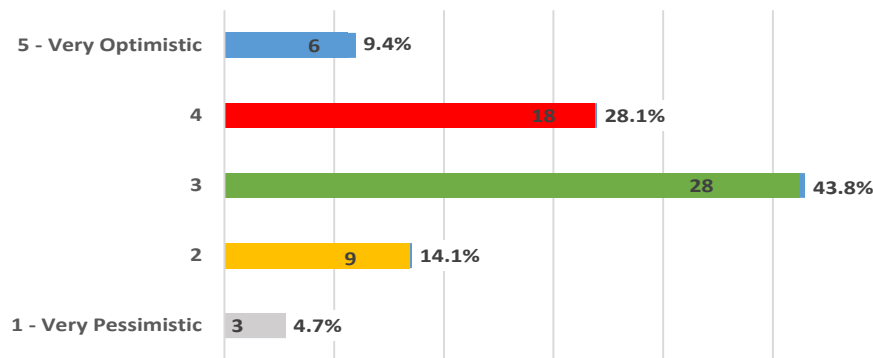
Figure 4-7:   Optimism about management plans for the future

Most responses (Figure 4-7) indicated a positive view of management plans for the future. Approximately 81% of the responses were in the optimistic to very optimistic scale while 18.8% of the respondents were not optimistic. The boxplot (Figure 4-12) indicates that most of the response data for Q8 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q9 How sufficient is communication on the organisation's strategy?
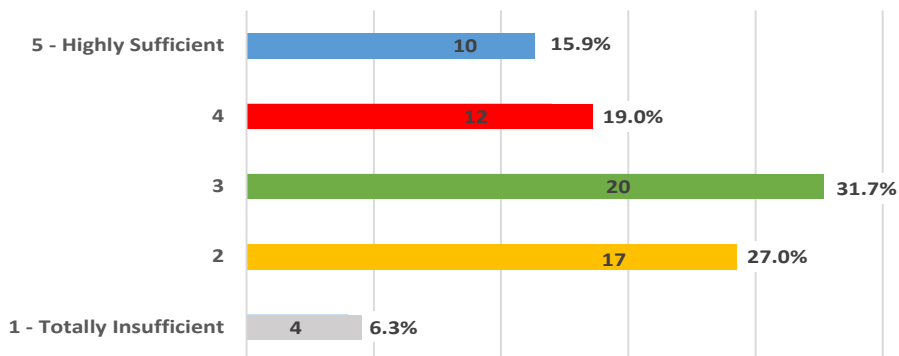
Figure 4-8:   Communication on the organisation's strategy

Figure 4-8 highlighted that 33.3% of the respondents feel that communication on the organisation's strategy is insufficient and 66.6% of the respondents feel that communication is sufficient to highly sufficient. The boxplot (Figure 4-12) indicates that the response data for Q9 is normally distributed across the scoring spectrum, which together with mean values support that this aspect requires improvement by management.

Q10 How inspired are you about top management's vision for the future?
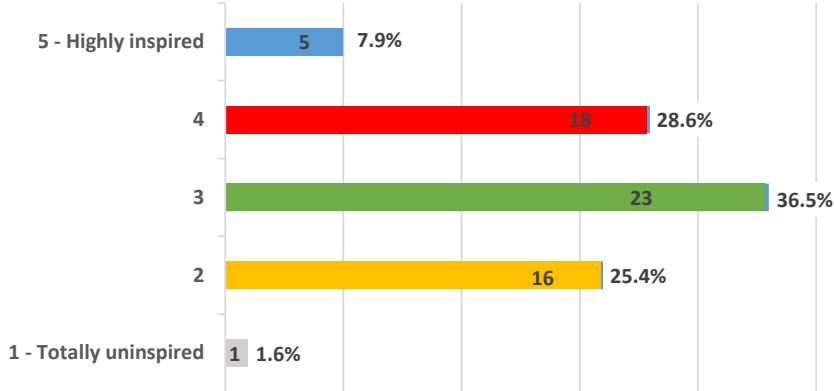
Figure 4-9:   Inspired by the vision for the future

It is evident (Figure 4-9) that the majority (73%) of the respondents are inspired to highly inspired while 27% of the respondents are not inspired by management's vision for the future. The boxplot (Figure 4-12) indicates that the response data for Q10 is normally distributed across the scoring spectrum.

Q11 How strongly does your manager believe that there's a future for your organisation?
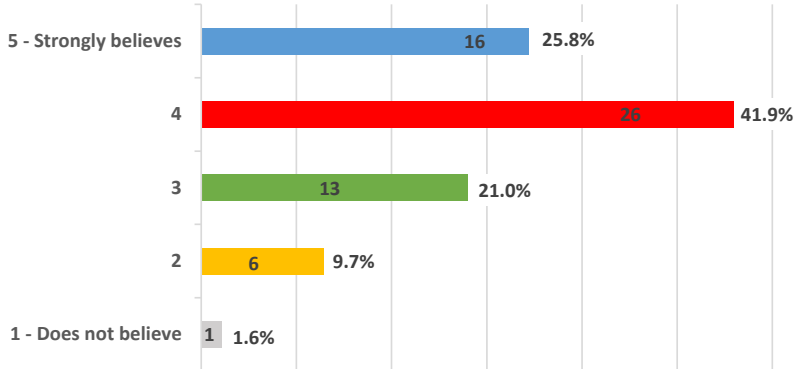
Figure 4-10:   Management belief in the future for the organisation

Figure 4-10 indicates that 88.7% of the respondents feel that their management believes to strongly believes about the future of the organisation, with 11% lacking belief in management's outlook on the organisation's future. The boxplot (Figure 4-12) indicates that most of the response data for Q11 are in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q12 How well are the people development strategies aligned with the organisation's business strategy?
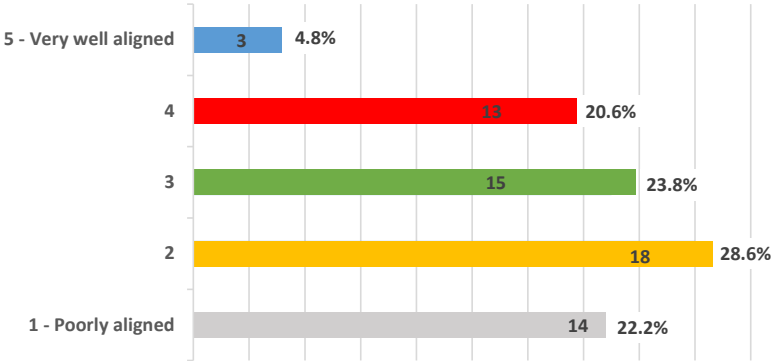
Figure 4-11:   Alignment of people development and organisation business strategy

From Figure 4-11, 51% of the respondents believe that people development strategies are not aligned with the organisation's business strategy. This is more than half of the respondent set and indicates a gap or shortcoming in this area. The boxplot (Figure 4-12) indicates that most of the response data for Q12 is in the negative scoring spectrum which together with the mean values support that this aspect requires improvement by management

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all six questions is illustrated in Figure 4-12 below. For Q7, 8 and 11 most of the responses lie in the positive response scale range while for Q9 and 10 there is an even spread of responses across the scale range. For Q12 the spread of responses tends towards the negative response scale.
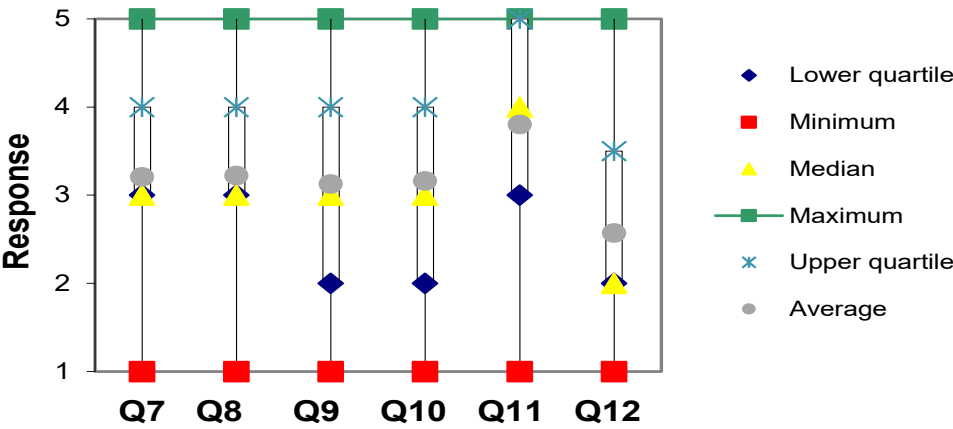
Figure 4-12:   Vision and strategy boxplot

4.3.2 Leadership

The leadership dimension of the questionnaire comprised of seven questions (Q13 – Q19) assessing employees' belief in management, level of management influence to commit to change, management's display of organisational values, management's acceptance of high performance levels, management's openness to new ideas, management's passion regarding creating a fun working environment, and their passion for the company's brand. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-13 to Figure 4-19.

Q13 How strongly do you believe that management will successfully lead the organisation into the future?
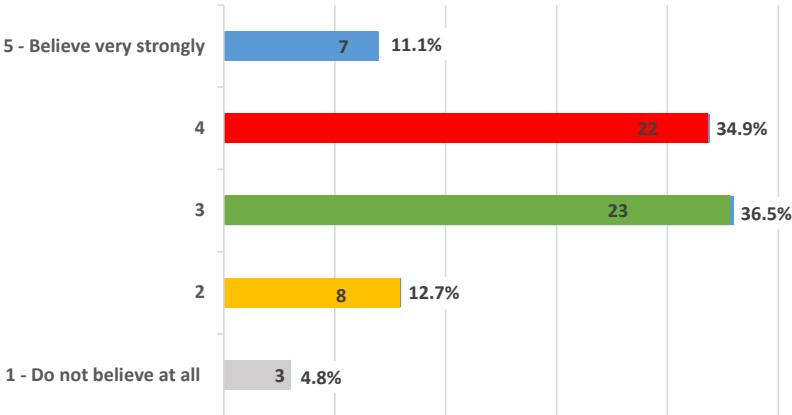
Figure 4-13:   Belief in management leading the organisation into the future

From Figure 4-13 82.1% of the respondents feel fairly to very strongly that management will successfully lead the organisation into the future with 17.5% not believing in management's capability. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that most of the response data for Q13 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.
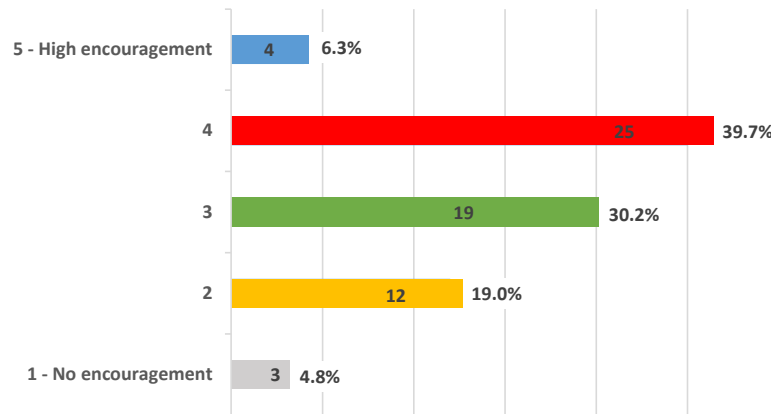
Figure 4-14:   Encouragement to commit to change

Figure 4-14 indicates that 76.2% of the respondents experience that management does encourage to highly encourage commitment to change, with 23.8% feeling a lack of encouragement. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that most of the response data for Q14 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q15 How strongly does top management embrace the organisation's values?
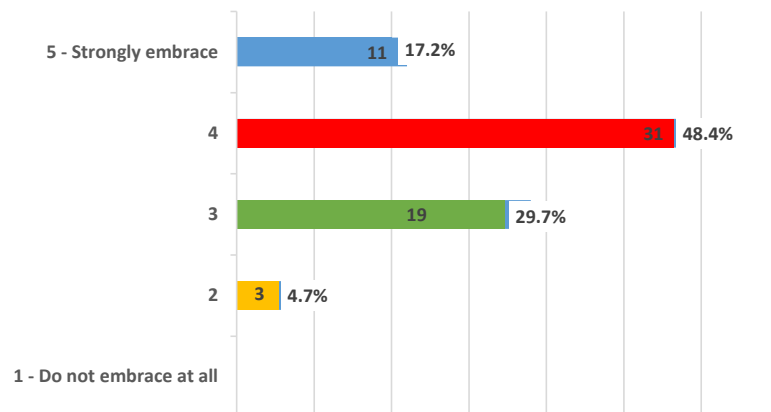
Figure 4-15:   Management embracement of organisation's values

Figure 4-15 indicates that 95.3% of respondents feel that management embraces the organisations values indicating strong performance in this area by management. Less than 5% (minor significance) of respondents feel otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that most of the response data for Q14 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q16 To what extent does top management accept only the best performance?
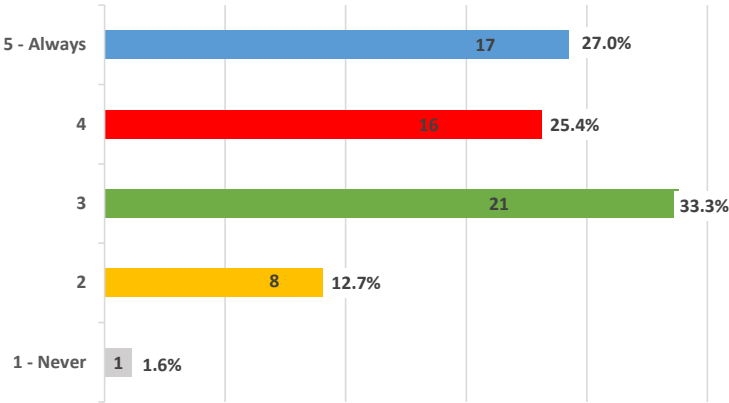
Figure 4-16:   Management's performance expectations

Figure 4-16 indicates that 85.7% of the respondents (generally to strongly) experience management's acceptance for the best performance while 14.3% of respondents indicate that management does accept sub-optimal levels of performance. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that most of the response data for Q16 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q17 How open is your immediate manager to new ideas?
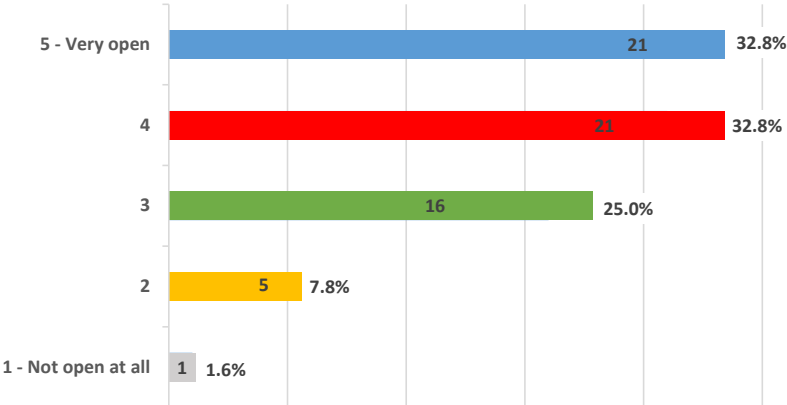
Figure 4-17:   Management openness to new ideas

Figure 4-17 indicates that 90.6% of the respondents experience management as open to new ideas indicative of strong management performance in this area. Less than 10% of the respondents feel otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that most of the response data for Q17 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q18 How passionate is your immediate manager about creating a fun working environment?
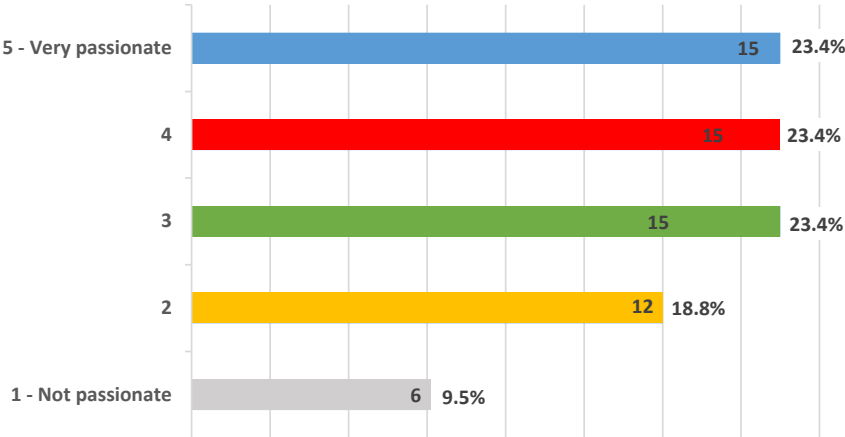
Figure 4-18:   Management approach to creating a fun working environment

The experience of respondents to management creating a fun working environment indicates (Figure 4-18) that 70.2% feel that management is passionate and supports a fun work environment while 28.3% experience the opposite. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that the response data is more evenly distributed for Q18 which supports that this aspect can be improved on by management.

Q19 How passionate is your immediate manager about your company's brand?
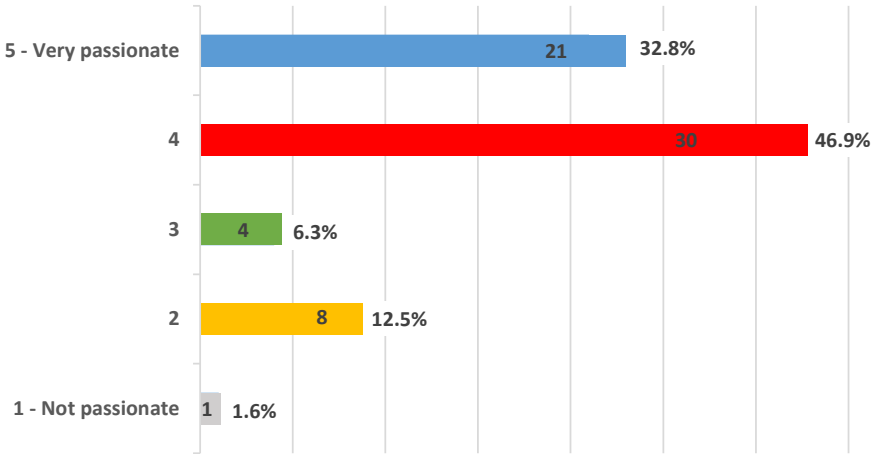
Figure 4-19:   Management's passion about the brand

Management's passion for the company's brand is clearly evident with 86% of respondents indicating as such (Figure 4-19) which is a strong management performance in this area. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that most of the response data for Q19 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all seven questions is illustrated in Figure 4-20 below. Most of the responses for Q13 to 17 lie in the positive response scale range. Q18 has an even spread of responses across the scale while the spread of responses for Q19 tends towards the extreme positive response scale.
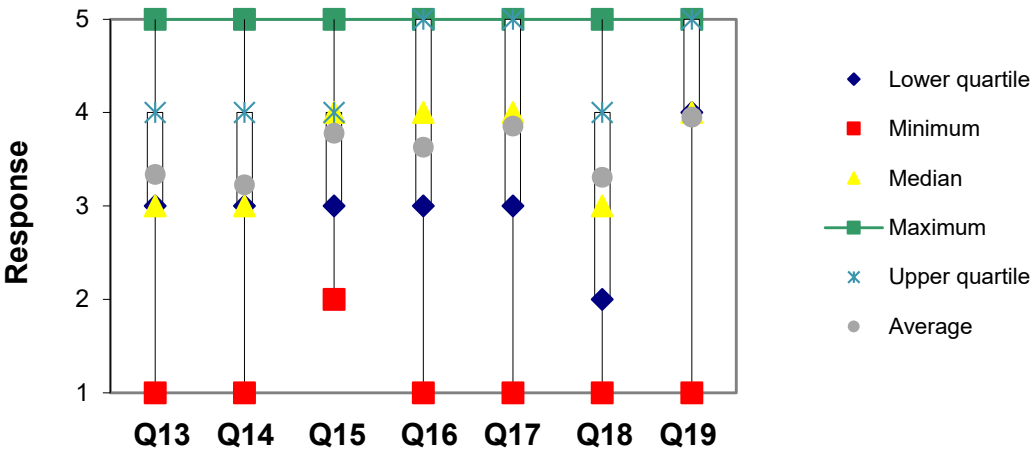
Figure 4-20:   Leadership boxplot

4.3.3   Core Capability

4.3.3.1   Organisation

The core capability of the organisation comprised of seven questions (Q20 – Q26) assessing culture, diversity, communication, willingness of employees for extra effort, trust in management, employee learning opportunities, and the benefit derived from a competitive environment. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-21 to Figure 4-27.

Q20 To what extent is the culture of your organisation described as trustworthy?
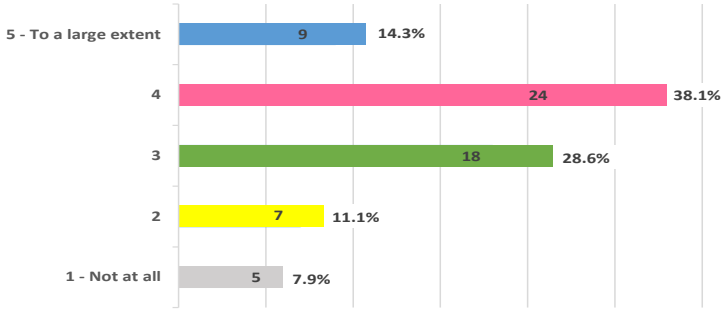
Figure 4-21:   Trustworthiness as part of culture

45

The experience of respondents to trustworthiness as part of the organisation's culture indicates (Figure 4-21) that 81% feel that trust is part of the culture while 19% feel the opposite. The boxplot (Figure 4-28) indicates that most of the response data for Q20 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q21 How important is respecting diversity in your organisation?
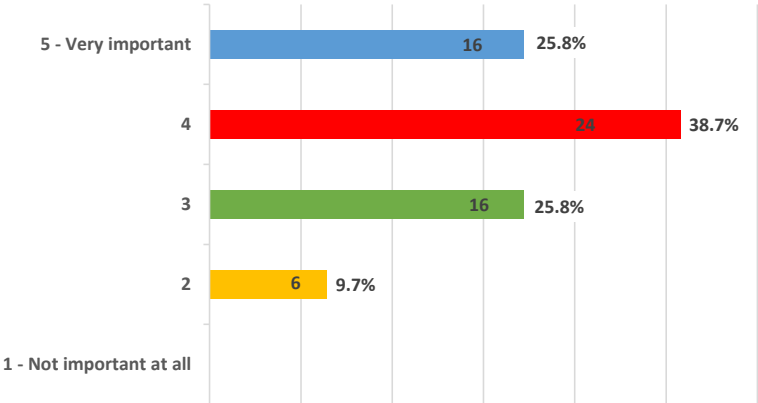
Figure 4-22:   Importance of diversity

Figure 4-22 illustrates that the organisation values the importance of diversity with 90.3% of responses falling in the fairly to very important categories. Less than 10% of the respondents felt otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates that most of the response data for Q21 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q22 How sufficient is the communication of the organisation's financial standing to all employees?
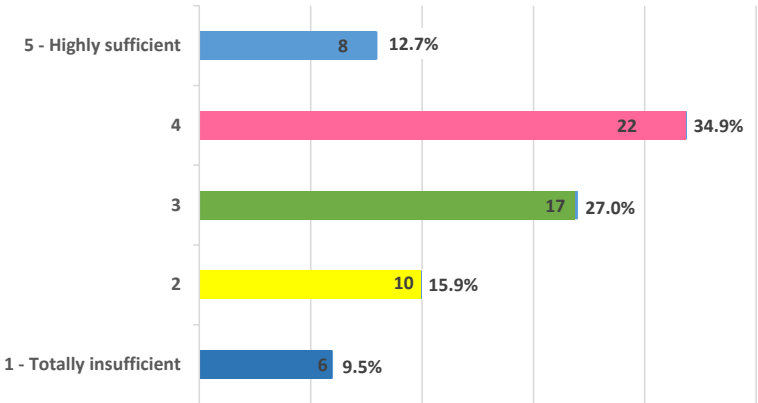
Figure 4-23:   Communication on organisation's financial standing

Figure 4-23 illustrates that 74.5% of respondents felt that communication on the financial position of the organisation was sufficient to highly sufficient with 25.4% of the respondents feeling

otherwise. This area requires attention from management with nearly a quarter of the respondents experiencing communication as insufficient. The boxplot (Figure 4-20) indicates a substantial spread of response data for Q22 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports the need for improvement in this aspect.

Q23 How willing are the people in this organisation to go the extra mile?
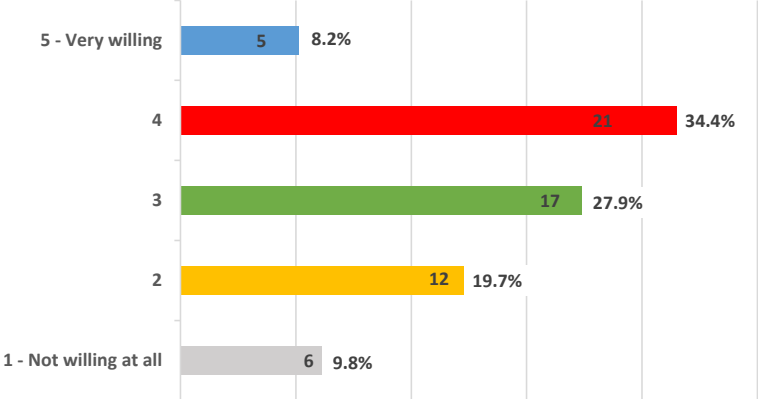
Figure 4-24:   Willingness to put in extra effort

Figure 4-24 illustrates that the majority (70.5%) of respondents felt that employees of the organisation would (generally to very willingly) go the extra mile with 29.5% of the respondents feeling otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-28) indicates that the response data is more evenly distributed for Q23 which supports that this aspect can be improved on by management.

Q24 How trustworthy is management in your organisation?
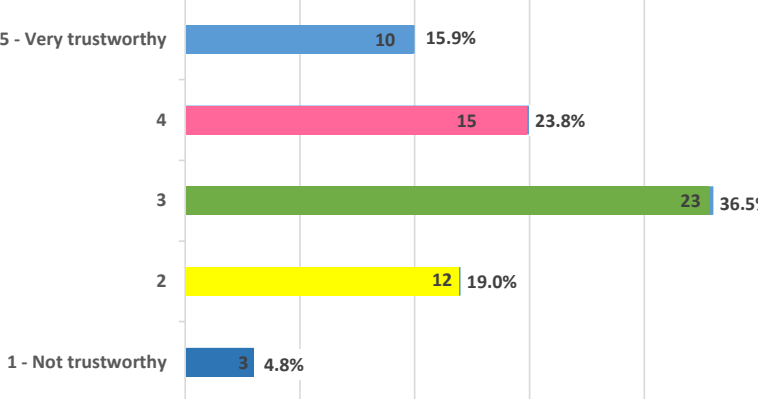
Figure 4-25:   Trust in management

Figure 4-25 illustrates that 76.2% of employees believe that management is fairly to very trustworthy with the remaining 23.8% of respondents experiencing otherwise. Building trust in

management will require dedicated effort by the organisation going forward. The boxplot (Figure 4-28) indicates that most of the response data for Q24 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q25 To what extent does your organisation ensure that employees are provided with learning opportunities to do their job better?
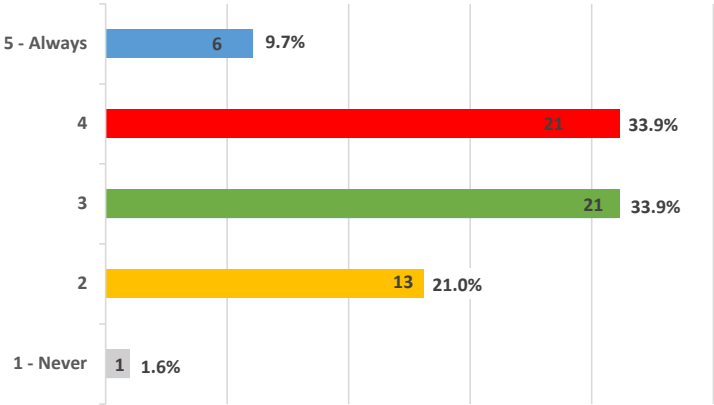
Figure 4-26:   Extent of learning for employees

Figure 4-26 illustrates that the majority (77.5%) of respondents feel that there are (generally to always) enough learning opportunities while 22.6% feel that there are insufficient learning opportunities. The boxplot (Figure 4-28) indicates that most of the response data for Q25 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q26 How beneficial is the competitive environment for the employees in your organisation?
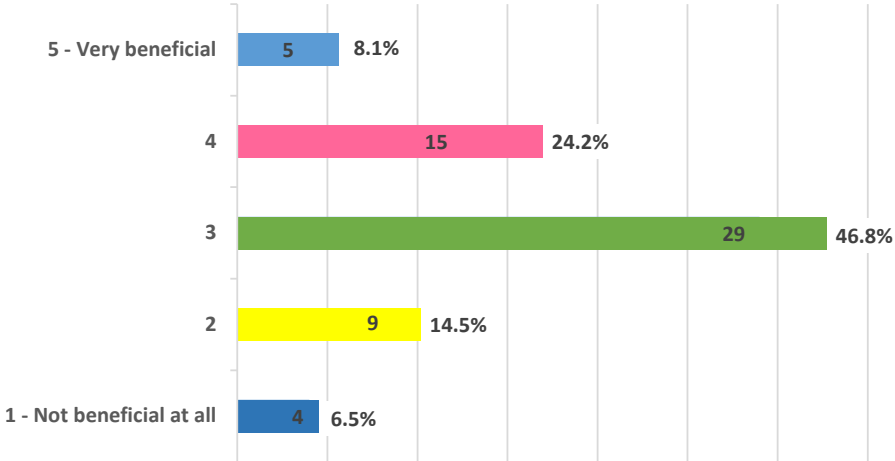
Figure 4-27:   Level of benefit from competition in the organisation

From Figure 4-27 it is evident that 79.1% of respondents feel that there are benefits from a competitive environment in the organisation. Frequent communication highlighting the business and individual benefits that result from a competitive work environment will reinforce a competitive performance culture. The boxplot (Figure 4-28) indicates that most of the response data for Q26 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all seven questions is illustrated in Figure 4-28 below. Based on the quartile values, Q20 to Q22 and Q24 to Q26 elicited largely positive employee responses. Q23 had a more even spread of responses across the scale.
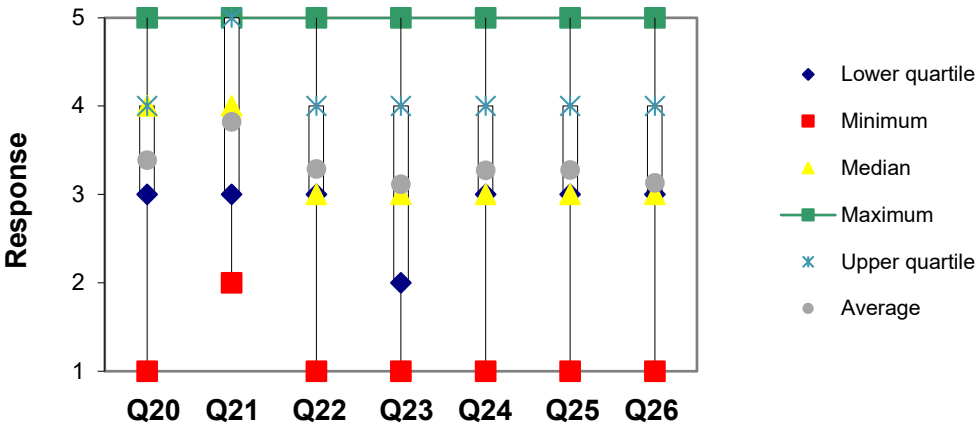
Figure 4-28:   Core capability - organisation boxplot

4.3.3.2 Group/Team

The group/team dimension of the questionnaire comprised of seven questions (Q27 – Q33) assessing the core capability of the team with respect to new ways of working, understanding of goals, sharing of ideas, extent of mutual respect and support, and job related communication. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-29 to Figure 4-35.

Q27 How often does your team seek new ways of doing things?
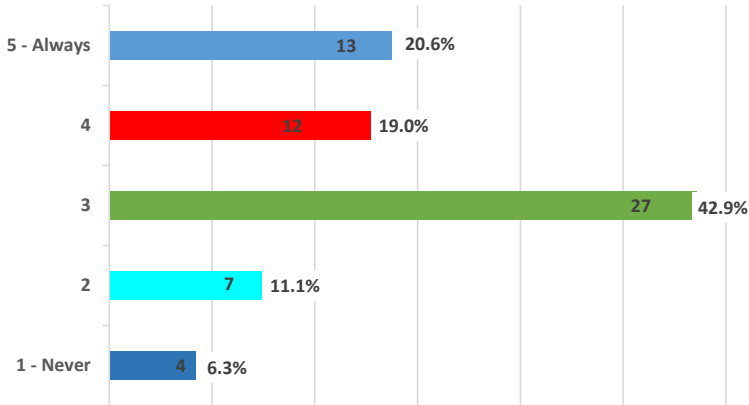
Figure 4-29:   Innovative approach

From Figure 4-29 it is evident that most of the responses (82.5%) indicate that there is a (fairly to always) tendency to seek out innovative work approaches. This indicates substantial organisational benefit being derived by empowering employees to innovate more often in the workplace. The boxplot (Figure 4-36) indicates that most of the response data for Q27 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q28 How well does your team understand their goals?
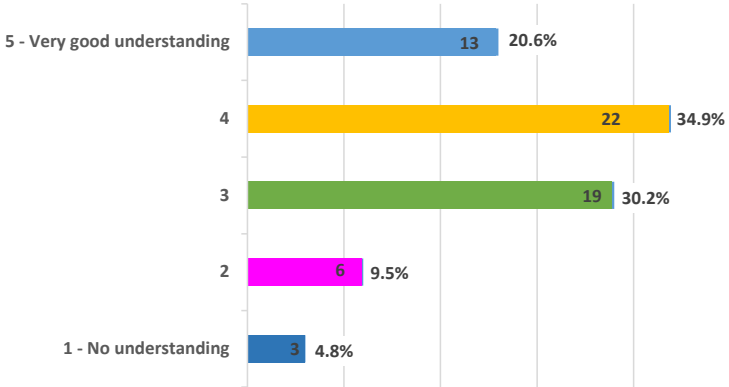
Figure 4-30:   Understanding of team goals

Figure 4-30 indicates that the more than 85.7% of employees have a fair to very good understanding of their goals. The boxplot (Figure 4-36) indicates that most of the response data for Q28 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect, indicating a strong performance by the organisation in setting and communicating goals.

Q29 To what extent are your colleagues/peers free to share their suggestions with management?
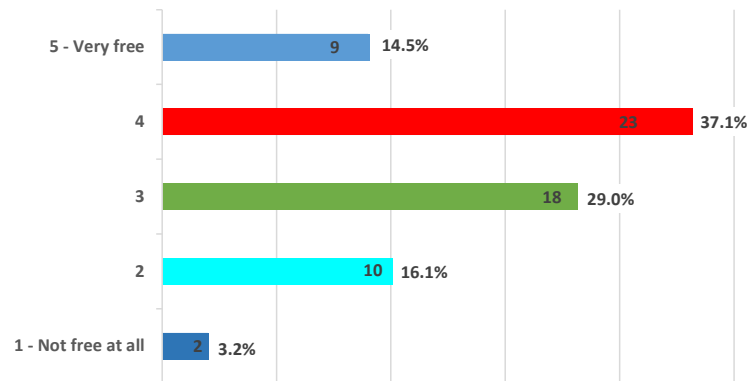
Figure 4-31: Openness with management

It is evident from Figure 4-31 that 80.6% of employees feel (generally to very) free to share their suggestions with management. The boxplot (Figure 4-36) indicates that most of the response data for Q31 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect and indicates a positive environment in which employees are able to communicate and share ideas openly with management.

Q30 To what extent do managers and employees respect each other's different interests?
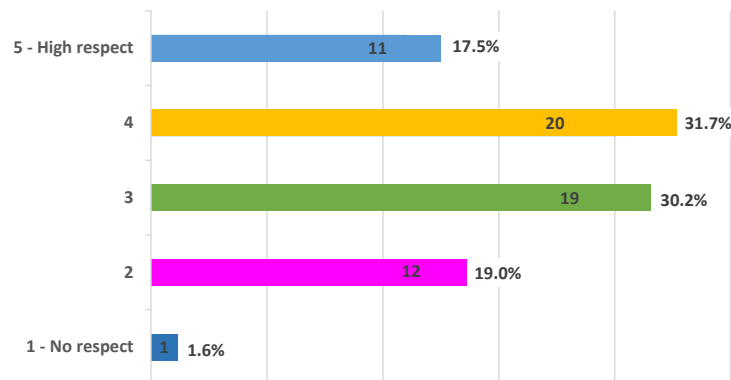
Figure 4-32: Respect between employees and management

Figure 4-32 indicates that the majority of employees (79.4%) experience fair to high levels of respect regarding individual's interests. The boxplot (Figure 4-36) indicates that most of the response data for Q30 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect, although respect within the organisation should continue to be fostered to address the 20.6% of employees that feel there is less respect of individual's interests.

Q31 How well are employees kept up-to-date on matters that affect their jobs?
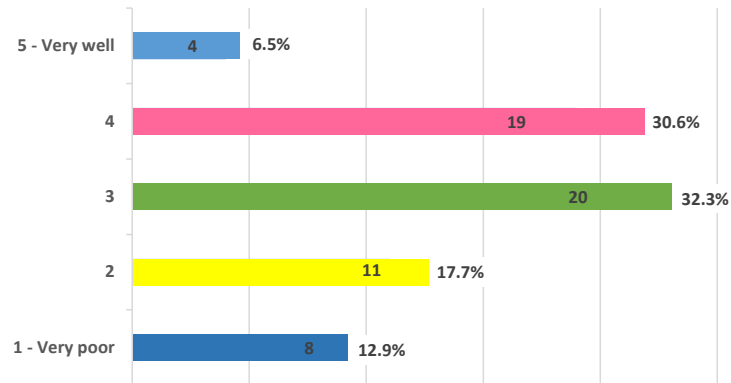
Figure 4-33:   Effectiveness of job-related communication

Figure 4-33 illustrates that 69.4% employees feel that communication is (fairly to very) adequate regarding job-related matters. 30.6% of employees feel that communication is lacking and this area warrants management focus going forward. The boxplot (Figure 4-36) indicates that the response data for Q31 is more evenly distributed across the scoring spectrum which supports that this aspect required improvement.

Q32 To what extent do your team members support each other?
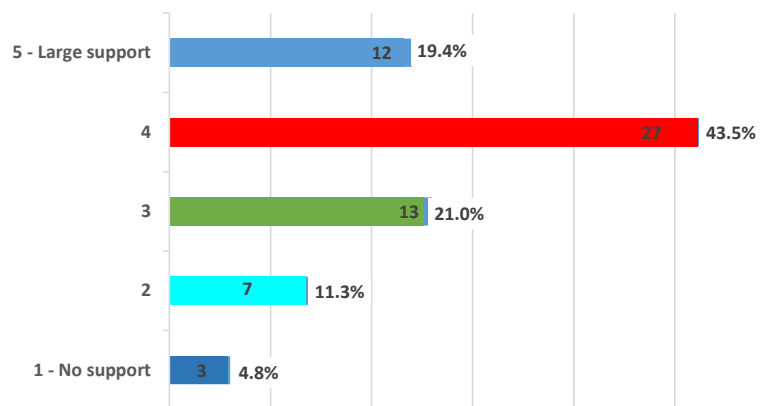
Figure 4-34:   Extent of support

Figure 4-34 indicates that 83.9% of employees experience that team members' exhibit fair to large levels of support for each other. The boxplot (Figure 4-36) indicates that most of the response data for Q32 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect, where team spirit can be described as high and should continue to be an area that is encouraged.

Q33 To what extent do your team members respect each other?
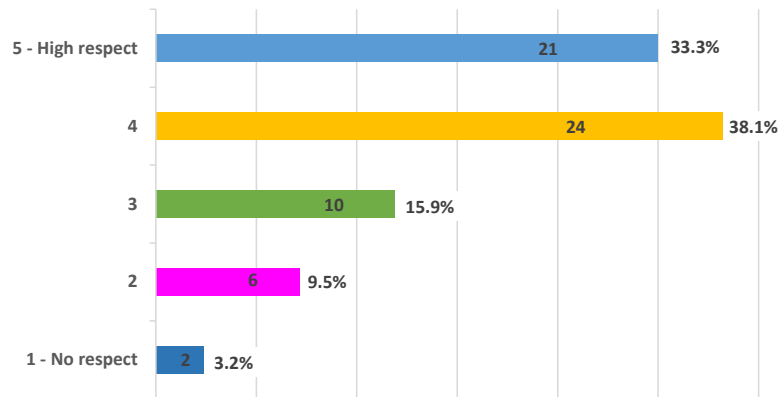
Figure 4-35:   Extent of respect

Figure 4-35 illustrates that the vast majority of employees (87.3%) experience fair to high levels of respect amongst each other. The boxplot (Figure 4-36) indicates that most of the response data for Q35 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. High levels of team respect is important when considering team dynamics and the manner in which teams need to deliver results.

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all seven questions associated with the group/team dimension is illustrated in Figure 4-36 below. Q27 to Q33 (except for Q31) elicited largely positive employee responses based on average, median and lower quartile values. Responses to Q31 displayed an even distribution across the response scale.
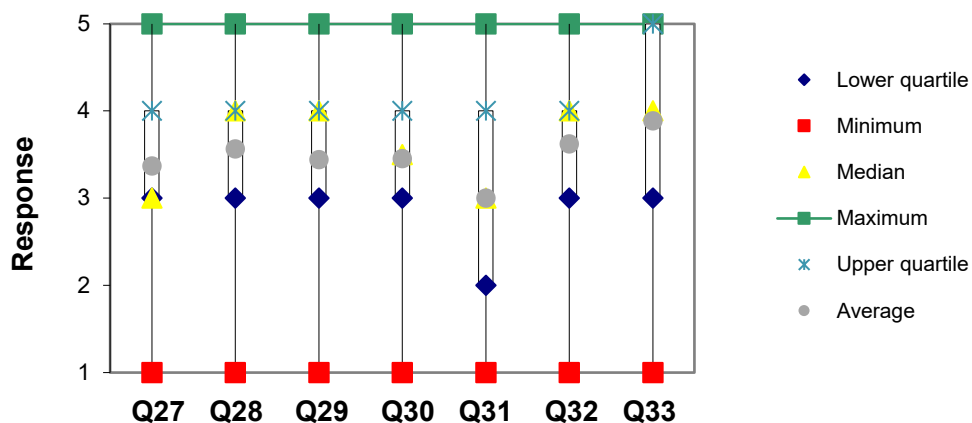
Figure 4-36:   Core capability – group/team boxplot

4.3.3.3 Individual

The individual dimension of the questionnaire comprised of nine questions (Q34 – Q42) assessing the core capability at an individual level with respect to empowerment, competence, resilience, responsibility and accountability, initiative, working conditions, and work relationships. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-37 to Figure 4-45.

Q34 How empowered are you to take control of your own development within your organisation?
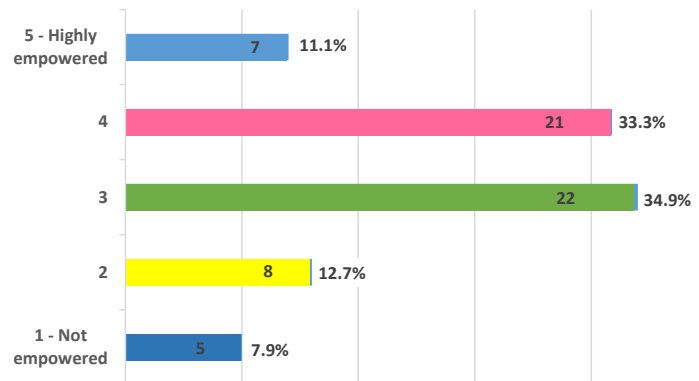
Figure 4-37:   Employee empowerment for individual development

Figure 4-37 indicates that the majority of employees (79.3%) experience fair to high levels of empowerment to take control of their own development. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q34 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. Being empowered for their own development indicates that there is healthy dialogue between the organisation and employees relating to development.

Q35 To what extent do you believe that you have the relevant competence to meet the challenges of your job?
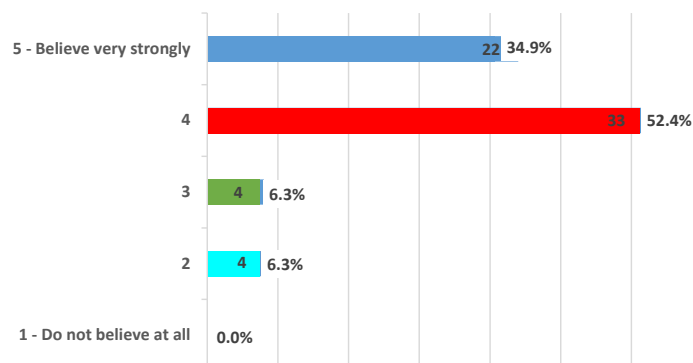
Figure 4-38:   Employee assessment of competence

Figure 4-38 illustrates that 93.6% of employees believe that they are competent to meet their job challenges indicating that the organisation has high levels of employee self-belief in their own competence. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q35 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q36 How well do you cope with your current workload?
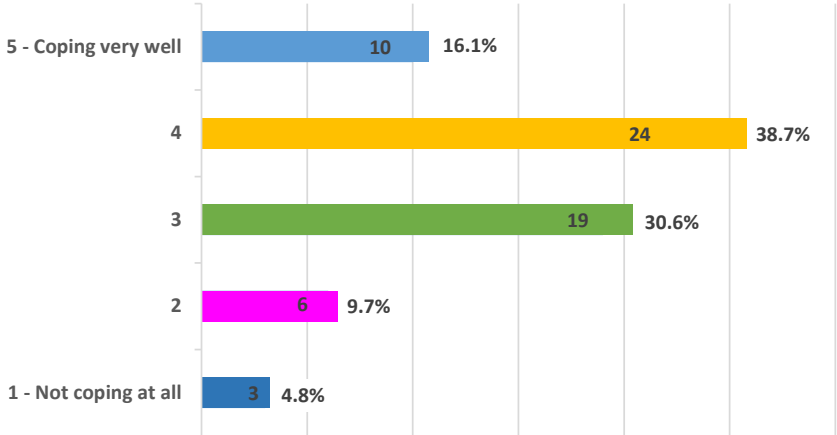
Figure 4-39:   Employee handling of workload

The results in Figure 4-39 indicate that 85.4% of employees are generally able to cope and handle their individual workloads. Less than 15% of employees struggle to cope with their workload indicating that certain employees may feel overworked. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q36 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q37 How satisfied are you with the amount of responsibility that you have been given in your job?
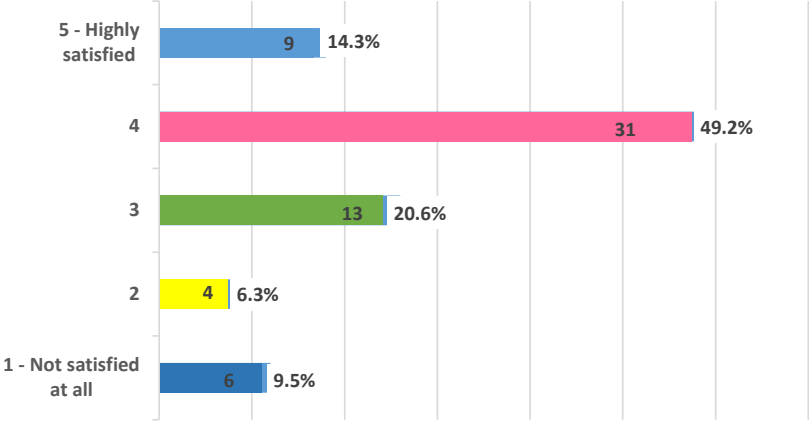
Figure 4-40:   Employee job responsibility

The results in Figure 4-40 indicate that 84.1% of employees are satisfied to highly satisfied with their responsibility levels. Just over 15% of employees are dissatisfied indicating that certain employees feel that they require more job related responsibilities. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q37 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q38 To what extent do you use your initiative at work?
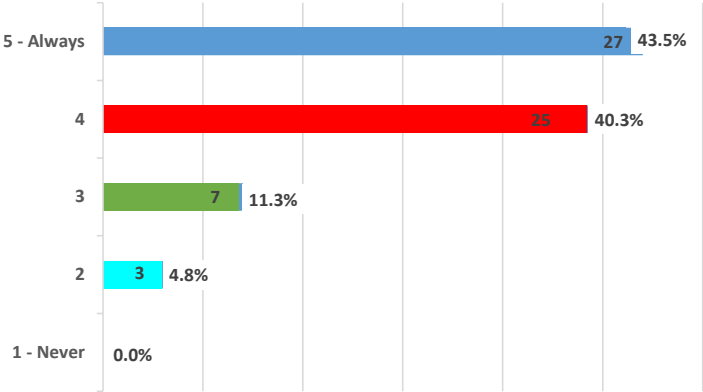
Figure 4-41:   Employee initiative at work

Figure 4-41 illustrates that 83.8% of employees feel that they strongly to always use their initiative at work while 11.3% of employees feel that they sometimes use their initiative. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q38 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect, indicating a proactive workforce willing to take necessary action to ensure work delivery.

Q39 How accountable are you for the quality of your work?
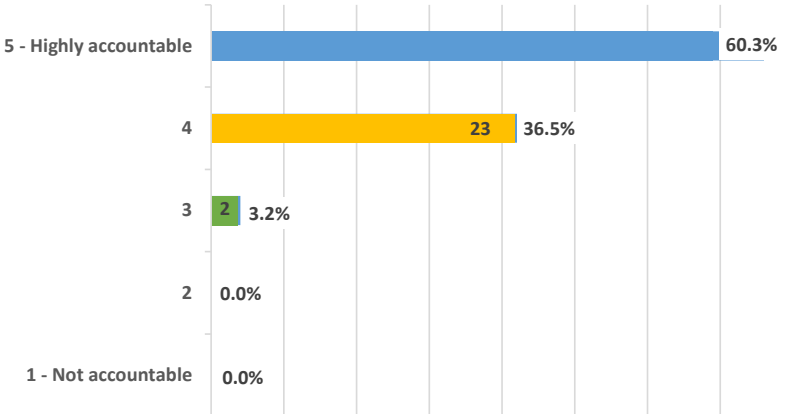
Figure 4-42:   Employee accountability for work quality

It is evident from Figure 4-42 that almost all employees feel accountable for the quality of their work. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q39 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect, indicating that the organisation allows employees full accountability regarding their work quality.

Q40 How sufficient are your physical working conditions (e.g. workspace, heat, light, noise etc.)?
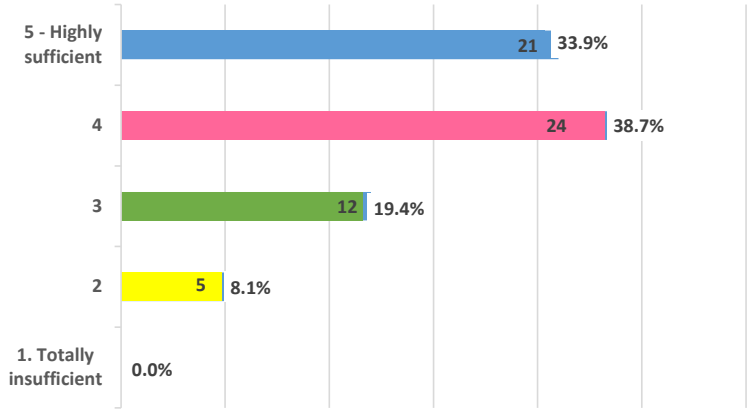
Figure 4-43:   Employee working conditions

Considering the context of the Covid 19 pandemic and the need for employees to adapt to working remotely, Figure 4-43 indicates that 92% of employees interpret their working condition as fairly to highly sufficient. These responses are a positive indication that working conditions positively supported employees during the pandemic for remote work. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q40 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q41 To what extent are you encouraged to come up with innovative solutions to work-related issues?
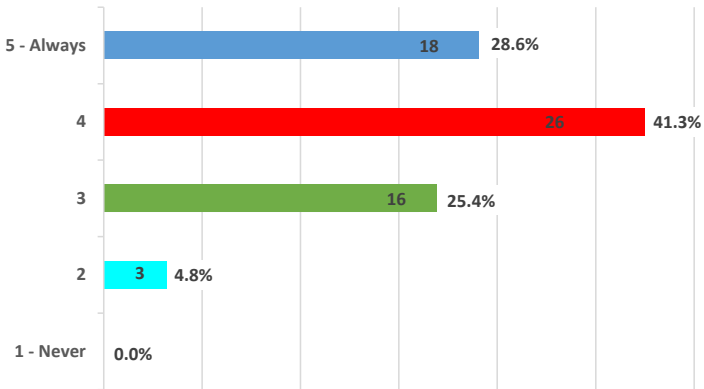
Figure 4-44:   Employee innovative solutions

It is evident from Figure 4-44 that the majority of employees (69.9%) feel very strongly that they are encouraged to be innovative to address work challenges. Approximately 25% responded that they sometimes apply innovation in the work place while less than 5% responded that they hardly ever apply innovative practices. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q41 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect, and indicates a work environment where innovation and creativity is encouraged.

Q42 How positive are your work relationships?
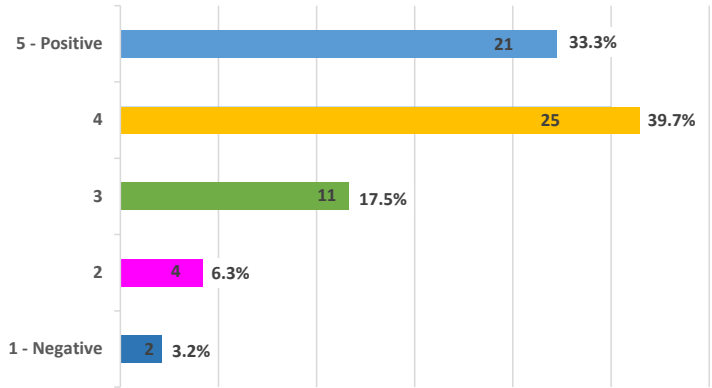
Figure 4-45:   Employee work relationships

Figure 4-45 indicates that the majority of employees (90.5%) enjoy fair to positive work relationships with 9.8% responding negatively. These responses indicate a positive work environment in which teamwork can thrive. The boxplot (Figure 4-46) indicates that most of the response data for Q42 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all nine questions is illustrated in Figure 4-46 below. Based on the average and median values, the responses for all nine questions lie in the positive response scale range.
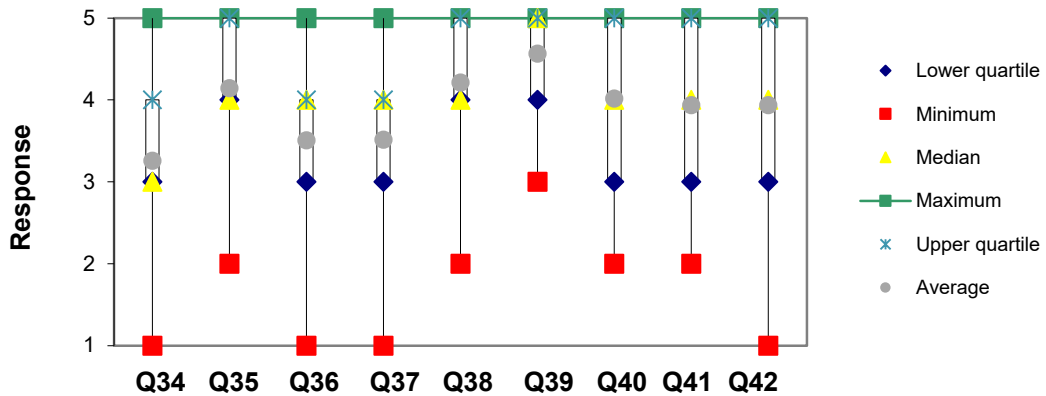
Figure 4-46:   Core capability – Individual boxplot

4.3.4   Reward System

The reward system dimension of the questionnaire comprised of five questions (Q43 – Q47) assessing employees' view on equitable benefits, remuneration, rewards, recognition and praise. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-47 to Figure 4-51.

Q43 To what extent do all employees at the same level receive equitable benefits in your organisation?
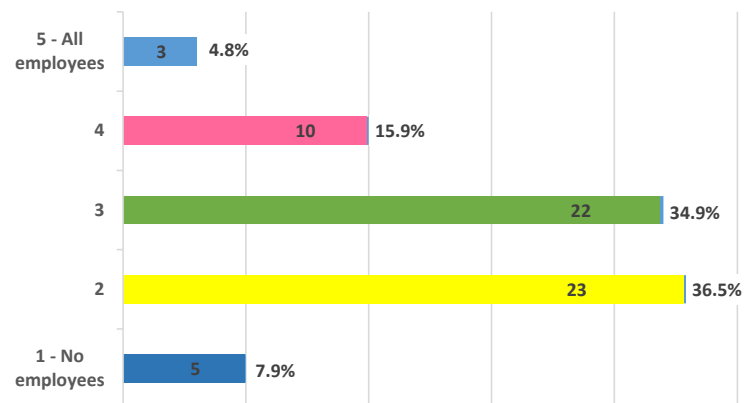
Figure 4-47:   Equitable benefits

It is evident from the responses (Figure 4-47) that there is a perception by a substantial portion of employees (44.4%) that the reward system at the same level is not equitable. 20.7% of employees believe that benefits are equitable. The boxplot (Figure 4-52) indicates that most of the response data for Q43 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an

improvement area. This perceived belief in inequitable rewards should not be left to perpetuate and can be damaging to future teamwork and collaboration.

Q44 To what extent does your total remuneration package (e.g. salary, bonus or/and incentives) match the responsibilities that you have?
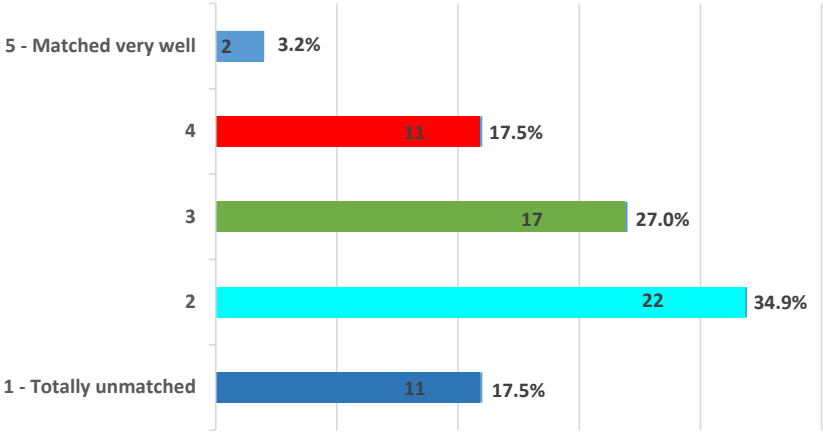
Figure 4-48:   Remuneration and responsibilities

Figure 4-48 indicates that a large portion of employees (52.4%) feel that there is a mismatch between their remuneration and responsibilities. 47.8% of employees feel that remuneration matches job responsibilities. The boxplot (Figure 4-52) indicates that most of the response data for Q44 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area. The market competitiveness of remuneration packages need to be assessed for each employee role category to ensure market parity.

Q45 How often are people, in your organisation, who perform well rewarded accordingly?
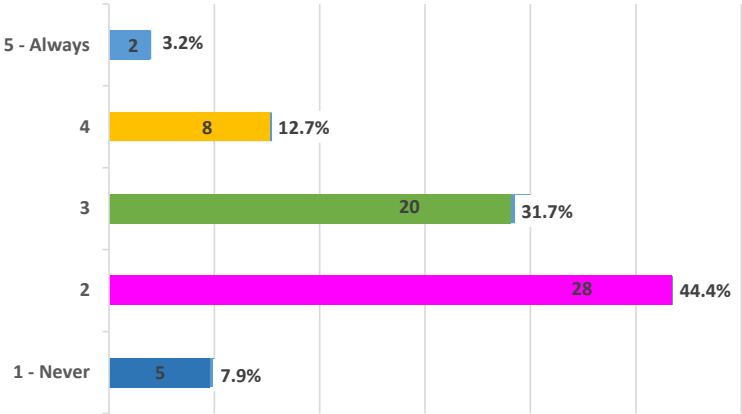
Figure 4-49:   Rewards and performance

It is evident from Figure 4-49 that 52.3% of employees feel that performance and rewards are not matched while 47.6% of employees feel that there is generally to always a match between performance and rewards. The boxplot (Figure 4-52) indicates that most of the response data for Q45 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area. These results could be related to the effectiveness of the performance management process (specifically the alignment between performance goal achievement and rewards) and needs to be assessed in this context.

Q46 How often have you, in the last six months, received recognition for work that you had done well?
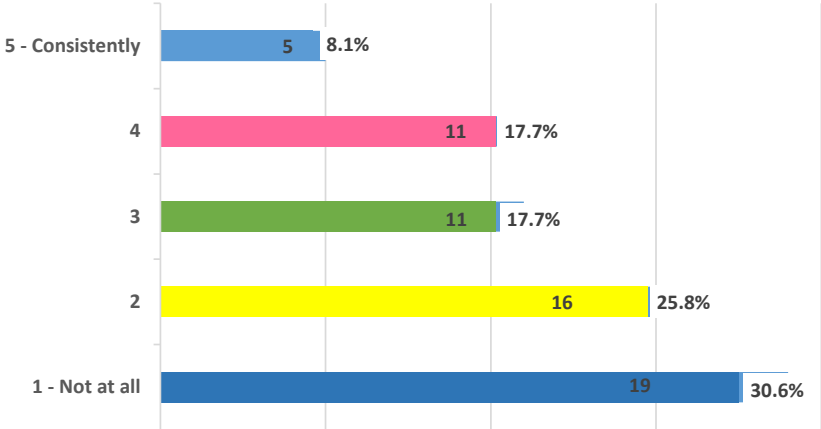
Figure 4-50:   Employee recognition

Figure 4-50 indicates that 56.4% of employees feel they did not receive recognition for work that was done well. Considering that 17.7% of employees responded that sometimes recognition is received these aggregate responses are significant. The boxplot (Figure 4-52) indicates that most of the response data for Q46 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area that requires management action.

Q47 How often do you receive praise when you do a good job?
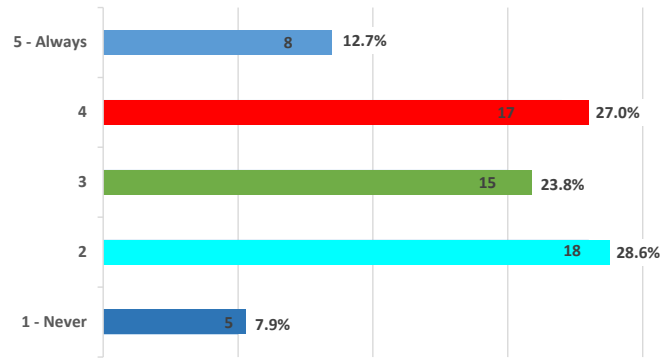
Figure 4-51:   Job praise

It is evident from Figure 4-51 that the responses for job praise are experienced differently amongst employees. A proportion of employees (39.7%) experience job praise positively while a similar proportion (36.5%) experience job praise hardly ever or never. 23.8% of employees sometimes receive job praise. The boxplot (Figure 4-52) indicates that most of the response data for Q47 is evenly spread across the scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area.

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all five questions is illustrated in Figure 4-52 below. Based on the quartile, average, and median values the responses for questions Q43-Q46 lie in the negative response scale range, except for Q47 which has a normal distribution.
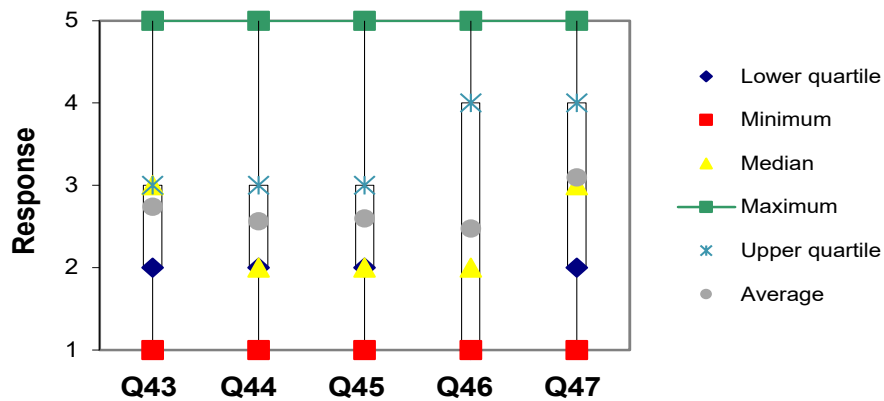
Figure 4-52:   Reward system boxplot

4.3.5   Performance Management

The performance management dimension of the questionnaire comprised of seven questions (Q48 – Q54) assessing employees' goal agreement, performance feedback, performance reviews, career path discussions, and goal accountability. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-53 to Figure 4-59.

Q48 To what extent have your goals been agreed to with your manager?
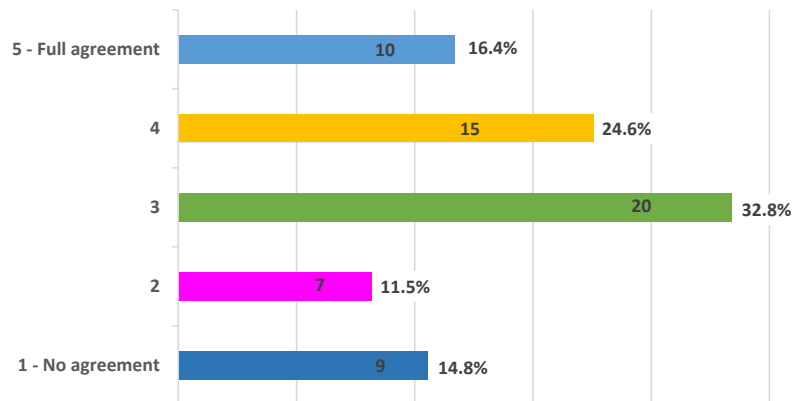
Figure 4-53:   Agreement of employee goals

Figure 4-53 indicates that 26.3% of employees have little to no agreement on performance goals which is of concern. 41% of employees feel that there is strong to full agreement while 32.8% have some agreement in place. Agreement on performance goals is imperative to individual and team performance. The boxplot (Figure 4-60) indicates that the response data for Q48 is evenly spread across the scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area.

Q49 To what extent does your direct manager give you honest positive and negative feedback related to your performance?
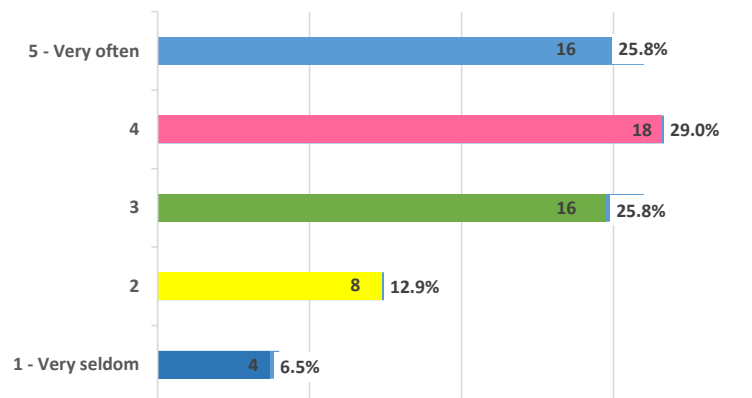
Figure 4-54:   Performance feedback

Figure 4-54 indicates that most employees (80.6%) generally to very often receive honest performance feedback while less than 20% of employees seldom receive honest feedback. The boxplot (Figure 4-60) indicates that most of the response data for Q49 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q50 How well does your organisation conduct fair performance reviews?
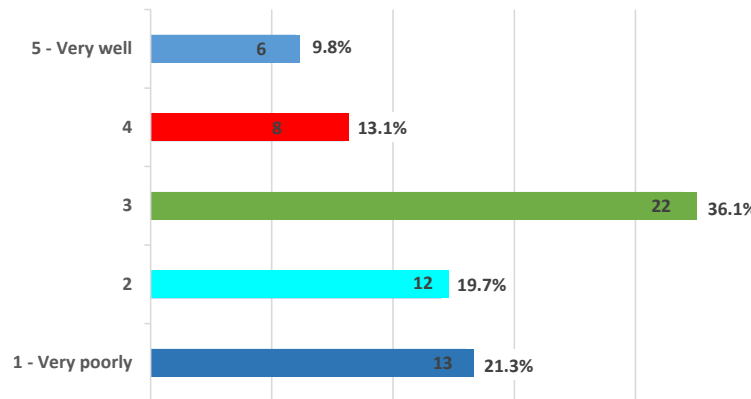
Figure 4-55:   Performance reviews

From employee responses it is evident in Figure 4-55 that 41% of employees feel that performance reviews are not conducted fairly, with 21.3% indicating that the performance review process is very poor. The boxplot (Figure 4-60) indicates that most of the response data for Q50 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area that requires management action. Fair performance reviews are an integral part of the performance management process to support delivery.

Q51 How often, in the last six months, has your career path in the organisation been discussed?
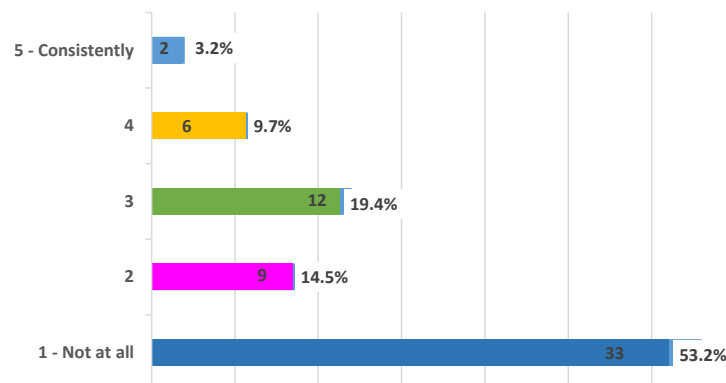
Figure 4-56:   Employee career path discussions

Figure 4-56 clearly indicates that employee career path discussions are not taking place regularly for most employees with line management. The boxplot (Figure 4-60) indicates that most of the response data for Q51 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area that requires management action considering that career path discussions

provide an opportunity to motivate and cultivate talent while addressing the future needs of the organisation.

Q52 To what extent do you believe that your performance is linked to a good performance rating?
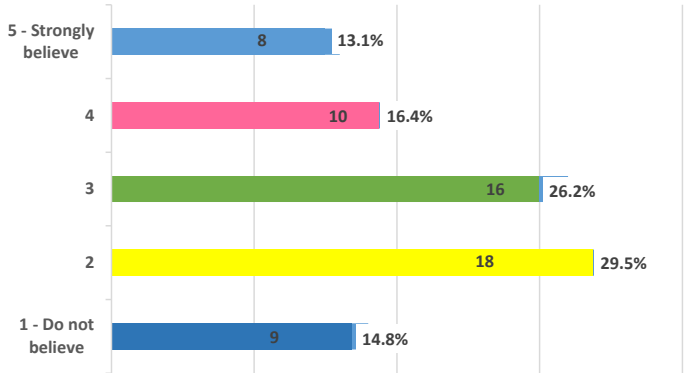
Figure 4-57:   Employee performance assessment

Figure 4-57 indicates that 44.3% of employees feel that their performance is not linked to a good performance rating while 55.7% of employees feel otherwise. The negative responses indicate that employees experience misalignment between actual performance and the resulting performance rating. The boxplot (Figure 4-60) indicates that more of the response data for Q52 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area.

Q53 To what extent does your organisation keep you accountable for meeting your goals?
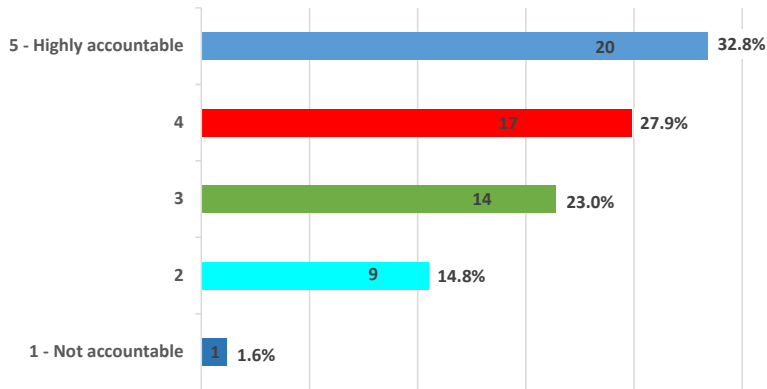
Figure 4-58:   Employee performance accountability

It is evident from Figure 4-58 that the majority of employees (83.7%) feel fairly to highly accountable for meeting their goals which is important for work performance and goal achievement. The boxplot (Figure 4-60) indicates that most of the response data for Q53 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as a positive organisational result.

Q54 How sufficient is the feedback you receive regarding your work performance?
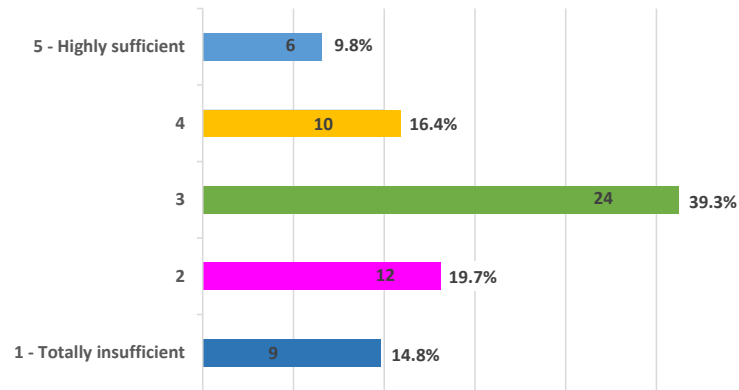
Figure 4-59:   Employee performance feedback

Figure 4-59 illustrates that 65.5% of employees experience feedback as fairly to highly sufficient regarding work performance with just over a third of employees experiencing otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-60) indicates that more of the response data for Q54 are in the negative scoring spectrum which supports this aspect as an improvement area that requires management action. Providing meaningful performance feedback helps identify areas of strengths which can be reinforced, and development areas to be addressed to improve performance.

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all seven questions is illustrated in Figure 4-60 below. Based on the average and median values, Q48, Q52 and Q54 indicate an even response distribution between the positive and negative scale. Q49 and Q53 indicate more positive responses, while responses to Q50 and Q51 lie in the negative response scale range.
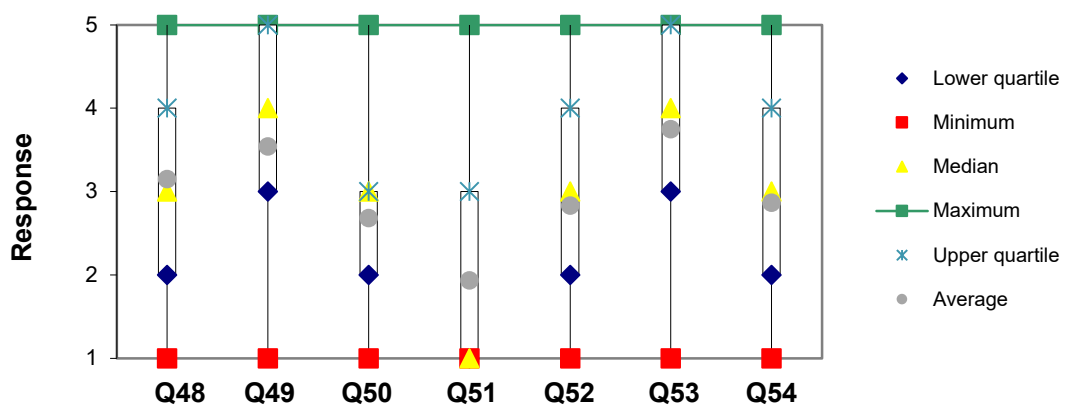
Figure 4-60:   Performance management boxplot

4.3.6   Policies & Procedures

The policies and procedures dimension of the questionnaire comprised of six questions (Q55 – Q60) assessing the company's policies and procedures from a communication, application, and understanding perspective. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-61 to Figure 4-66.

Q55 To what extent are the company policies and procedures clearly communicated to our team?
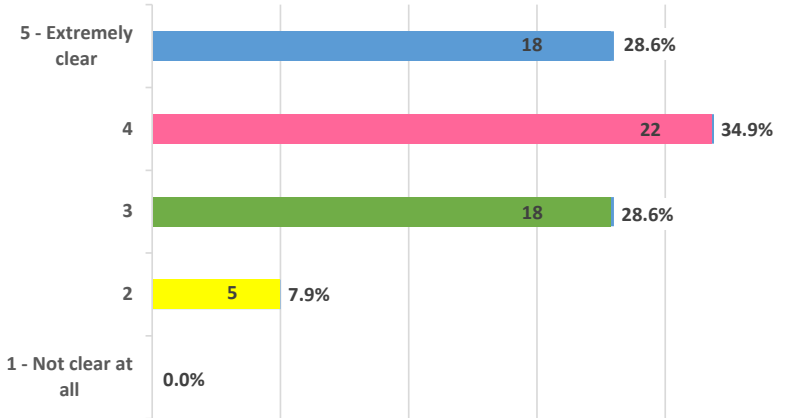
Figure 4-61:   Company policies and procedures

It is evident from Figure 4-61 that the majority of employees (92.1%) feel that company policies and procedures are fairly to very clearly communicated, which is indicative of strong dissemination of policy and procedure information across teams. The boxplot (Figure 4-67) indicates that most of the response data for Q55 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q56 To what extent are the staff procurement procedures applied fairly in your organisation?
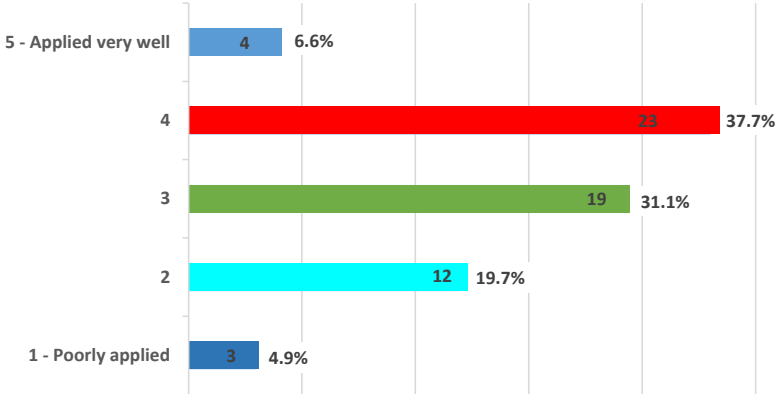
Figure 4-62:   Company staff procurement procedures

Figure 4-62 illustrates that 75.4% of employees felt that the application of staff procurement procedures were applied adequately or higher while 24.6% of respondents indicated that procurement procedures were not applied well. The boxplot (Figure 4-67) indicates that more of the response data for Q56 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q57 How well do you understand the company's ethics policy?
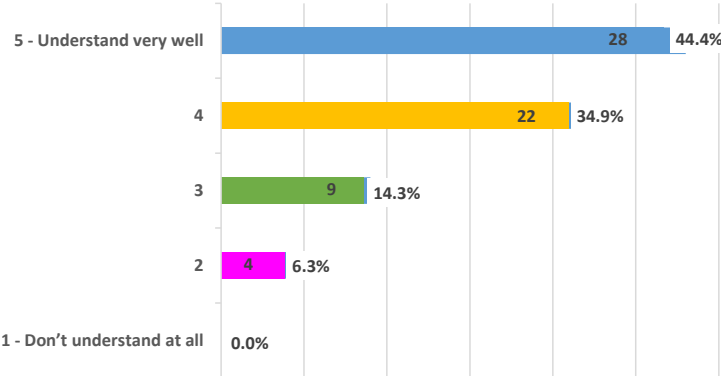
Figure 4-63:   Company ethics policy

It is clearly evident from the responses in Figure 4-63 that the majority of employees (93.6%) have an adequate to good understanding of the company's ethics policies. This is extremely relevant in a sales team where high levels of customer interaction occur and the importance of ethical behaviour and conduct is paramount. The boxplot (Figure 4-67) indicates that most of the response data for Q57 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q58 How committed is your organisation with a clear policy and commitment towards dealing with HIV/Aids in the workplace?
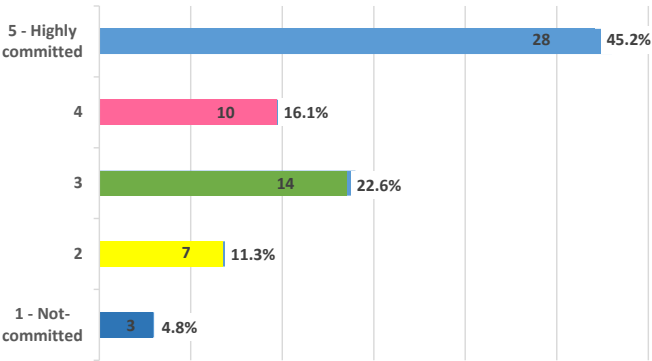
Figure 4-64:   Company HIV/Aids policy

Figure 4-64 indicates that the majority (83.9%) of respondents feel that the organisation is committed to dealing with HIV/Aids in the workplace with a clear documented policy which is indicative of an organisation concerned about employee wellbeing. The boxplot (Figure 4-67) indicates that most of the response data for Q58 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q59 How well do you understand the link between Employment Equity plans and business success?
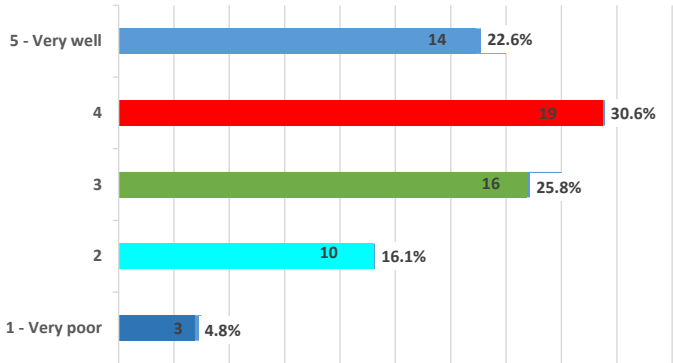
Figure 4-65:   Employment equity plans and business results

79% of respondents indicated a good understanding of the link between employment equity and business success, while 20.9% of respondents indicated a poor understanding thereof. The boxplot (Figure 4-67) indicates that most of the response data for Q59 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. However, there is room for further education within the organisation regarding the organisational benefits of effective employment equity plans.

Q60 To what extent are the disciplinary procedures applied fairly to all employees?
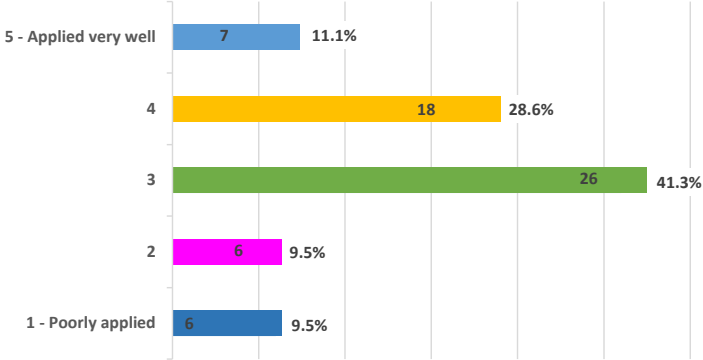
Figure 4-66:   Disciplinary procedures

Figure 4-66 illustrates that a large proportion of respondents (81%) felt positive on the fair application of disciplinary procedures. 39.7% of these respondents felt disciplinary procedures were applied very positively and 19% felt negative in the application thereof. The boxplot (Figure 4-67) indicates that most of the response data for Q60 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

A boxplot illustrating the spread of responses for all six questions is illustrated in Figure 4-67 below. Based on quartile, average and median values the spread of responses for all questions were in the positive spectrum of the response scale.
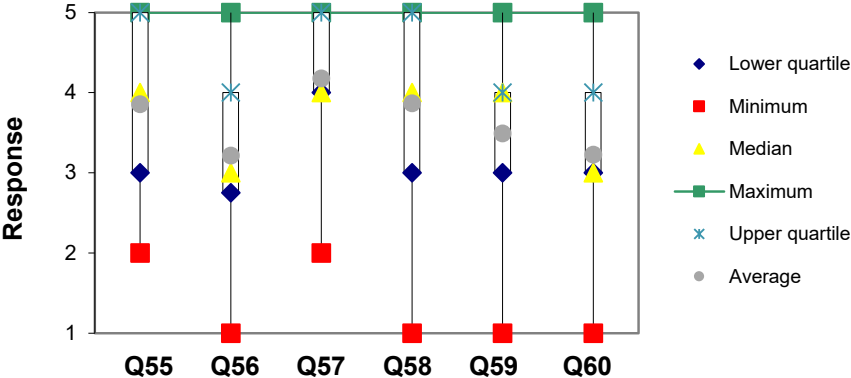
Figure 4-67:   Policies and procedures boxplot

4.3.7   Stakeholder Satisfaction

4.3.7.1   Customer

The customer (as a stakeholder) dimension of the questionnaire comprised of five questions (Q61 – Q65) assessing the company's approach to customer feedback, level of involvement of customers in decision making processes, product and service fit to customer requirements, and the company's power position towards its' customers. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-68 to Figure 4-72.

Q61 How accurate is the feedback from customers to your organisation?
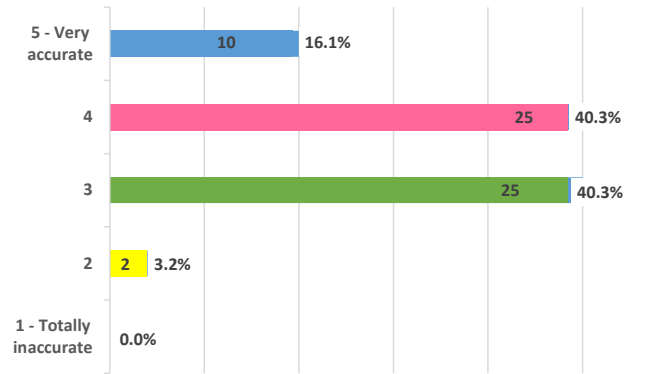
Figure 4-68:   Customer feedback accuracy

Figure 4-68 indicates that the majority (96.7%) of respondents feel that (fairly to very) accurate feedback is received from customers. The boxplot (Figure 4-73) indicates that most of the response data for Q61 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. This indicates strong alignment between the respondents' perception of the organisations' service and products and the customer's actual experience thereof.

Q62 How much value does your organisation place on customer feedback?
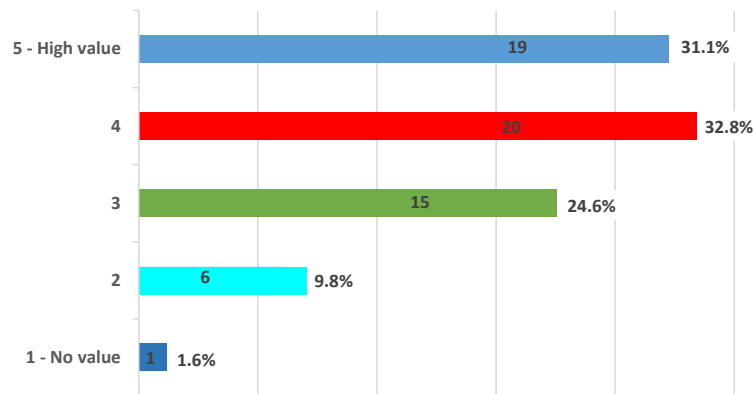
Figure 4-69:   Customer feedback value

It is evident from the responses in Figure 4-69 that the majority (63.9%) of respondents believe very strongly that the organisation takes customer feedback very seriously with a further 24.6% of employees believing that average value is placed on customer feedback. The boxplot (Figure 4-73) indicates that most of the response data for Q62 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. Customer feedback is essential for ongoing business improvement and organisational performance. 11.4% of respondents feel that little to no value is derived from customer feedback.

Q63 To what extent does your organisation consider the customers' needs and expectations when making decisions?
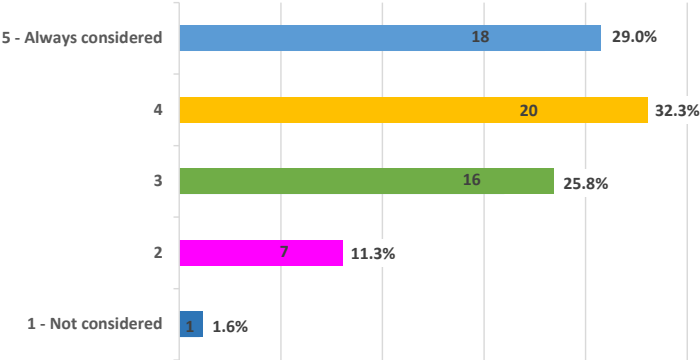
Figure 4-70:   Customer needs

Figure 4-70 indicates that 87.1% of respondents feel that customer needs and expectations do feature indicating that the organisation considers customer needs and expectations during its decision making processes. The boxplot (Figure 4-73) indicates that most of the response data for Q63 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q64 To what extent does your organisation ensure that its products and services meet the requirements of the customer?
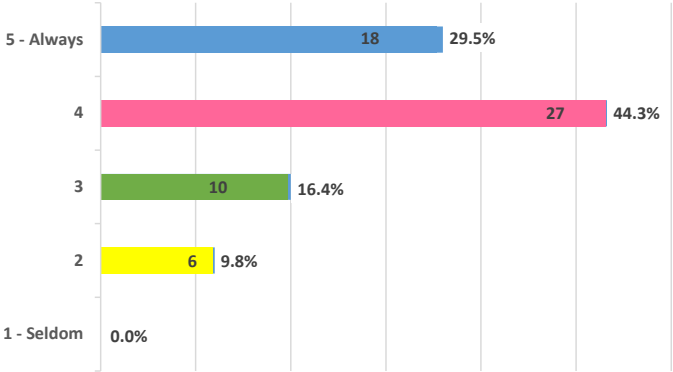
Figure 4-71:   Customer requirements

Figure 4-71 indicates a similar positive response set (as in the preceding question) regarding product and services fit to customer requirements, with 90.2% of respondents responding positively. The boxplot (Figure 4-73) indicates that most of the response data for Q64 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q65 To what extent has your organisation refrained from abusing its power/position towards its customers?
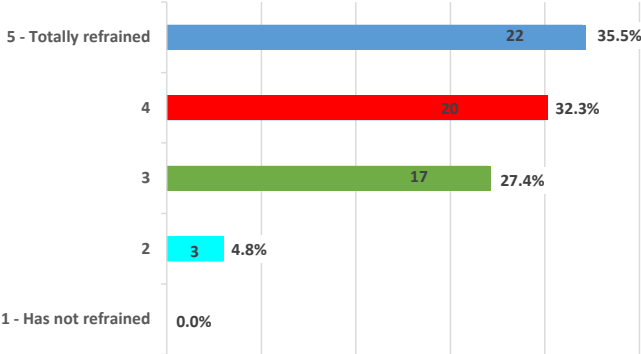
Figure 4-72:   Organisation power/position over customers

Figure 4-72 indicates that the majority of respondents (95.2%) feel that the organisation has refrained from abusing power and/or position with respect to its customers. The boxplot (Figure 4-73) indicates that most of the response data for Q65 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. These results are consistent with the responses from the previous questions indicating that the organisation displays strong customer focus and sensitivity towards customer needs within the context of a respectful partnership.

The boxplot in Figure 4-73 supports the positive responses set for all five questions relating to customer satisfaction, and the importance of customers as a stakeholder in the organisation.
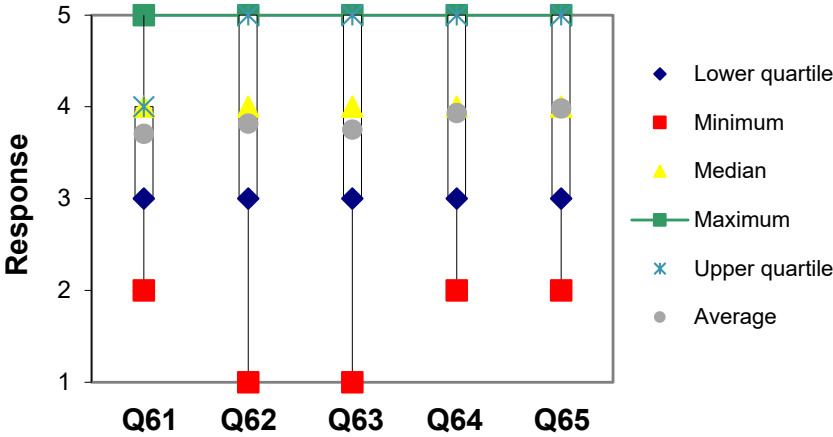
Figure 4-73:   Customer stakeholder satisfaction boxplot

4.3.7.2 Supplier

The supplier (as a stakeholder) dimension of the questionnaire comprised of four questions (Q66 – Q69) assessing the company's approach to supplier feedback, level of involvement in decision making processes, and the company's power position towards its suppliers. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-74 to Figure 4-77.

Q66 To what extent does your organisation allow its suppliers to participate in business decisions?
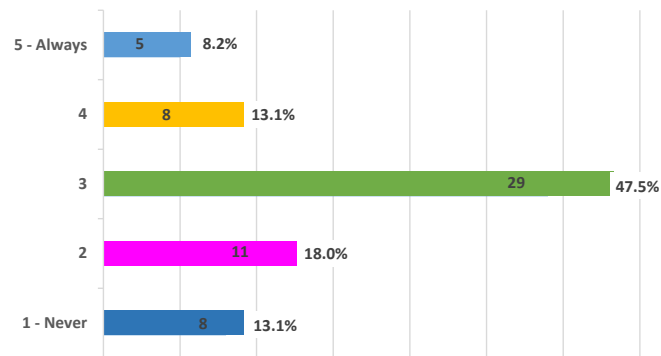
Figure 4-74:   Supplier impact on business decisions

It is evident from the responses (Figure 4-74) that the majority (68.8%) of respondents indicated that suppliers are somewhat involved in business decisions. However, the majority (47.5%) of these responses indicated that suppliers are sometimes involved. Eliciting sufficient supplier input is important in ensuring key inputs are considered that can impact the business. The boxplot (Figure 4-78) indicates that most of the response data for Q66 is in the negative scoring spectrum which supports that this aspect requires improvement and management intervention.

Q67 To what extent has your organisation refrained from abusing its power towards its suppliers?
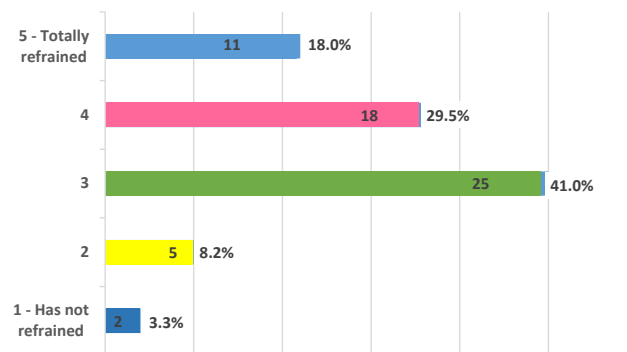
Figure 4-75:   Organisation power/position towards suppliers

Figure 4-75 indicates that the majority (88.5%) of respondents believe that the organisation has not abused its power and/or position when interacting with suppliers. The boxplot (Figure 4-78) indicates that most of the response data for Q67 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. This is important since maintaining healthy supplier relationships are key to long term business viability for both parties.

Q68 How much value does your organisation place on supplier feedback?
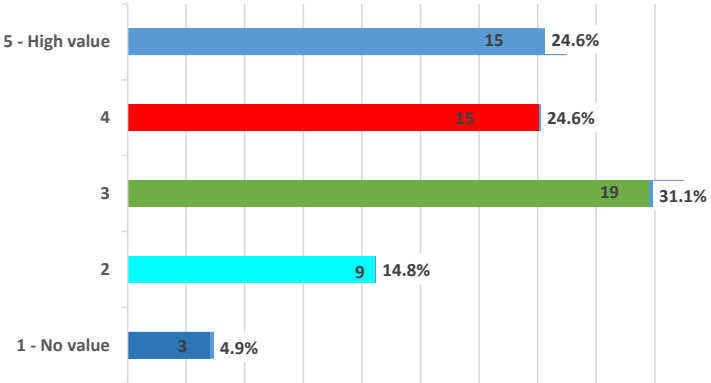
Figure 4-76:   Importance of supplier feedback

Figure 4-76 indicates that 19.7% of respondents feel that supplier feedback is not valued, 31.1% of respondents experience that average value is placed on supplier feedback while 49.2% feel that supplier feedback is taken seriously. The boxplot (Figure 4-78) indicates that most of the response data for Q68 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q69 How much emphasis does your company place on its suppliers being important partners in their business?
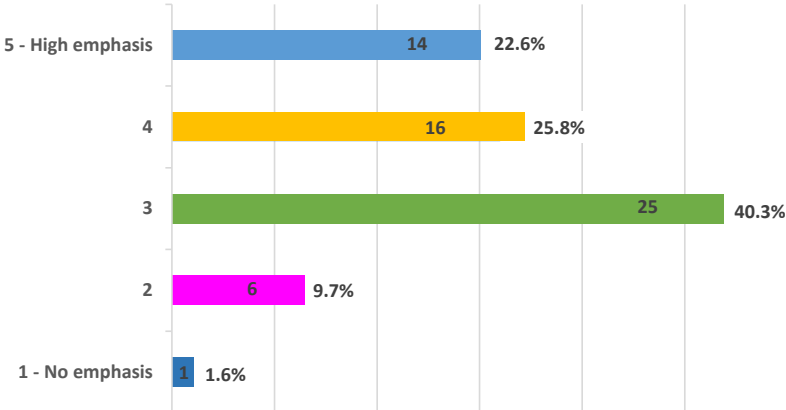
Figure 4-77:   Importance of suppliers as partners

The majority of responses (88.7%) in Figure 4-77 indicate that average to high emphasis is placed on suppliers being important stakeholders in the business which is an important acknowledgment by the organisation from a stakeholder input and management perspective. The boxplot (Figure 4-78) indicates that most of the response data for Q69 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

The boxplot in Figure 4-78 indicates in general positive respondent feedback for the role of suppliers as a stakeholder. However, Q66 is more skewed towards the negative scale based on the upper and lower quartile of the response set.
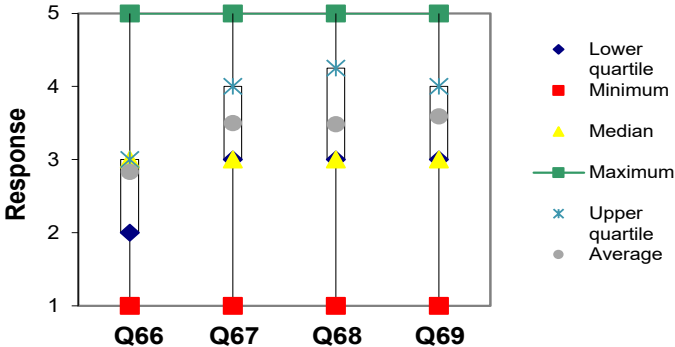
Figure 4-78:   Supplier stakeholder satisfaction boxplot

4.3.7.3 Community

The community (as a stakeholder) dimension of the questionnaire comprised of three questions (Q70 – Q72) assessing the company's approach to the community in terms of development, social responsibility, and community upliftment. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-79 to Figure 4-81.

Q70 How significant is your company's contribution to the development of the community?
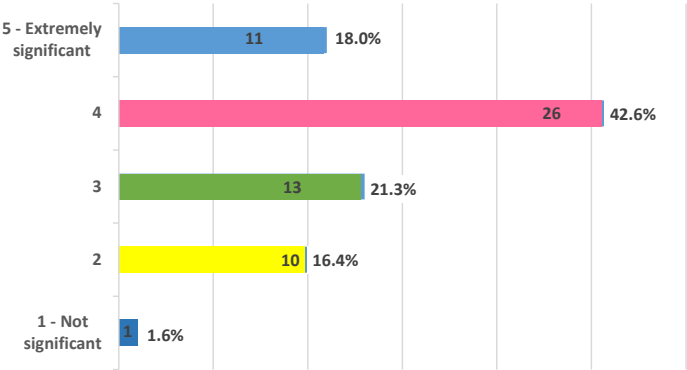
Figure 4-79:   Community development

Figure 4-79 indicates that most respondents (81.9%) feel that the company contributes (fairly to extremely) significantly to the community in which it operates. Community development and relations are a key part of ensuring business sustainability. The boxplot (Figure 4-82) indicates that most of the response data for Q70 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q71 To what extent does your organisation act in a socially responsible way/manner?
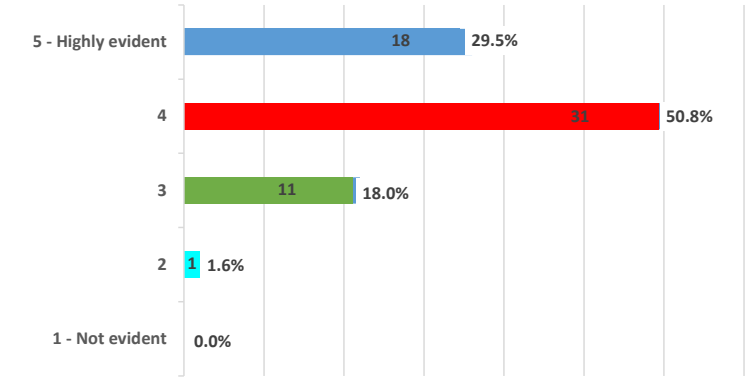
Figure 4-80:   Social responsibility

It is evident from Figure 4-80 that the majority of employees (98.3%) feel that the organisation operates in a socially responsible manner which is important considering that the company brand and reputation can be jeopardised if corporate social responsibility is neglected. The boxplot (Figure 4-82) indicates that most of the response data for Q71 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q72 To what extent does your organisation encourage employees to become involved in community upliftment?
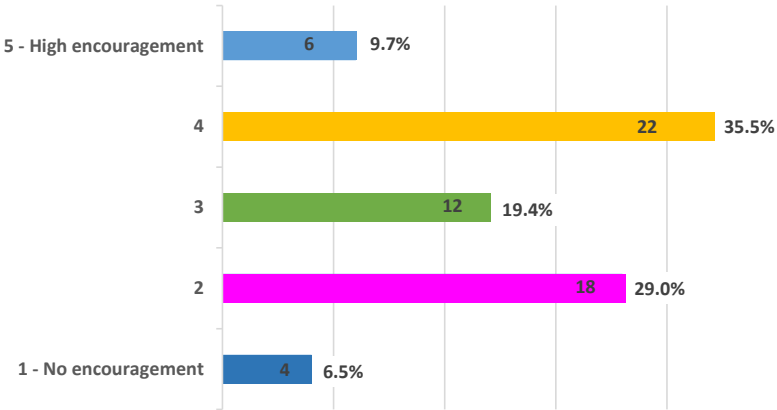
Figure 4-81:   Community upliftment

Figure 4-81 indicates that 45.2% of respondents feel more encouraged, 35.5% feel a lack of encouragement and 19.4% experience average encouragement. Employees are often brand ambassadors and the organisation should evaluate leveraging this opportunity to further enhance its community development status. The boxplot (Figure 4-82) indicates that the response data for Q72 is evenly distributed across the scoring spectrum which supports that this aspect can be improved.

The boxplot in Figure 4-82 for Q70 and Q71 supports the findings that the organisation contributes positively to the communities in which it operates while operating in a socially responsible manner. The spread of responses for Q73 indicates that the organisation can do more to encourage employees to become more involved in community upliftment projects.
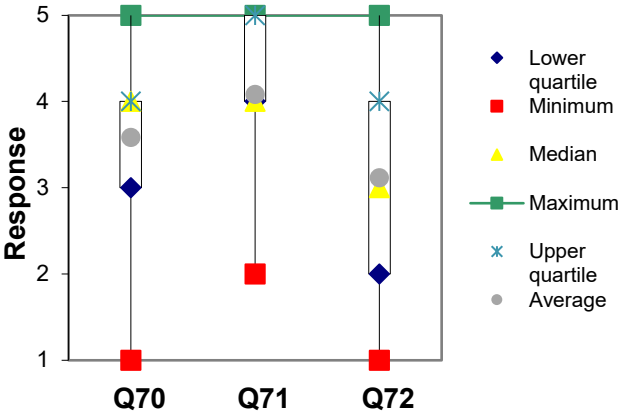
Figure 4-82:   Community satisfaction boxplot

4.3.7.4 People

People (as a stakeholder) dimension of the questionnaire comprised of eleven questions (Q73 – Q83) assessing the company's approach to its employees in terms of work life balance, job satisfaction, employer relationships, supplier management, work environment, care for employees, and the attractiveness of the organisation as an employer. Responses (including number and valid percentage) to each of these questions are presented below from Figure 4-83 to Figure 4-93.

Q73 To what extent does your organisation encourage a healthy balance between work and life issues?
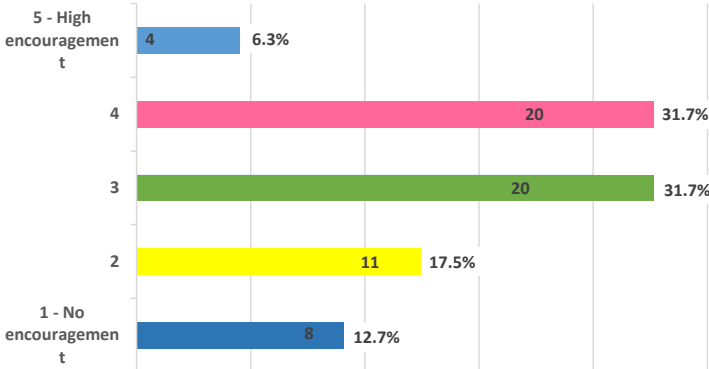
Figure 4-83:   Work life balance

Figure 4-83 indicates that 69.7% of employees enjoy (average to high) encouragement for work-life balance while a significant proportion (30.2%) are not experiencing any encouragement. It is important that this area is assessed further within the context of employee burn-out. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that the response data for Q73 is evenly distributed across the scoring spectrum which supports that this aspect can be improved.

Q74 How satisfied are you that your job gives you the opportunity to do what you are best at doing?
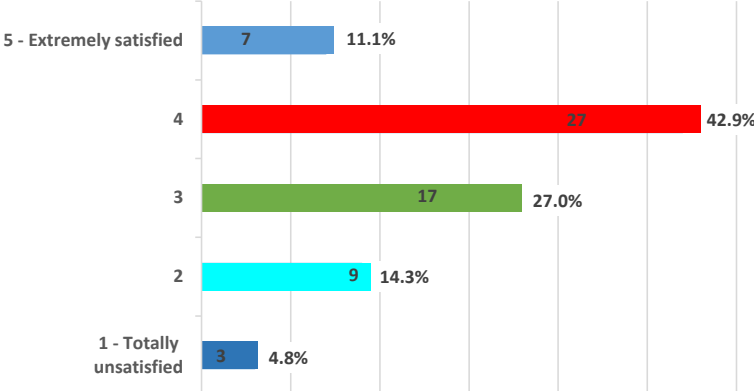
Figure 4-84:   Job employee fit

From Figure 4-84 it is evident that a significant portion of the respondents (81%) enjoy a good fit between their job and personal skills, while 19% experience a lack of fit. Taking practical organisational constraints into consideration, this represents a good overall profile for the

organisation. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that most of the response data for Q74 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q75 How interesting is your work?
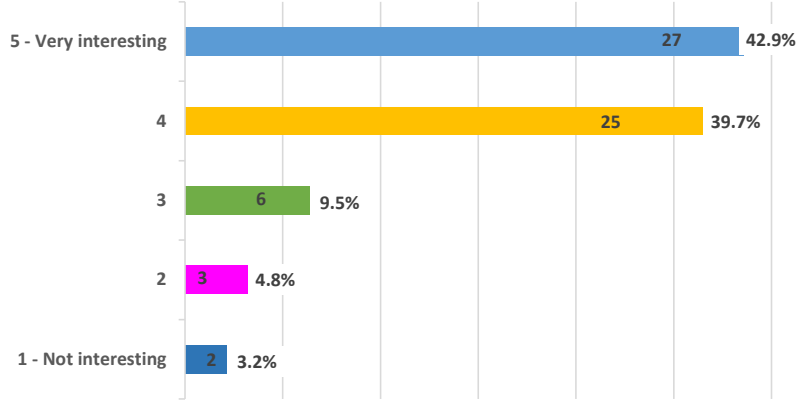
Figure 4-85:   Job interest

Figure 4-85 indicates that the majority of respondents (92.1%) find their work fairly interesting to very interesting. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that most of the response data for Q75 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. High levels of work interest indicate that employees are highly engaged in their jobs.

Q76 To what extent has your company established a good relationship with employees?
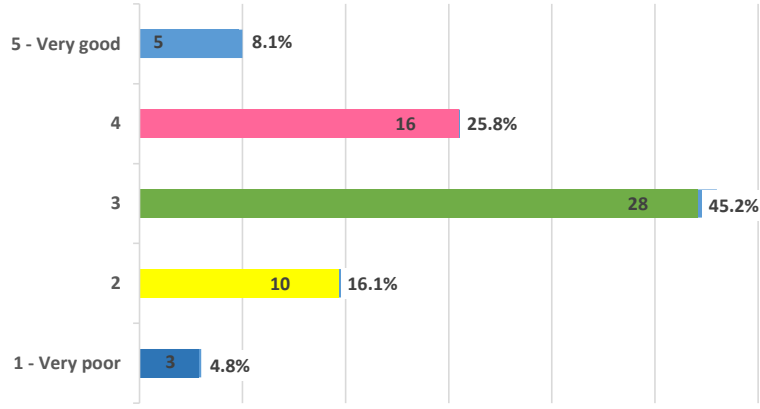
Figure 4-86:   Organisation employee relationships

It is evident from Figure 4-85 that the majority (79.1%) of respondents experience fairly average to very good organisation employee relations while 20.9% of employees feel otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that most of the response data for Q76 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q77 How strongly do your believe that your job contributes to the success of the business?
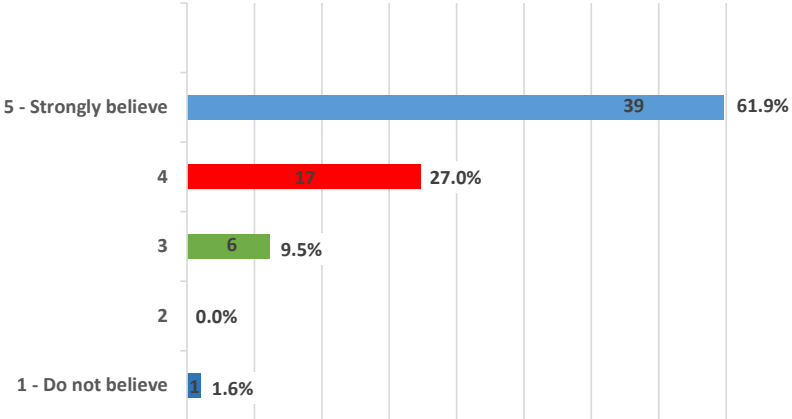
Figure 4-87:   Job relation to business success

Figure 4-87 indicates that 98.4% of respondents believe that their job has a direct contribution to the success of the business indicating a strong understanding of the relation between employee output and business results. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that most of the response data for Q77 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q78 To what extent are black suppliers promoted within your organisation's commercial policy?
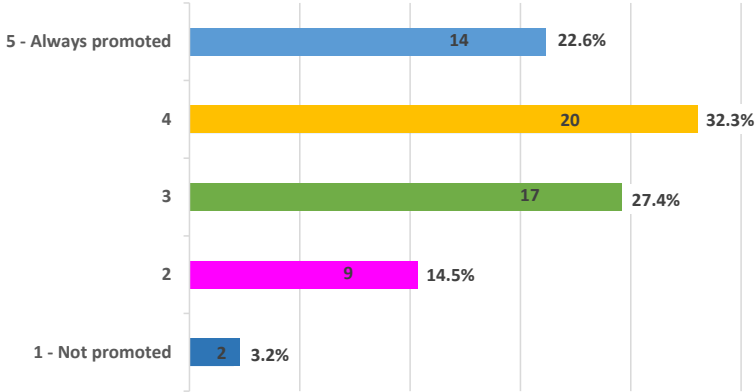
Figure 4-88:   Commercial policy

It is evident from Figure 4-88 that there is general to strong promotion of black suppliers commercially in the organisation with 82.3% of employees responding as such. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that most of the response data for Q78 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. Continued support to local suppliers within the framework and regulations of the country is imperative for business viability.

Q79 To what extent has your organisation's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy been communicated to all staff?
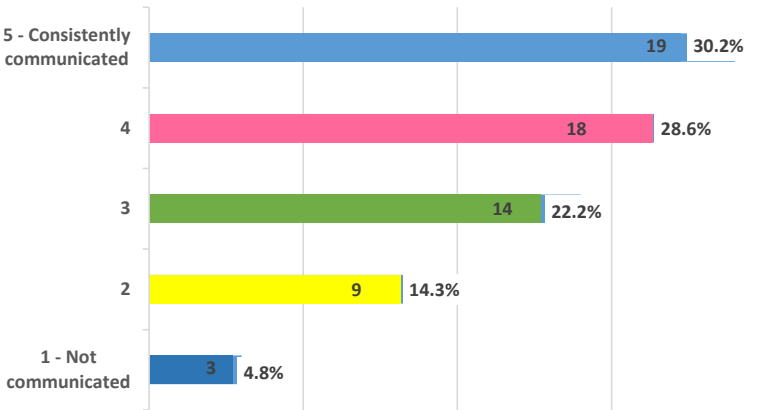
Figure 4-89:   BEE policy communication

Figure 4-89 indicates that most respondents (81%) experience some to consistent levels of communication on the organisation's BEE policy. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that most of the response data for Q79 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect.

Q80 To what extent is your workplace a fun place to work?
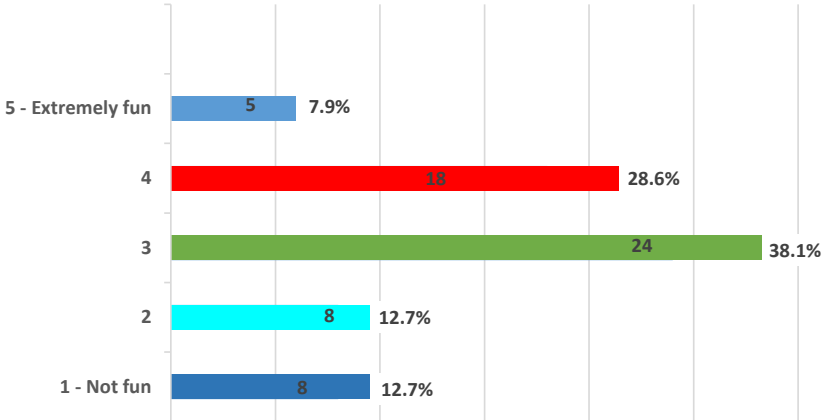
Figure 4-90:   Workplace environment

Figure 4-90 indicates that most respondents (74.6%) experience the environment as sometimes fun to extremely fun in which to work. 25.4% of respondents experience the environment otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that the response data for Q80 is evenly distributed across the scoring spectrum which supports that this aspect can be improved.

Q81 To what extent does your organisation look after its people?
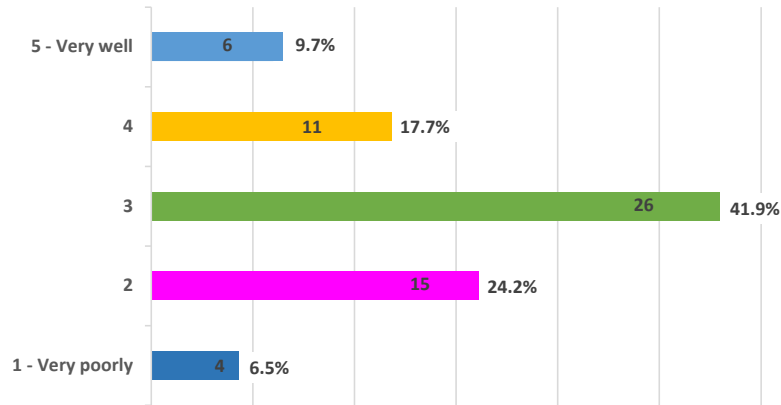
Figure 4-91:   Value of people in the organisation

It is evident from Figure 4-91 that the response range follows a normal distribution. 41.9% responded in the average scale indicating that these employees feel that the organisation is doing more or less what its peers are doing in terms of looking after its people. This area could be further assessed to improve organisational performance. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that the response data for Q81 is evenly distributed across the scoring spectrum which supports that this aspect can be improved.

Q82 How proactive is your organisation in the advancement of previously disadvantaged individuals/people?
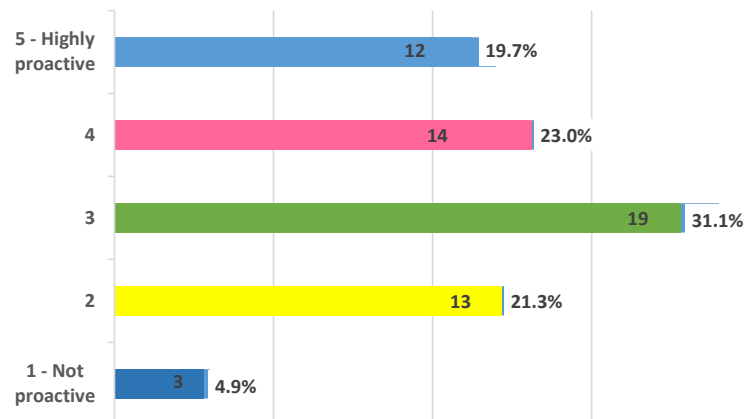
Figure 4-92:   People development (employment equity)

Figure 4-92 indicates that most respondents (73.8%) experience behaviour as fairly to highly proactive by the organisation to advance previously disadvantages individuals while 26.2% of

respondents feel otherwise. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that the response data for Q82 is evenly distributed across the scoring spectrum which supports that this aspect can be improved.

Q83 How easily would you encourage your friends to join your organisation?
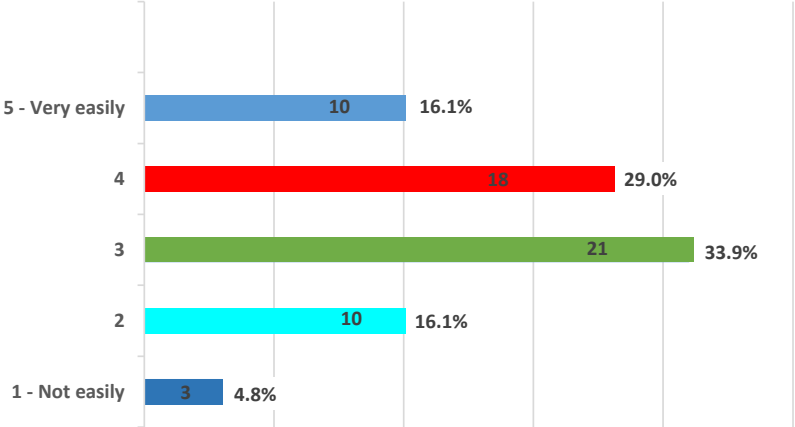
Figure 4-93:   Attractiveness of organisation as an employer

Figure 4-93 indicates that most respondents (79%) would easily to very easily encourage others to join the organisation. The boxplot (Figure 4-94) indicates that most of the response data for Q74 is in the positive scoring spectrum which supports a desirable organisational result for this aspect. These results indicate that most of the respondents would recommend the organisation as a place to work.

The boxplot in Figure 4-94 summarises the spread of responses for Q73 to Q83. Responses for Q73, Q80, Q81 and Q82 exhibit a normal distribution. The remaining questions all exhibit responses higher in the response scale indicating strong positive feedback for those dimensions.
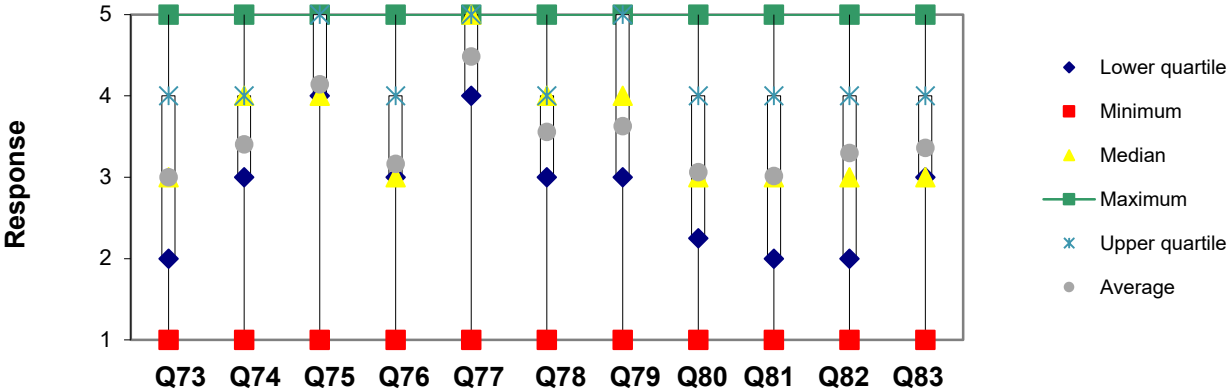
Figure 4-94:   People satisfaction boxplot

4.4 COMPARATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Comparative data analysis was completed to compare and determine the consistency of two or more datasets with one another (Saunders *et al.*, 2016:537). This included an independent samples test for any statistical significance between gender responses, Spearman's rank-order correlation to assess the strength and direction of relationships between the twelve dimensions, and one-way ANOVA for assessing the significance of the responses from the differing sales position role categories with the twelve dimensions associated with a high performance culture.

Group gender responses were analysed with Table 4-1 below indicating the mean and standard deviation per dimension per gender category, while Table 4-2 provides the results of the associated independent samples test. It is evident from Table 4-2 that the *p* values for each independent dimension is greater than the chosen significance level *a* = 0.05 (5%) indicating that the null hypothesis can be accepted and that the mean responses from males and females in the group are not significantly different. Therefore, the research results are not significant in terms of male and female responses despite the relatively large difference in the number of responses between genders.

Table 4-1:   Group (gender) statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Vision_Strategy	FEMALE	5	2.73	0.55
	MALE	58	3.26	0.76
Leadership	FEMALE	5	3.60	0.75
	MALE	58	3.63	0.72
Capability_organization	FEMALE	5	3.23	0.51
	MALE	57	3.36	0.78
Capability_group	FEMALE	5	3.80	0.96
	MALE	57	3.48	0.76
Capability_individual_general	FEMALE	5	3.80	0.73
	MALE	57	4.06	0.49
Reward_system	FEMALE	5	2.32	0.48
	MALE	57	2.74	0.83
Performance_management	FEMALE	5	2.54	0.64
	MALE	57	3.04	0.93
Policies_Procedures	FEMALE	5	3.17	0.61
	MALE	57	3.70	0.71
Satisfaction_customer	FEMALE	4	3.70	0.35
	MALE	57	3.86	0.66
Satisfaction_supplier	FEMALE	4	2.94	0.24
	MALE	57	3.39	0.89
Satisfaction_community	FEMALE	5	3.40	0.89
	MALE	56	3.64	0.78
Satisfaction_people_general	FEMALE	5	3.35	0.60
	MALE	57	3.50	0.77

Table 4-2:   Independent samples test (for gender)

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
									Lower	Upper
Vision_Strategy	Equal variances assumed	1.355	0.25	-1.51	61	0.137	-0.52586	0.34928	-1.22429	0.17256
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.99	5.434	0.099	-0.52586	0.26457	-1.18996	0.13824
Leadership	Equal variances assumed	0.043	0.84	-0.10	61	0.922	-0.03300	0.33775	-0.70837	0.64236
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.09	4.660	0.929	-0.03300	0.34938	-0.95116	0.88515
Capability_organization	Equal variances assumed	0.749	0.39	-0.37	60	0.716	-0.13024	0.35673	-0.84381	0.58332
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.52	5.783	0.623	-0.13024	0.25082	-0.74961	0.48913
Capability_group	Equal variances assumed	0.095	0.76	0.87	60	0.386	0.31629	0.36238	-0.40858	1.04116
	Equal variances not assumed			0.72	4.458	0.508	0.31629	0.43938	-0.85578	1.48837
Capability_individual_general	Equal variances assumed	0.525	0.47	-1.10	60	0.278	-0.26015	0.23745	-0.73512	0.21482
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.78	4.319	0.477	-0.26015	0.33399	-1.16108	0.64078
Reward_system	Equal variances assumed	2.023	0.16	-1.10	60	0.277	-0.41684	0.37959	-1.17614	0.34245
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.72	6.340	0.133	-0.41684	0.24199	-1.00136	0.16767
Performance_management	Equal variances assumed	0.695	0.41	-1.17	60	0.245	-0.50079	0.42635	-1.35362	0.35203
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.60	5.596	0.164	-0.50079	0.31247	-1.27896	0.27738
Policies_Procedures	Equal variances assumed	0.505	0.48	-1.63	60	0.109	-0.53275	0.32705	-1.18695	0.12145
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.84	4.986	0.125	-0.53275	0.28943	-1.27741	0.21191
Satisfaction_customer	Equal variances assumed	1.084	0.30	-0.48	59	0.633	-0.16082	0.33467	-0.83050	0.50886
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.83	4.703	0.447	-0.16082	0.19397	-0.66908	0.34744
Satisfaction_supplier	Equal variances assumed	3.350	0.07	-1.02	59	0.311	-0.45724	0.44759	-1.35286	0.43839
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.73	11.009	0.020	-0.45724	0.16766	-0.82622	-0.08826
Satisfaction_community	Equal variances assumed	0.290	0.59	-0.65	59	0.516	-0.23988	0.36666	-0.97358	0.49381
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.58	4.556	0.589	-0.23988	0.41326	-1.33412	0.85436
Satisfaction_people_general	Equal variances assumed	0.332	0.57	-0.42	60	0.677	-0.14896	0.35531	-0.85968	0.56177
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.52	5.259	0.623	-0.14896	0.28531	-0.87164	0.57373

A Spearman's rank-order correlation was completed to determine the strength and direction of any relationships between the twelve dimensions assessed. The results are presented in Table 4-3 below. In the absence of a universally accepted definition in the literature regarding the interpretation of Spearman's correlation coefficients, the following ranges were used as a guide to interpret the strength of the correlation: 0.00 - 0.19 "very weak", 0.20 – 0.39 "weak", 0.40 – 0.59 "moderate", 0.60 – 0.79 "strong", and 0.80 – 1.0 "very strong". In summary:-

1. Vision and strategy had a moderate to strong positive correlation with all other eleven dimensions that were statically significant ($p < 0.01$).

2. Leadership had a moderate to strong positive correlation with nine dimensions that were statically significant ($p < 0.01$), with a weak correlation to customer and supplier stakeholder satisfaction that were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

3. The core capability at the organisation level had a moderate to strong positive correlation with the other eleven dimensions that were statically significant ($p < 0.01$).

4. The core capability at the group/team level had a moderate to strong positive correlation with seven dimensions that were statically significant ($p < 0.01$), with a weak correlation to the four dimensions of policies and procedures, customer, supplier and community stakeholder satisfaction that were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

5. The core capability at the individual level had a moderate to strong positive correlation with eight dimensions that were statically significant ($p < 0.01$), with a weak correlation to the three dimensions of customer, supplier and community stakeholder satisfaction that were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

6. Reward systems had a moderate to strong positive correlation with seven dimensions that were statically significant ($p < 0.01$), a weak correlation to the three dimensions of policies and procedures, customer and community stakeholder satisfaction, and a very weak correlation to supplier stakeholder satisfaction that were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

7. Performance management had a moderate to strong positive correlation with eight dimensions that were statically significant ($p < 0.01$), with a weak correlation to the three dimensions of policies and procedures, customer and supplier stakeholder satisfaction that were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

8. Policies and procedures were strongly correlated to vision and strategy (statistically significant with $p < 0.01$), weakly correlated to core capability at the group/team level, reward system, and performance management (statistically significant with $p < 0.01$), and moderately correlated to the remaining dimensions (statistically significant with $p < 0.01$).

9. Customer stakeholder satisfaction was weakly correlated with leadership, core capability of the organisation at the group level, reward systems, performance management, and

people stakeholder satisfaction (statistically significant with $p < 0.01$) with moderate correlation with the remaining dimensions.

10. Supplier stakeholder satisfaction had similar results to customer stakeholder satisfaction but correlated very weakly with reward systems.

11. Community stakeholder satisfaction was weakly correlated with reward systems, core capability at the group/team and individual level, and people stakeholder satisfaction (statistically significant with $p < 0.01$) and moderately correlated with the remaining dimensions.

12. People stakeholder satisfaction was weakly correlated with customer, supplier and community stakeholder satisfaction (statistically significant with $p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$), and moderately to strongly correlated with the remaining dimensions (statistically significant with $p < 0.01$).

In summary, Spearman's statistical analysis testing for the strength and direction of relationships between the twelve dimensions indicated that *vision and strategy*, and *core capability at the organisation level* were moderately to strongly positively related (or correlated) to each of the other eleven dimensions (refer to Table 4-3 below). Therefore, there is a significant positive relationship between each of these dimensions with each of the other eleven dimensions.

It was also found that *leadership* was moderately to strongly positively related (or correlated) to nine other dimensions indicating a significant positive relationship between *leadership* with each of these nine dimensions (refer to Table 4-3 below for the applicable dimensions).

Further research (which is beyond the scope of this research study) is required to understand the reasons for the effect of each of these dimensions on the others.

Table 4-3:   Nonparametric correlations

Dimension		Please indicate your sales work experience (years). Please mark the applicable box	Please indicate your age group. Please mark the applicable box	Vision_Strategy	Leadership	Capability_organization	Capability_group	Capability_individual_general	Reward_system	Performance_management	Policies_Procedures	Satisfaction_customer	Satisfaction_supplier	Satisfaction_community	Satisfaction_people_general
Vision_Strategy	Correlation Coefficient	0.15	.260*	1.000	.743**	.726**	.481**	.564**	.458**	.605**	.619**	.481**	.507**	.535**	.599**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.30	0.04		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	51.00	63.00	64	64	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	0.05	0.08	.743**	1.000	.679**	.685**	.607**	.587**	.659**	.458**	.361**	.349**	.434**	.630**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.71	0.53	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.005	0.000	0.000
	N	51.00	63.00	64	64	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Capability_organization	Correlation Coefficient	-0.02	0.12	.726**	.679**	1.000	.604**	.470**	.601**	.562**	.528**	.464**	.417**	.454**	.671**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.88	0.37	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000
	N	50.00	62.00	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Capability_group	Correlation Coefficient	-0.06	0.00	.481**	.685**	.604**	1.000	.599**	.451**	.462**	.390**	.280*	.228*	.288*	.595**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.67	0.98	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.028	0.075	0.023	0.000
	N	50.00	62.00	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Capability_individual_general	Correlation Coefficient	0.16	0.19	.564**	.607**	.470**	.599**	1.000	.464**	.569**	.428**	.346**	.292*	.367**	.683**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.28	0.13	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.006	0.021	0.003	0.000
	N	50.00	62.00	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Reward_system	Correlation Coefficient	0.10	0.12	.458**	.587**	.601**	.451**	.464**	1.000	.655**	.393**	0.205	0.149	.336**	.676**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.48	0.37	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.001	0.111	0.249	0.007	0.000
	N	50.00	62.00	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Performance_management	Correlation Coefficient	0.19	.277*	.605**	.659**	.562**	.462**	.569**	.655**	1.000	.378**	0.225	.322*	.423**	.648**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.18	0.03	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.002	0.078	0.011	0.001	0.000
	N	50.00	62.00	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Policies_Procedures	Correlation Coefficient	-0.14	0.14	.619**	.458**	.528**	.390**	.428**	.393**	.378**	1.000	.543**	.466**	.540**	.479**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.34	0.29	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.002		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	50.00	62.00	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63
Satisfaction_customer	Correlation Coefficient	-0.17	-0.10	.481**	.361**	.464**	.280*	.346**	0.205	0.225	.543**	1.000	.548**	.492**	.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.25	0.44	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.028	0.006	0.111	0.078	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.005
	N	49.00	61.00	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	61	62
Satisfaction_supplier	Correlation Coefficient	-0.03	0.04	.507**	.349**	.417**	0.228	.292*	0.149	.322*	.466**	.548**	1.000	.483**	.281*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.85	0.76	0.000	0.005	0.001	0.075	0.021	0.249	0.011	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.027
	N	49.00	61.00	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	61	62
Satisfaction_community	Correlation Coefficient	0.06	0.22	.535**	.434**	.454**	.288*	.367**	.336**	.423**	.540**	.492**	.483**	1.000	.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.70	0.09	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.023	0.003	0.007	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.005
	N	49.00	61.00	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	62	61	61	62	62
Satisfaction_people_general	Correlation Coefficient	-0.08	0.04	.599**	.630**	.671**	.595**	.683**	.676**	.648**	.479**	.355**	.281*	.355**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.60	0.76	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.027	0.005	
	N	50.00	62.00	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	63	62	62	62	63

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

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A one-way ANOVA analysis was completed to assess the theoretical dimensions associated with a high performance culture (dependent variables) with sales position role categories (independent variables). For this assessment the business development manager and business manager categories were combined to increase the group size to 13 respondents, and the head of sales was ignored due to the minimal number (3) of respondents in this category. The groups consisted

of account managers, service specialists, and combined business development manager and business manager. The results of the ANOVA analysis are presented below in Table 4-4. It is evident that there are statistically significant differences (significance values < 0.05) between groups in the mean responses for the *core capability at the organisation level*, *policies and procedures, and stakeholder satisfaction (customer, supplier and community)*. While statistically significant differences exist in the group means for these dimensions, the interpretation of the descriptive data analysis in section 4.3 and discussion of the research findings in Chapter 5 takes into consideration the spread in data (presented in the box plots in section 4.3) and not only the mean values.

Table 4-4:   One-way ANOVA Test

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Vision_Strategy	Between Groups	1.831	2	0.916	1.475	0.238
	Within Groups	34.778	56	0.621		
	Total	36.609	58			
Leadership	Between Groups	0.145	2	0.073	0.120	0.887
	Within Groups	33.802	56	0.604		
	Total	33.947	58			
Capability_organization	Between Groups	3.807	2	1.903	3.273	0.045
	Within Groups	31.982	55	0.581		
	Total	35.789	57			
Capability_group	Between Groups	0.567	2	0.283	0.415	0.662
	Within Groups	37.538	55	0.683		
	Total	38.105	57			
Capability_individual_general	Between Groups	0.100	2	0.050	0.150	0.861
	Within Groups	18.325	55	0.333		
	Total	18.425	57			
Reward_system	Between Groups	0.854	2	0.427	0.627	0.538
	Within Groups	37.467	55	0.681		
	Total	38.321	57			
Performance_management	Between Groups	0.507	2	0.253	0.271	0.764
	Within Groups	51.400	55	0.935		
	Total	51.907	57			
Policies_Procedures	Between Groups	3.034	2	1.517	3.251	0.046
	Within Groups	25.666	55	0.467		
	Total	28.700	57			
Satisfaction_customer	Between Groups	5.749	2	2.875	8.667	0.001
	Within Groups	17.912	54	0.332		
	Total	23.661	56			
Satisfaction_supplier	Between Groups	12.952	2	6.476	11.301	0.000
	Within Groups	30.946	54	0.573		
	Total	43.898	56			
Satisfaction_community	Between Groups	3.642	2	1.821	2.893	0.064
	Within Groups	33.988	54	0.629		
	Total	37.630	56			
Satisfaction_people_general	Between Groups	0.580	2	0.290	0.444	0.644
	Within Groups	35.952	55	0.654		
	Total	36.532	57			

4.5 SURVEY VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Statistical analysis was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the research instrument. The internal consistency approach was adopted to assess survey reliability with Cronbach's alpha being used as the measure (Saunders *et al*., 2016:451). A Cronbach alpha result of 0.7 and higher indicates an acceptable level of internal reliability (Bryman and Bell, 2017:38). The Cronbach alpha (Table 4-5) calculated for eleven theoretical dimensions (excluding customer stakeholder satisfaction) ranged between 0.757 and 0.882. For the five items in the customer stakeholder satisfaction dimension the Cronbach alpha value was marginal (0.683) in terms of internal reliability. Considering all twelve dimensions, the overall reliability of the research instrument was confirmed.

As part of research instrument validity the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) was used to ensure that the data were adequate for factor analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2017:325). The KMO MSA for all twelve dimensions ranged from 0.6 to 0.84 indicating the data as adequate. The results for Bartlett's test of sphericity were substantial (based on approx. chi square) at a 0.000 level of significance indicating that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and that variables are related.

Table 4-5:   KMO MSA, Bartlett's test for sphericity, and Cronbach's alpha per dimension

Theoretical Dimension	Items	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	Bartlett's Test			Cronbach's Alpha
		MSA	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.	
Vision and Strategy	6	0.823	109.382	15	0.000	0.810
Leadership	7	0.794	161.318	21	0.000	0.832
Core Capability: Organisation	7	0.839	141.916	21	0.000	0.833
Core Capability: Group/Team	7	0.793	191.031	21	0.000	0.846
Core Capability: Individual	9	0.705	164.437	36	0.000	0.768
Reward System	5	0.711	116.842	10	0.000	0.790
Performance Management	7	0.832	211.408	21	0.000	0.882
Policies and Procedures	6	0.702	97.536	15	0.000	0.760
Stakeholder Satisfaction: Customer	5	0.605	77.627	10	0.000	0.683
Stakeholder Satisfaction: Supplier	4	0.660	100.016	6	0.000	0.829
Stakeholder Satisfaction: Community	3	0.658	44.118	3	0.000	0.757
Stakeholder Satisfaction: People	11	0.840	325.620	55	0.000	0.839

To further validate the research instrument exploratory factor analysis using principal component analysis was conducted on each of the twelve theoretical dimensions to explore how many factors were represented by the data for each dimension (based on the slope of the "scree" plot). Two theoretical dimensions relating to Individual Core Capability and People Stakeholder Satisfaction had a second factor or trait associated with certain questions. The results of the factor analysis are presented below.

- *Vision and Strategy* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the six questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-95.
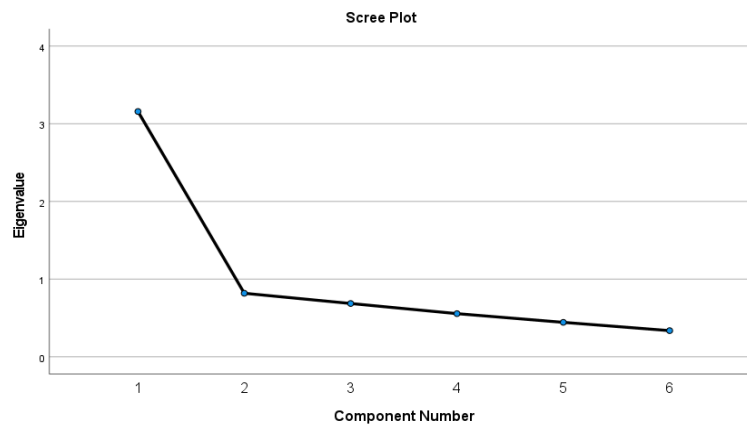
Figure 4-95:   Eigenvalues for 6 components of Vision and Strategy

- *Leadership* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the seven questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-96.
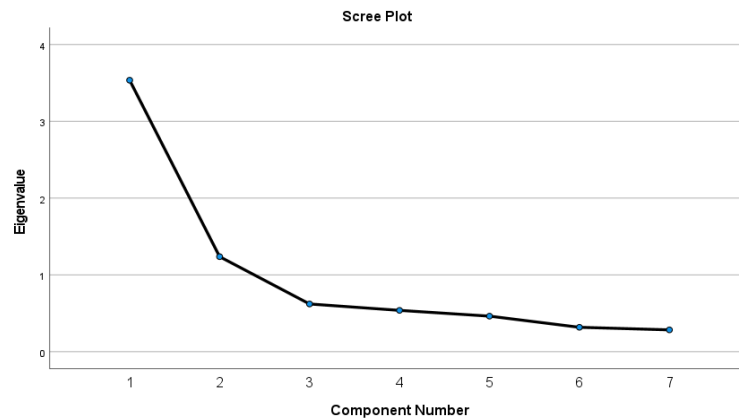
Figure 4-96:   Eigenvalues for 7 components of Leadership

- *Core Capability: Organisation* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the seven questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-97.
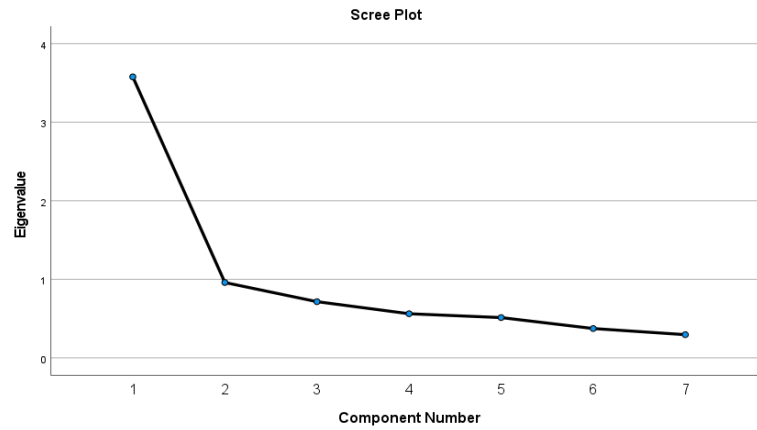
Figure 4-97:   Eigenvalues for 7 components of Core Capability Organisation

- *Core Capability: Group/Team* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the seven questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-98.
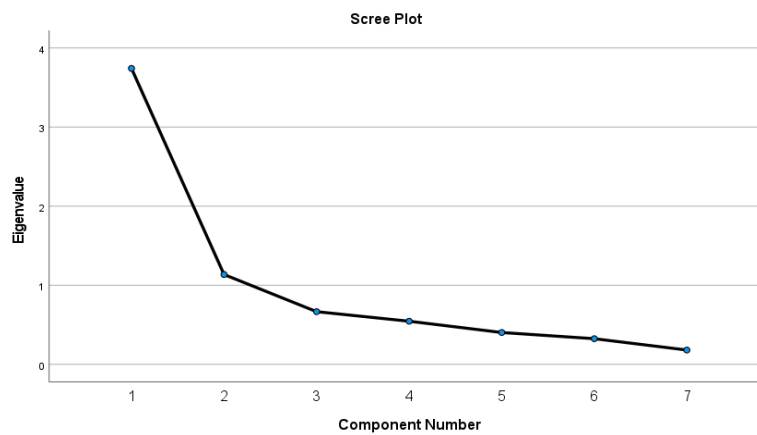
Figure 4-98:   Eigenvalues for 7 components of Core Capability Group/Team

- *Core Capability: Individual* – factor analysis indicated two factors/traits underlying the nine questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-99.
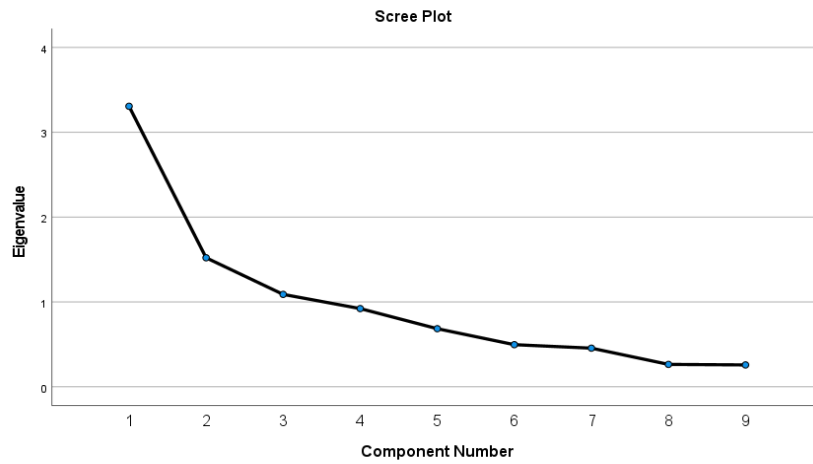
Figure 4-99:   Eigenvalues for 9 components of Core Capability Individual

Table 4-6 below indicates that there is a second underlying trait associated with the question "How accountable are you for the quality of your work?" This second trait/component can be described as "individual accountability".

Table 4-6:   Rotated Component matrix for Core Capability Individual

Structure Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
To what extent do you use your initiative at work?	0.837	
To what extent do you believe that you have the relevant competence to meet the challenges of your job?	0.746	
To what extent are you encouraged to come up with innovative solutions to work-related issues?	0.712	-0.422
How positive are your work relationships?	0.633	-0.305
How empowered are you to take control of your own development within your organisation?	0.606	
How sufficient are your physical working conditions (e.g. workspace, heat, light, noise etc)?	0.284	
How satisfied are you with the amount of responsibility that you have been given in your job?	0.489	-0.816
How well do you cope with your current workload?	0.280	-0.747
How accountable are you for the quality of your work?	0.514	0.524

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

- *Reward System* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the five questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-100.
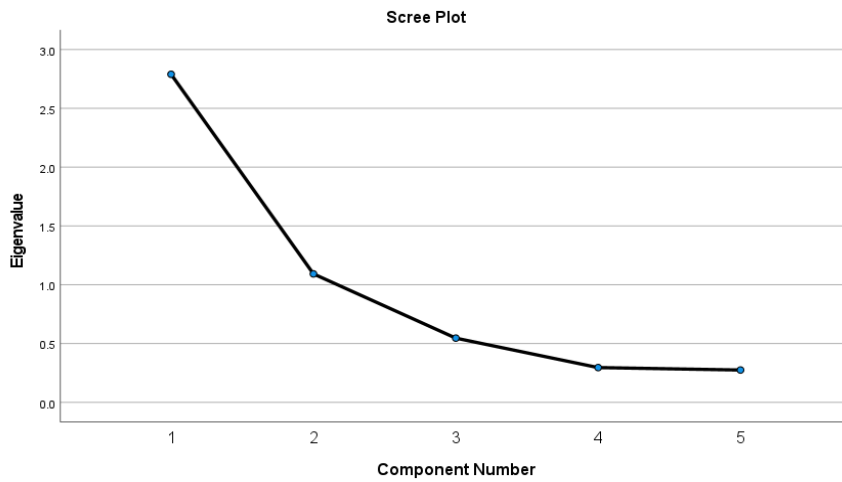
Figure 4-100:   Eigenvalues for 5 components of Reward System

- *Performance Management* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the seven questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-101.
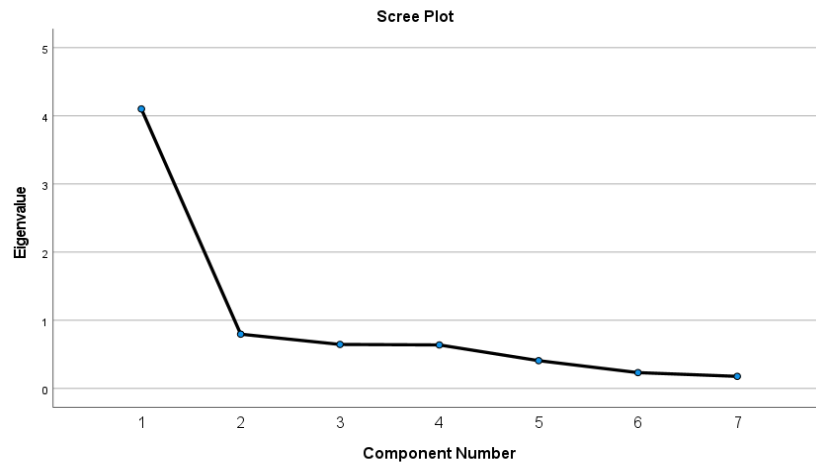
Figure 4-101:   Eigenvalues for 7 components of Performance Management

- *Policies and Procedures* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the seven questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-102.
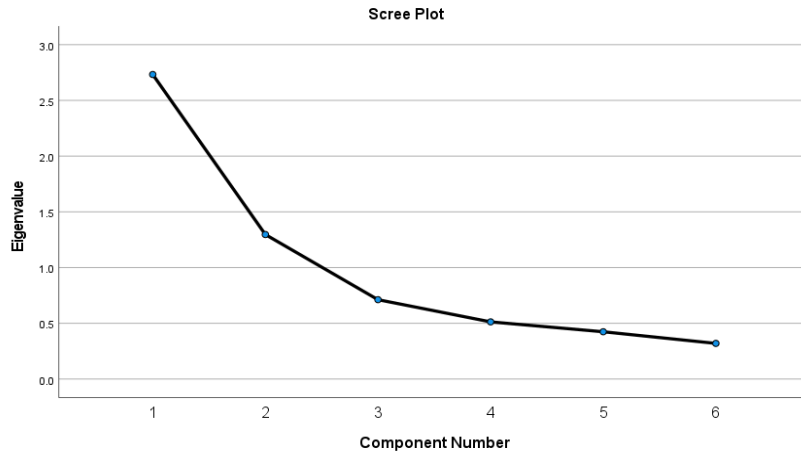
Figure 4-102:   Eigenvalues for 7 components of Policies and Procedures

- *Stakeholder Satisfaction: Customer* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the five questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-103.
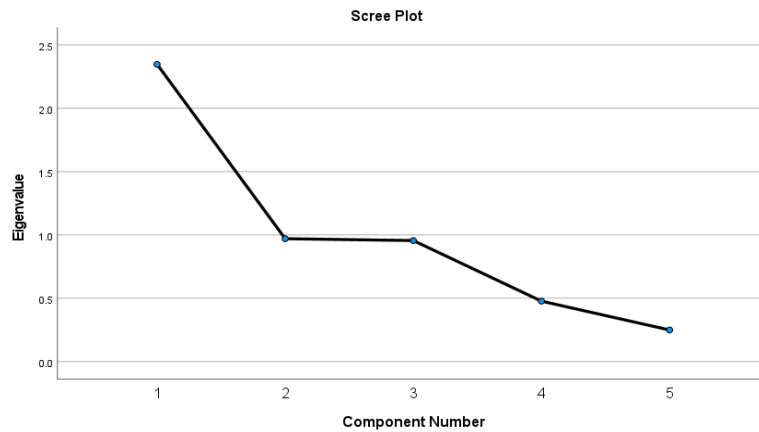
Figure 4-103:   Eigenvalues for 5 components of Customer Stakeholder Satisfaction

- *Stakeholder Satisfaction: Supplier* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the four questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-104.

96
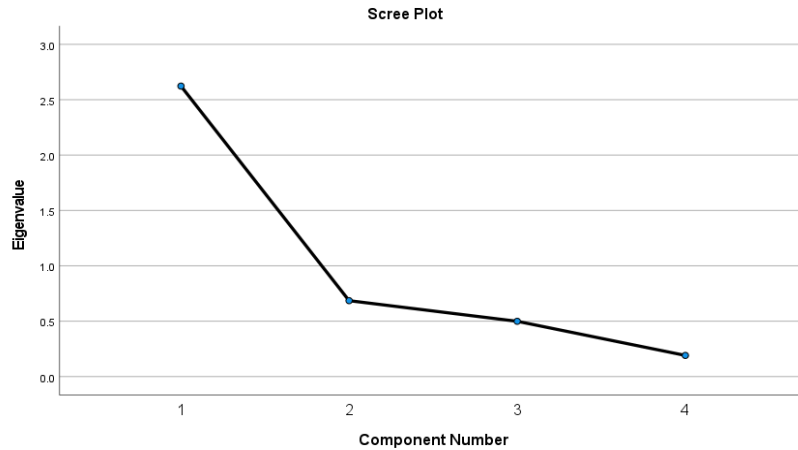
Figure 4-104:   Eigenvalues for 4 components of Supplier Stakeholder Satisfaction

- *Stakeholder Satisfaction: Community* – factor analysis indicated one factor/trait underlying the three questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-105.
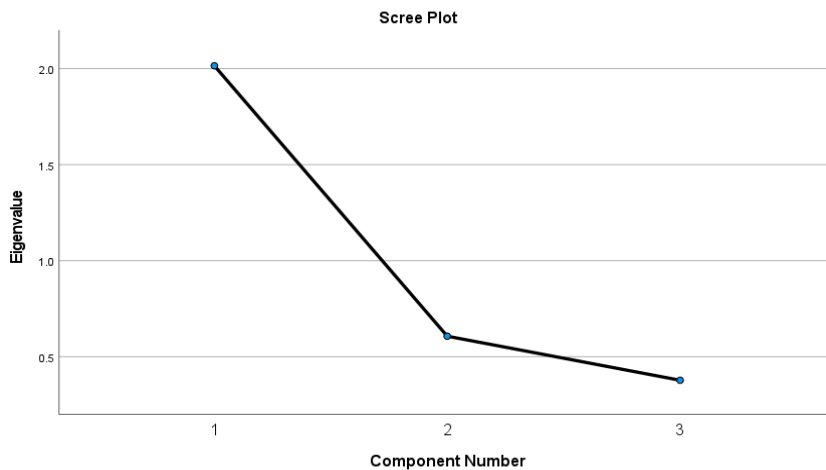
Figure 4-105:   Eigenvalues for 3 components of Community Stakeholder Satisfaction

- *Stakeholder Satisfaction: People* – factor analysis indicated two factors/traits underlying the eleven questions as indicated by the Eigenvalues in Figure 4-106.
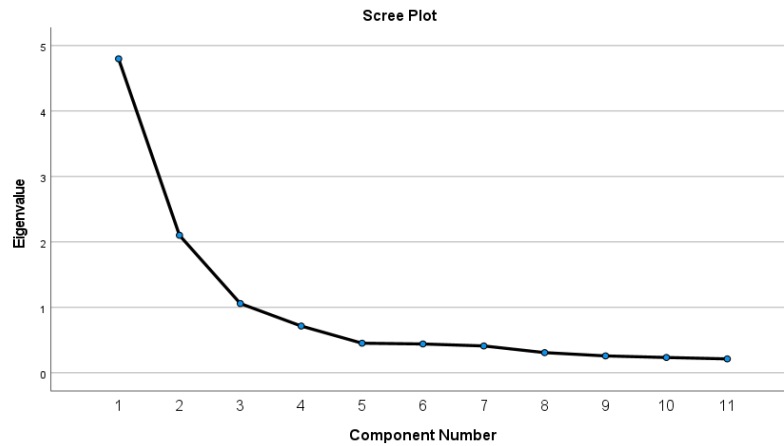
Figure 4-106:   Eigenvalues for 11 components of People Stakeholder Satisfaction

Table 4-7 below indicates that there is a second underlying trait associated with the following three questions: "To what extent has your organisation's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy been communicated to all staff?", "To what extent are black suppliers promoted within your organisation's commercial policy?" and "How proactive is your organisation in the advancement of previously disadvantaged individuals/people?". This second trait/component can be described as "BEE and employment equity".

Table 4-7:   Rotated Component matrix for People Stakeholder Satisfaction

Structure Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
How easily would you encourage your friends to join your organisation?	0.869	
To what extent does your organisation look after its people?	0.842	
To what extent has your company established a good relationship with employees?	0.821	0.269
How satisfied are you that your job gives you the opportunity to do what you are best at doing?	0.821	
To what extent is your workplace a fun place to work?	0.782	
To what extent does your organisation encourage a healthy balance between work and life issues?	0.693	
How interesting is your work?	0.641	0.536
How strongly do your believe that your job contributes to the success of the business?	0.436	
To what extent has your organisation's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy been communicated to all staff?		0.883
To what extent are black suppliers promoted within your organisation's commercial policy?		0.859
How proactive is your organisation in the advancement of previously disadvantaged individuals/people?	0.258	0.828

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

The research instrument was validated with the KMO measure of sampling adequacy, followed by the Bartlett's test of sphericity which confirmed the relatedness of the dimensions (variables) assessed. Further validation using factor analysis indicated that two dimensions (Core capability: individual and Stakeholder satisfaction: people) has a second factor or trait associated. The other ten dimensions had one underlying trait or factor associated with each dimension. Therefore, it is evident that the research instrument has an overall high validity in terms of assessing each of the theoretical dimensions associated with a high performance culture.

4.6   CHAPTER SUMMARY

The results of the data analysis presented in this chapter can be summarised into the following main aspects:-

- Presentation of preliminary data analysis on response rate and respondent data which confirmed that the response rate was sufficient for generalisation to the wider population in the organisation, and which provided the characteristics of the sample for this research study.
- Presentation and interpretation of the descriptive statistics applicable to the twelve theoretical dimensions associated with a high performance culture including: vision and strategy, leadership, core capability of the organisation, core capability of the group/team, core capability of the individual, reward system, performance management, policies and procedures, customer stakeholder satisfaction, supplier stakeholder satisfaction, community stakeholder satisfaction, and people stakeholder satisfaction.
- Presentation and interpretation of the comparative data analysis completed: to determine if the response data were sensitive to gender (no statistically significant impact); and to identify the strength of relationships between the twelve dimensions.
- Presentation and interpretation of the statistical analysis completed which confirmed the validity and reliability of the research instrument.

The following chapter analyses and discusses the research findings in detail within the context of the research objectives.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings (based on the results presented in Chapter 4) of this research study relating to respondent data and the twelve high performance culture dimensions assessed by the research instrument. Table 5-1 below presents the assessed high performance culture dimension with the associated underlying theoretical construct discussed in Chapter 2. This chapter concludes by summarising key discussion points within the context of the research objectives.

Table 5-1:   High performance culture dimensions mapped to theoretical constructs

High performance culture dimension	Theoretical construct	Chapter reference
1. Vision and strategy	Organisational strategy	2.2.1
2. Leadership	Leadership	2.2.2
3. Core capability of the organisation	Core capability - Organisation	2.2.3
4. Core capability of the group/team	Core capability – Group/Team	2.2.3
5. Core capability of the individual	Core capability - Individual	2.2.3
6. Reward system	Work practices	2.2.4
7. Performance management	Human resource management (HRM)	2.3
8. Policies and procedures	Work practices	2.2.4
9. Customer stakeholder satisfaction	Stakeholder Management	2.4
10. Supplier stakeholder satisfaction	Stakeholder Management	2.4
11. Community stakeholder satisfaction	Stakeholder Management	2.4
12. People stakeholder satisfaction	Human resource management (HRM)	2.3

5.2   RESPONSE RATE AND RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

At the time of the research study the organisation employed ninety (90) sales individuals of which sixty three (63) employees provided effective responses yielding a 70% completion rate. The context of the research findings is based on responses from five role categories, comprising predominantly service specialists and account managers (74%), with sales work experience evenly distributed across the work force indicating a blend of employees with less than five (5) years to employees with more than twenty (20) years of sales experience. There is a similar balance with respect to the age profile of employees and all regional offices in the country were represented in terms of employee responses.

It is evident that the census sampling approach resulted in a large portion of the population responding, and that each unit of analysis (sales individual) was included across the different strata (experience and geography), which avoided the over or under representation of certain experience levels or geographic locations. However, it is also clearly evident that the sales work force is predominantly male (91%). This reality did not impact the research findings since comparative data analysis between male and female response data sets indicated that statistically no significant difference existed between gender response sets.

Comparative data analysis testing for strength and direction of relationships (using Spearman's rank-order correlation) between the twelve dimensions in the high performance organisation construct indicated that *vision and strategy*, and *core capability at the organisation level* were moderately to strongly related (or correlated) to each of the other eleven dimensions which was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), followed by leadership which was moderately to strongly correlated to nine dimensions which was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). These results confirm that there is moderate to strong association of these dimensions to each other in support of the high performance organisational culture construct.

5.3   VISION & STRATEGY

Considering that business strategies have a significant positive link to job satisfaction, organisational objectives, and job and organisational performance (Wu and Lin, 2013:6; Prodromos *et al.,* 2018:62), the following research findings reflect positively on the organisation.

Characteristics of the organisational strategy in which the organisation performed strongly included: having a balance between short-term and long-term goals, level of employee optimism about management plans for the future, level of employees' inspiration about management's vision, and management's belief in the future of the organisation. Employees currently experience the organisation as well balanced in terms of focussing on both short term and long term goals. The majority of employees are generally optimistic about management plans and remain inspired by management's vision for the future. Assessment by employees on their direct line managers indicated that employees believe that their managers have a strong belief in the future of the organisation.

There are two characteristics that, however, warrant further attention and improvement by management. The first of which relates to the level of communication effectiveness on the strategy of the organisation considering that a third of employees felt that communication levels were insufficient. It is imperative that communication on the organisation's strategy utilises all available communication channels and platforms to reach all levels and areas with the sales team. Cascading of communication from the organisation's leadership to direct line managers should be further assessed for effectiveness. Organisational factors such as the level of communication from leaders regarding the organisation's vision and goals and the level of interaction (behavioural distance) between leaders and employees at an individual level are significantly related to employee inspiration (James and Lahti, 2011:108; Hoffner, 2018:54).

The second characteristic relates to alignment between people development and business strategy considering that over half of employees feel that people development strategies were not aligned with that of the business. It is therefore important that the organisation assesses its people development strategies and practices and importantly considers how these people development initiatives are aligned with supporting the organisation's current and future strategy. People development is a key tenet of creating and supporting a high performance culture and strongly influences employee motivation (Ramlall and Melton, 2019:12-16; Hartnell *et al.,* 2019:844; Manzoor *et al*., 2021:10).

5.4 LEADERSHIP

Characteristics of the leadership dimension in which the organisation performed strongly include: employee's belief in management's ability to lead the organisation into the future, level of management influence on employees to commit to change, management's display of organisational values, management's acceptance of high performance levels, management's openness to new ideas, and management's passion for the company's brand. These assessed leadership characteristics are related to the concept of transformational leadership (TL) and the discussion of this research findings occurs within this context.

Positive performance around employees' belief in management's ability to lead the organisation into the future indicates that management is successfully displaying one of the facets of TL which is the capacity to inspire and motivate (Makka, 2019:86), commonly referred to as inspirational motivation (Laureani and Antony, 2019:66). Inspirational motivation is either consciously or unconsciously being used by management to articulate a vision which is clear, can be understood, and supported by employees in the organisation. The organisation therefore has leaders who engage and persuade, thereby creating the necessary motivation for followers to envision and work towards a more attractive future organisational state (Giddens, 2018:118). Further, these leaders in the organisation are exhibiting a high level of self-confidence which is key to lobbying and inspiring employees to rally behind the vision or goal (O'Reilly and Chatman, 2020:19).

Positive research findings regarding the level of management influence on employees to commit to change, and in management's passion for the company's brand is evident in another facet of TL which is personal charisma (Makka, 2019:86), commonly referred to as idealised influence (Laureani and Antony, 2019:66). In this context it is evident that the organisation's leaders express confidence about the future and communicate to employees with enthusiasm that the vision is achievable. There is likely enthusiastic discussion about what needs to be accomplished, with organisational leaders acting with integrity and inspiring through consistent actions (Hoffner, 2018:54).

Positive research findings regarding management's acceptance of high performance levels are related to the third facet of TL which relates to the personal attentiveness of leaders to employees (Makka, 2019:86), referred to as individualised consideration (Laureani and Antony, 2019:66). It is therefore likely that individualised consideration is occurring where management is interacting and seeking to understand at an individual level with the premise that individual employees have unique views and needs which influences their performance. Further, organisational factors such as a high level of general communication and increased interaction (less behavioural distance) between leaders and employees are likely evident in the organisation.

Positive research findings regarding the organisation's culture, associated with management's openness to new ideas, support the final facet of TL which is encouragement for problem-solving (Makka, 2019:86) referred to as intellectual stimulation (Laureani and Antony, 2019:66). Transformational leaders exhibit a willingness to challenge existing norms and in doing so incur risks commonly associated with charting a new or different path (O'Reilly and Chatman, 2020:19). It is therefore likely that managers in the organisation are displaying these behaviours and thereby stimulating new or alternative approaches to overcome challenges being experienced.

It can therefore be concluded that the organisation is in a very strong position relating to the leadership characteristics being displayed and experienced by employees in the sales teams. Positive research findings in this dimension indicate prevalent leadership attributes in the organisation which are underpinned by the theoretical construct of TL. These leadership behaviours will positively affect job performance (Langat *et al*. 2019:5; Matar and Aldaheri, 2019:290), firm performance (Jensen *et al*., 2020:842), reduce employee turnover and improve talent retention (Mangisa *et al*., 2020:10).

Due to the positive research findings it can also be assumed that no negative or "toxic" leadership (Paltu and Brouwers, 2020:9) attributes (abusive and undermining, authoritarian, and narcissistic) are evident in the organisation which could undermine a high performance culture.

There was one characteristic, within the leadership domain, that perhaps warrants further attention and improvement and relates to management's passion for creating a fun working environment. Approximately 28% of employees felt that management was not passionate about creating a fun working environment. While this proportion may not be significant considering research findings in the other characteristics, it is important that the work environment is as far as possible experienced as relaxed, enjoyable and "fun" within the parameters of maintaining a professional work environment.

5.5   CORE CAPABILITY OF THE ORGANISATION

Organisational capability (market and customer knowledge, relationships, competence, and innovation) significantly determines the level of intellectual capital residing in the organisation, which in turn positively influences organisational performance (Huang and Huang, 2019:116).

Assessment of the core capability of the organisation revealed that the organisation performed strongly in the following characteristics: culture of trust, the importance of diversity, employee learning opportunities, and the benefit derived from a competitive environment. These positive

research findings benefit the organisation in that trust increases productivity, improves employee job satisfaction, reduces job turnover, and generally results in happier and healthier employees (Johannsen and Zak, 2021:9). Further the positive findings around diversity, which contributes to the organisation's overall capability through diverse thinking and perspectives, results in increased organisation performance (Moon and Christensen, 2020:141; Fernando *et al.*, 2020:484).

There are two characteristics that warrant further attention and improvement by management in this dimension. These include: the level of communication effectiveness on the organisation's financial standing, and willingness of employees to put in extra effort. The willingness of employees to put in extra effort (commitment) is related to organisation performance (Sabir *et al.*, 2015:12) so any management interventions which either directly or indirectly increase employee commitment levels will benefit the organisation. Specific and tailored communication on a regular basis needs to be devised by management that informs employees about the organisation's financial position to equip employees with the necessary information required to support sales team business related decisions.

5.6   CORE CAPABILITY OF THE GROUP/TEAM

The organisation performed strongly in the following characteristics of the core capability of the group/team dimension: new or innovative ways of working, understanding of goals, sharing of ideas, extent of mutual respect and support. Positive research findings indicate that management is successfully creating an environment in which employees feel free to discuss, challenge and seek new work methods and approaches. Seeking new or innovative ways of working indicates that teamwork is prevalent and widespread in the organisation (Fay *et al.*, 2015:261). Importantly goal clarity is prevalent amongst the team which results in better team performance (Van der Hoek *et al.*, 2018: 492).

This environment is also characterised by high levels of mutual trust which increases productivity, employee job satisfaction, reduces job turnover, and generally results in happier and healthier employees (Johannsen and Zak, 2021:9). Positive research findings relating to intrinsic factors such as professional respect, personal development and growth, performing work that is enjoyable, and learning something new have a positive impact on employee motivation and performance (Manzoor *et al.*, 2021:10).

There was one aspect concerning job related communication that warrants further attention and improvement by management. Just under a third of employees felt that job-related communication

was lacking and could improve. Job-related communication contributes to more engagement creating alignment with company objectives and goals and drives sales performance, whilst also allowing the employer to better understand the needs and goals of employees (Verbeke *et al.* (2011:421). Further, respectful engagement and communication positively benefit employees' wellbeing (resilience) and improve long-term business results (LaGree *et al*., 2021:4).

5.7   CORE CAPABILITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Assessment of the organisation relating to organisational core capability at the individual level yielded very positive results which are extremely encouraging considering employee competence has a significant impact on organisational performance (Salman *et al*., 2020:430). Assessed characteristics related to empowerment, competence, resilience, responsibility and accountability, initiative, working conditions, and work relationships. These characteristics largely lie within the four critical competency clusters of functional (task or job) competency, leadership competency, communication competency, and cognitive (analytical and decision making) competency (Puteh *et al*., 2015:335) thus making the current sales team assets to the organisation. Further positive research findings relating to high levels of employee empowerment and accountability in the organisation reinforce the competitive position of the organisation in the industry (Ribeiro, 2018:65; Han and Hong, 2019:21).

In general, positive research findings indicate that the organisation retains significant capability at the individual level and it is imperative that the organisation continues to retain and nurture this capability.

5.8   REWARD SYSTEM

The reward system dimension assessed employees views on equitable benefits, remuneration, financial compensation, levels and frequency of recognition and praise awarded. Assessment of the organisation's reward system indicated major deficiencies or negative perceptions held by employees. Critically, a substantial portion of employees felt that the organisation's reward system was not equitable, that remuneration did not match responsibilities, that performance did not match rewards, with employees noting the absence of recognition and praise in the last six (6) months for work done well.

It is imperative that the organisation critically assesses its reward system to address the concerns arising from this research study considering that a sound organisational financial reward system

positively influences employees' willingness to put in extra effort (Den Hartog and Verburg, 2004:73); levels of innovation, customer centricity, financial outcomes (Hartnell *et al.*, 2019:844) and organisational performance (Yongmei Liu *et al.*, 2006:524),.

Further, non-financial rewards such as praise and recognition also have an important and constructive effect on employee performance (Hussain *et al.*, 2019:69) and suitable initiatives should also be considered for management action.

5.9   PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management is one of the most effective human resource work practices at management's disposal to enable employee performance.   This dimension assessed levels of employee's goal agreement, value of performance feedback, integrity of performance reviews, effectiveness of career path discussions, and levels of employee goal accountability in the organisation. The importance of effective performance management as part of HRM is critical considering that there is an undisputable positive link between good HRM practices and key business performance metrics (Bakator *et al.*, 2019:11). Performance management specifically plays an instrumental role in establishing and maintaining a high performance culture by defining work targets and assessing performance through fair performance appraisals and effective performance feedback (Ramlall and Melton, 2019:12-16).

The two (2) characteristics in which the organisation was strongly assessed include: receiving of honest performance feedback from management, and the level of accountability awarded to employees for meeting their goals.

Based on employee feedback the characteristics in which the organisation requires improvement include: more consistent agreement and setting of employee performance goals across the team, meaningful and frequent discussion of career paths, rectification of misalignment between employees self-view of performance and actual awarded performance rating, and addressing insufficient work performance feedback. Goal setting theory suggests that employees perform better if goals that guide work are clear and specific with goal clarity positively affecting team performance (Van der Hoek *et al.*, 2018: 492). Adopting specific clear goals largely eliminates the possibility for misalignment between employee and management on awarded performance ratings.

Adopting a frontline approach to coaching and developing employees to improve overall performance with continuous learning and development initiatives are essential to skills

development, and support enhanced employee engagement levels (Ramlall and Melton, 2019:14). Career path discussions and employee development lead into succession planning in which the scheduling of regular career development discussions with employees ensures that high potential employees are exposed to different work opportunities to gain the necessary experience required to occupy senior positions in the organisation.

One of the key tenets for an effective performance management system relates to shared common understanding between employees and management regarding actual performance and awarded performance ratings based on clear and specific goals. Performance management should be approached and formally actioned by management with employees as a continuous process during the period of assessment, and not only at the end of the financial year as is generally practiced.

5.10 POLICIES & PROCEDURES

This dimension assessed employees' experience with the organisation's policies and procedures from a communication, application, and understanding perspective. The organisation performed strongly on all characteristics of this dimension which included: the level of communication and application of policies and procedures relating to procurement, ethics, health, employment equity, and disciplinary processes. This research findings imply that policies and procedures are being applied in a consistent manner which supports the retention of employees with key skills and experience (Ramlall and Melton, 2019:16). Further if these policies and procedures are not impeding employees from accomplishing their goals, employee engagement is maintained which is necessary for establishing and maintaining a high performance culture (Ramlall and Melton, 2019:12).

These positive research findings indicate that the organisation should take note of and continue to maintain its current balance of policies and procedures which has (to date) proved effective in supporting employees.

5.11 STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

Effective stakeholder management is imperative to ensure that the organisation is aware of and able to evaluate key stakeholder inputs that can affect the organisation's operation and performance (Wang and Sengupta, 2016:5566). Stakeholder satisfaction was assessed for four stakeholder groups (customer, supplier, community and people) with a discussion on the findings following below.

5.11.1 Customer

Customer collaboration is important since customer inputs and perspectives stimulate organisations to implement process improvements that can result in cost reduction initiatives, market gains and better overall firm performance (Grekova *et al*., 2015:1869). The benefit is further amplified in market uncertainty conditions where a strong focus on customer orientation results in higher organisation performance (Vaitoonkiat and Charoensukmongkol, 2019:879).

The customer (as a stakeholder) dimension assessed the company's approach to customer feedback, the level of involvement of customers in decision making processes, product and service fit to customer requirements, and the company's power position towards its' customers. The organisation performed strongly on all characteristics of this dimension indicating that the organisation is highly customer centric taking customer needs and feedback into consideration as a vital part of its business operation, while not abusing its positional power towards its customers.

5.11.2 Supplier

Considering suppliers as key stakeholders is also beneficial since collaborating with suppliers can improve firm performance as it encourages cost savings (Grekova *et al*., 2015:1869). The supplier (as a stakeholder) dimension assessed the company's approach to supplier feedback, level of involvement in decision making processes, and the company's power position towards its suppliers.

Based on this research findings one aspect requires improvement and relates to the involvement of suppliers in the organisation's business decisions. The inclusion and involvement of suppliers in certain business decisions, while being cognisant of divulging sensitive business information, can assist the organisation with identifying optimisation opportunities on the front end of the supply value chain. In uncertain market conditions this benefit is amplified (Vaitoonkiat and Charoensukmongkol, 2019:879).

Characteristics of supplier satisfaction in which the organisation performed well include: not abusing its positional power towards its suppliers, the importance of supplier feedback and the importance of suppliers as business partners. These positive research findings are important since maintaining healthy supplier relationships are key to long term business viability for both parties.

5.11.3 Community

Within the context of corporate social responsibility organisations which consider the needs and input from the community has proven to enhance their market value (Yoon and Chung, 2018:94). The community dimension assessed the company's approach to the community in terms of development, social responsibility, and employee involvement in community upliftment.

Based on this research findings the aspect in which the organisation needs to improve relates to the encouragement of employees to participate in community upliftment initiatives. Employees are often brand ambassadors and the organisation should evaluate leveraging this opportunity to further enhance its community development status.

Characteristics of community satisfaction in which the organisation performed extremely well include: the company's contribution to community development and the extent to which the organisation behaves in a social responsible manner. Operating in a socially responsible manner enhances the company's brand and reputation with positive community development and relations being a key part of ensuring business sustainability.

5.11.4 People

The final dimension of this research study assessed the company's approach to its employees in terms of work life balance, job satisfaction, employer relationships, support for BEE, work environment, care for employees, and the attractiveness of the organisation as an employer.

The characteristics in which the organisation was strongly assessed include: job employee fit, high levels of work interest, good organisation employee relations, job relation to business success, BEE initiatives and communication, and the organisation's positive work environment where most employees indicated that they would recommend the organisation to others as a place to work. Employees' satisfaction is largely influenced by management with activities that were previously reserved for HR specialists being consciously devolved to line management for implementation (Perry and Kulik, 2008:262). These positive research findings are therefore testament to the behaviour and leadership capability (as discussed in the leadership dimension)

of the organisation's management team which will also positively manifest in the organisation's business metrics (Bakator *et al.*, 2019:11).

The characteristics in which the organisation requires improvement include: more encouragement for a healthy work life balance, making the work environment a "fun" place to work, the level (extent) to which the organisation looks after its' employees, and the organisation's proactive stance regarding its employment equity practices. A healthy work life balance is critical to ensure that employees are not overworked, do not experience burnout and ultimately maintain employee satisfaction levels (Ramlall and Melton, 2019:15). Making the work environment a more "fun" place to work also manifested in the findings related to the leadership dimension which was discussed above. The level to which the organisation looks after its employees is related to a number of factors such as work life balance, and the organisations' reward system and interventions addressing these areas will address this concern. Employment equity is an important initiative within the local South African context with diversity and inclusion seeking to ensure that previously disadvantaged individuals are allowed equal opportunities in the workplace. From a business results perspective, the benefits of a diverse range of ideas and views can lead to robust discussion, innovation and business growth (Moon and Christensen, 2020:141; Fernando *et al.*, 2020:484).

5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Within the context of the research objectives, the key discussion points can be summarised as:-

- *Response rate and respondent characteristics* - a 70% response rate with responses from all five role categories consisting of an even distribution of sales work experience, a good balance with respect to the age profile of employees, and representation from all regional offices in the country. There was no statistical significance between responses from a gender perspective.
- *Vision and strategy dimension* - Characteristics of the organisational strategy in which the organisation performed strongly included: having a balance between short-term and long-term goals, level of employee optimism about management plans for the future, level of employees' inspiration about management's vision, and management's belief in the future of the organisation. Two characteristics require further attention and improvement and relates to the level of communication effectiveness on the strategy of the organisation, and alignment between people development initiatives and business strategy.
- *Leadership dimension* - Characteristics of the leadership dimension in which the organisation performed strongly include employees' belief in management's ability to lead the organisation

into the future, level of management influence on employees to commit to change, management's display of organisational values, management's acceptance of high performance levels, management's openness to new ideas, and management's passion for the company's brand. It is evident that the organisation is in a very strong position relating to TL leadership characteristics being displayed and experienced by employees in the sales teams which will positively affect job performance, firm performance, reduce employee turnover and improve talent retention. One characteristic that warrants further attention and improvement relates to creating a "fun" working environment.

- *Core capability of the organisation* – the organisation performed strongly in the following characteristics: culture of trust, the importance of diversity, employee learning opportunities, and the benefit derived from a competitive environment. Organisational benefits of trust manifest in productivity, employee job satisfaction, reduces job turnover, and generally results in happier and healthier employees. Diversity contributes to the organisation's overall capability through diverse thinking and perspectives, ultimately resulting in increased organisation performance. Two characteristics warrant further attention and improvement by management relate to the level of communication effectiveness on the organisation's financial standing, and willingness of employees to put in extra effort.

- *Core capability of the group/team* – the organisation performed strongly in the following characteristics: new or innovative ways of working, understanding of goals, sharing of ideas, extent of mutual respect and support. Positive research findings indicate an environment of teamwork in which employees feel free to discuss, challenge and seek new work methods and approaches. Intrinsic factors such as professional respect, personal development and growth, performing work that is enjoyable, and learning something new have a positive impact on employee motivation and performance. One characteristic concerning job related communication warrants further attention and improvement by management.

- *Core capability of the individual* – assessment at the individual level yielded very positive results around all of the characteristics including: empowerment, competence, resilience, responsibility and accountability, initiative, working conditions, and work relationships. These characteristics make the current sales team assets to the organisation and improves the competitive position of the organisation. It is imperative that the organisation continues to retain and nurture this capability.

- *Reward system* – assessment of the organisation's reward system indicated major deficiencies or negative perceptions held by employees. This requires urgent management intervention to assess the organisation's reward system and address these concerns considering that a sound organisational financial reward system positively influences: employee's willingness to put in extra effort; levels of innovation, customer centricity, financial

outcomes and organisational performance. Non-financial rewards (praise and recognition) also have an important and constructive effect on employee performance and suitable initiatives should also be considered for management action.

- *Performance management* - Two characteristics in which the organisation was strongly assessed include: receiving of honest performance feedback from management, and the level of accountability awarded to employees for meeting their goals. However, characteristics requiring improvement include: more consistent agreement and setting of employee performance goals across the team, meaningful and frequent discussion of career paths, rectification of misalignment between employees self-view of performance and actual awarded performance rating, and addressing insufficient work performance feedback. Urgent management intervention is required considering the undisputable positive link between effective performance management and key business performance metrics.

- *Policies and procedures* - the organisation performed strongly on all characteristics of this dimension which included: the level of communication and application of policies and procedures relating to procurement, ethics, health, employment equity, and disciplinary processes. The organisation should take note of and continue to maintain its current balance of policies and procedures which has (to date) proved effective in supporting employees.

- *Stakeholder satisfaction* - the organisation performed strongly on all characteristics of the *customer* stakeholder dimension indicating that the organisation is highly customer centric taking customer needs and feedback into consideration as a vital part of its business operation, while not abusing its positional power towards its customers.

  Characteristics of the *supplier* stakeholder dimension that require improvement include: involvement of suppliers in business decisions and the importance of supplier feedback. Involving suppliers in certain business decisions can assist with identifying optimisation opportunities on the front end of the supply value chain. Characteristics of the supplier stakeholder dimension in which the organisation performed well include: not abusing its positional power towards its suppliers and the importance of suppliers as business partners. These positive research findings are important since maintaining healthy supplier relationships are key to long term business viability for both parties.

  Characteristics of *community* satisfaction in which the organisation performed extremely well include: the company's contribution to community development and the extent to which the organisation behaves in a social responsible manner. Operating in a socially responsible manner enhances the company's brand and reputation with positive community development and relations being a key part of ensuring business sustainability. Characteristics requiring improvement include employee involvement in community upliftment initiatives. Employees

are often brand ambassadors and the organisation should evaluate leveraging this opportunity to further enhance its community development status.

Characteristics of *people* (employee) stakeholder satisfaction which were strongly assessed include: job employee fit, high levels of work interest, good organisation employee relations, job relation to business success, BEE initiatives and communication, and the organisation's positive work environment where most employees indicated that they would recommend the organisation to others as a place to work. Employees' satisfaction is largely influenced by management and these findings are testament to the behaviour and leadership capability of the organisation's management team. Characteristics which require management intervention include: more encouragement for a healthy work life balance, making the work environment a "fun" place to work, the level (extent) to which the organisation looks after its' employees, and the organisation's proactive stance regarding its employment equity practices. A healthy work life balance is critical to ensure that employees are not overworked, do not experience burnout and ultimately maintain employee satisfaction levels. The level to which the organisation looks after its employees is related to a number of factors such as work life balance, and the organisations' reward system and interventions addressing these areas will address this concern. Employment equity is an important initiative within the local South African context and benefits from a diverse range of ideas and views can lead to robust discussion, innovation and business growth.

These key findings feature in the next and final chapter which addresses this achievement of the research study's objectives and answering the research questions. It further highlights managerial implications of this research, and proposes recommendations to management for implementation in relation to a high performance culture in the organisation.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION, MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a concise summary of achieving the study objectives, key research findings that address the research questions, managerial implications of the research findings and recommendations for management consideration and action. Finally, limitations of the study are mentioned and recommendations for further studies are proposed.

6.2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research was to assess the prevalence of those specific characteristics that are needed to establish or support a high performance organisational culture in order for the sales team to perform in a highly competitive environment. The main research objective was to assess the prevalence of high performance organisational culture characteristics as experienced by sales employees in a selected sales-driven organisation within South Africa.

The sub-objectives of this research were to determine: the effectiveness of the *organisation's vision and strategy* and *organisation's leadership behaviour* in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team, the *core capability* present at organisation, team and individual levels to support a high performance culture, the effectiveness of the organisation's *reward and performance management practices* in the sales team and how *stakeholder satisfaction* features as part of culture in the sales team.

The study was successful in addressing these research objectives (Chapter 1) by establishing the theoretical constructs underpinning this research topic (Chapter 2), employing a suitable research methodology (Chapter 3), and analysing and interpreting research data (Chapter 4) to determine which high performance organisational culture characteristics are prevalent and how effective these characteristics are as part of the culture in the sales team.

6.3 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.3.1 Prevalence of high performance organisational culture characteristics

The primary research question addressed was "what is the prevalence of high performance organisational culture characteristics as experienced by sales employees in a selected organisation in South African?"

The organisation was assessed against 12 high performance culture dimensions with each dimension consisting of specific characteristics. The performance of the organisation when assessed against these dimensions is summarised below:

1) *Vision and strategy* - the organisation performed strongly in four of the six characteristics. Two characteristics that require improvement relates to the effectiveness of communication on the strategy of the organisation, and alignment between people development initiatives and business strategy.

2) *Leadership* - the organisation performed strongly in six of the seven characteristics. One characteristic that requires improvement relates to creating a "fun" working environment.

3) *Core capability at organisation level* - the organisation performed strongly in five of the seven characteristics. Two characteristics that require improvement relate to the effectiveness of communication on the organisation's financial standing and willingness of employees to put in extra effort.

4) *Core capability at group/team level* - the organisation performed strongly in six of the seven characteristics. One characteristic concerning job related communication requires improvement.

5) *Core capability at individual level* - the organisation performed strongly in all nine of the characteristics.

6) *Reward system* - the organisation performed poorly in all five characteristics relating to equitable benefits, remuneration, financial compensation, recognition and praise awarded.

7) *Performance management* - the organisation performed poorly in five of the seven characteristics relating to setting of employee performance goals, discussion of career paths, misalignment between employees self-view of performance and actual awarded performance rating, and insufficient work performance feedback.

8) *Policies and procedures* - the organisation performed strongly in all six characteristics.

9) *Stakeholder satisfaction: customer* - the organisation performed strongly in all five characteristics.

10) *Stakeholder satisfaction: supplier* - the organisation performed strongly in two of the four characteristics. Two characteristics relating to the involvement of suppliers in business decisions and the importance of supplier feedback require improvement.

11) *Stakeholder satisfaction: community* - the organisation performed strongly in two of the three characteristics. One characteristic concerning employee involvement in community upliftment initiatives require improvement.

12) *Stakeholder satisfaction: people* - the organisation performed strongly in seven of the eleven characteristics. Four characteristics which require improvement relate to a healthy work life balance, making the work environment a "fun" place to work, the level (extent) to which the organisation looks after its' employees, and the organisation's proactive stance regarding its employment equity practices.

Table 6-1 below indicates the 12 high performance culture dimensions with their associated scores and assessment based on this research findings. The assessment per dimension is based on the following proposed scoring categories with a score higher than 80% considered as excellent, a score between 70 - 80% as good, a score between 50 - 70% as average, and a score less than 50% as poor.

It is evident (from Table 6-1), and following from Chapter 5, that high performance organisational culture characteristics are prevalent in the organisation, to a lesser extent in certain dimensions and not at all for the *reward system* dimension. It can therefore be asserted that for the dimensions of *leadership*, *core capability (group/team and individual level), policies and procedures,* and *stakeholder satisfaction at the customer level* the organisation was assessed to have performed excellently. There was good performance in *core capability at the organisation level,* and average performance in *vision and strategy*, *stakeholder satisfaction at the supplier, community and people level.* For the dimensions of *performance management* and *reward system* the organisation was assessed to have performed poorly.

To answer the primary research question, it is evident that the prevalence of high performance organisational culture characteristics does exist to a large degree in the organisation when considering ten of the twelve dimensions assessed. Those characteristics relating to the dimensions of *leadership*, *core capability (organisation, group/team and individual level), policies and procedures,* and *stakeholder satisfaction at the customer level* manifested extremely positively while characteristics related to *vision and strategy*, *stakeholder satisfaction at the supplier, community and people level* was evident to an average degree. The organisation performed poorly in those characteristics related to the two dimensions of *performance management* and *reward system*.

Table 6-1:   Prevalence of high performance cultural characteristics

Dimension	Total characteristics per dimension (A)	Characteristics with strong performance (B)	Score (B / A, %)	Assessment > 80%, Excellent 70 - 80%, Good 50 - 70%, Average < 50%, Poor
1. Vision and strategy	6	4	67	Average
2. Leadership	7	6	86	Excellent
3. Core capability at organisation	7	5	71	Good
4. Core capability at group/team	7	6	86	Excellent
5. Core capability at individual	9	9	100	Excellent
6. Reward system	5	0	0	Poor
7. Performance management	7	2	29	Poor
8. Policies and procedures	6	6	100	Excellent
9. Stakeholder satisfaction: customer	5	5	100	Excellent
10. Stakeholder satisfaction: supplier	4	2	50	Average
11. Stakeholder satisfaction: community	3	2	67	Average
12. Stakeholder satisfaction: people	11	7	64	Average

6.3.2 Effectiveness of high performance culture dimensions

To address the sub-objectives of this research study the following secondary research questions were formulated which are subsequently discussed:-

- To what extent is the organisation's *vision and strategy* aligned with high performance culture in the sales team?
- To what extent is *leadership behaviour* aligned with a high performance culture in the sales team?
- To what extent is the *core capability* present at organisation, team and individual levels to support a high performance culture?
- To what extent is the organisation's *reward and performance management practices* relevant to the sales team?
- To what extent does *stakeholder satisfaction* feature as part of the culture in the sales team?

6.3.2.1 Effectiveness of the *organisation's vision and strategy* and *organisation's leadership behaviour* in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team

Characteristics of the *vision and strategy* dimension in which the organisation performed strongly included: having a balance between short term and long term goals, level of employee optimism about management plans for the future, level of employees' inspiration about management's vision, and management's belief in the future of the organisation. There are two characteristics that require further attention and improvement which relate to the effectiveness of communication on the strategy of the organisation, and alignment between people development initiatives and business strategy. Within this context, and considering that business strategies have a significant positive link to job satisfaction, organisational objectives, and job and organisational performance, it can therefore be concluded that the organisation's vision and strategy is effective in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team.

Characteristics of the *leadership* dimension in which the organisation performed strongly include: employee's belief in management's ability to lead the organisation into the future, level of management influence on employees to commit to change, management's display of organisational values, management's acceptance of high performance levels, management's openness to new ideas, and management's passion for the company's brand. It is evident that the organisation is in a very strong position relating to TL leadership characteristics being

displayed and experienced by employees in the sales teams which will positively affect job performance, firm performance, reduce employee turnover and improve talent retention. One characteristic that warrants further attention and improvement relates to creating a "fun" working environment. Within this context, it can be concluded that the organisation's leadership is highly effective in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team.

6.3.2.2 The core capability present at organisation, team and individual levels to support a high performance culture

At the *organisation* level the organisation performed strongly relating to a culture of trust, the importance of diversity, employee learning opportunities, and the benefit derived from a competitive environment. Organisational benefits of trust manifest in productivity, employee job satisfaction, reduces job turnover, and generally results in happier and healthier employees. Diversity contributes to the organisation's overall capability through diverse thinking and perspectives, ultimately resulting in increased organisation performance. There are two characteristics that require improvement and relate to the level of communication effectiveness on the organisation's financial standing, and willingness of employees to put in extra effort.

At the *group/team* level the organisation performed strongly relating to new or innovative ways of working, understanding of goals, sharing of ideas, extent of mutual respect and support. Positive research findings indicates an environment of teamwork in which employees feel free to discuss, challenge and seek new work methods and approaches. Intrinsic factors such as professional respect, personal development and growth, performing work that is enjoyable, and learning something new has a positive impact on employee motivation and performance. There is one characteristic concerning job related communication that requires improvement.

At the *individual* level the organisation performed exceptionally relating to empowerment, competence, resilience, responsibility and accountability, initiative, working conditions, and work relationships. These characteristics make the current sales team assets to the organisation and improve the competitive position of the organisation. Therefore, it is imperative that the organisation continues to retain and nurture this capability.

It can therefore be concluded that the organisation has, to a large extent, the requisite core capability at all three levels (organisation, group/team, and individual) to support a high performance culture.

6.3.2.3 Effectiveness of the organisation's *reward and performance management practices* in the sales team

Characteristics of the organisation's *reward system* indicated major deficiencies or negative perceptions held by employees. This dimension requires urgent management intervention to assess the organisation's reward system and address these concerns considering that a sound organisational financial reward system positively influences: employee's willingness to put in extra effort; levels of innovation, customer centricity, financial outcomes and organisational performance. Non-financial rewards (praise and recognition) also have an important and constructive effect on employee performance and suitable initiatives should also be considered for management action.

In terms of *performance management*, there are two characteristics in which the organisation performed strongly and relate to receiving of honest performance feedback from management, and the level of accountability awarded to employees for meeting their goals. However, characteristics requiring improvement relate to more consistent agreement and setting of employee performance goals across the team, meaningful and frequent discussion of career paths, rectification of misalignment between employees self-view of performance and actual awarded performance rating, and addressing insufficient work performance feedback. Improvement is required in this dimensions considering the undisputable positive link between effective performance management and key business performance metrics.

It can therefore be concluded that the organisation, to a large extent, lacks an effective reward system and performance management system.

6.3.2.4 How *stakeholder satisfaction* features as part of culture in the sales team

Regarding *customer stakeholder satisfaction* the organisation performed strongly relating to all characteristics of the customer stakeholder dimension indicating that the organisation is highly customer centric taking customer needs and feedback into consideration as a vital part of its business operation, while not abusing its positional power towards its customers.

Regarding *supplier stakeholder satisfaction* level characteristics that require improvement relate to the involvement of suppliers in business decisions and the importance of supplier feedback. Involving suppliers in certain business decisions can assist with identifying optimisation opportunities on the front end of the supply value chain. Characteristics in which the organisation performed well relate to not abusing its positional power towards its suppliers and the importance

of suppliers as business partners. These positive research findings are important since maintaining healthy supplier relationships are key to long term business viability for both parties.

Regarding *community stakeholder satisfaction* characteristics the organisation performed strongly relating to the company's contribution to community development and the extent to which the organisation behaves in a social responsible manner. Operating in a socially responsible manner enhances the company's brand and reputation with positive community development and relations being a key part of ensuring business sustainability. There is one characteristic that requires improvement and relates to encouraging employee involvement in community upliftment initiatives. Employees are often brand ambassadors and the organisation should evaluate leveraging this opportunity to further enhance its community development status.

Regarding the *people* (employee) *stakeholder satisfaction* the organisation performed strongly relating to job employee fit, high levels of work interest, good organisation employee relations, job relation to business success, BEE initiatives and communication, and the organisation's positive work environment. The latter characteristic is where most employees indicated that they would recommend the organisation to others as a place to work. Employees' satisfaction is largely influenced by management and these findings are testament to the behaviour and leadership capability of the organisation's management team. Characteristics which require improvement relate to more encouragement for a healthy work life balance, making the work environment a "fun" place to work, the level (extent) to which the organisation looks after its' employees, and the organisation's proactive stance regarding its employment equity practices. A healthy work life balance is critical to ensure that employees are not overworked, do not experience burnout and ultimately maintain employee satisfaction levels. The level to which the organisation looks after its employees is related to a number of factors such as work life balance, and the organisations' reward system and interventions addressing these areas will address this result. Employment equity is an important initiative within the local South African context and benefits from a diverse range of ideas and views can lead to robust discussion, innovation and business growth

It can therefore be concluded that *customer stakeholder satisfaction* features to an extremely large extent as part of the culture in the sales team. *Supplier, community, and people stakeholder satisfaction* features as part of the culture but to a much lesser extent.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT ACTION

Arising from this research study, the following recommendations are proposed to inform management action which will comprise specific initiatives to preserve and build on a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics which enhance performance, and initiatives to address those characteristics which are impeding performance.

To avoid losing sight of or neglecting the characteristics in which the organisation performed strongly, it is recommended that management consciously continues with current practices, initiatives, and behaviours which reinforce and support the following characteristics:-

- *Vision and strategy* - ensuring a balance between short term and long term goals, maintaining the level of employee optimism about management plans for the future, maintaining the level of employees' inspiration about management's vision, and continuing to visibly demonstrate to employees management's belief in the future of the organisation.
- *Leadership* – continue with TL behaviour that supports employee's belief in management's ability to lead the organisation into the future, continue motivating employees to commit to change, demonstrating management behaviour that supports the organisation's values, continue to drive high performance levels, continue being open to new ideas and to demonstrate passion for the company's brand.
- *Core capability of the organisation* – cultivating a culture of trust, supporting the importance of diversity, creating employee learning opportunities, and maintaining a competitive environment.
- *Core capability of the group/team* – encouraging new or innovative ways of working, communicating and discussing team goals, creating a comfortable environment to share ideas, and maintaining mutual respect and support.
- *Core capability of the individual* – empowering employees, continue with training and development initiatives to enable competence, and perpetuating an environment that supports resilience, responsibility and accountability, initiative, working conditions, and work relationships.
- *Performance management* – continue to offer honest performance feedback, and maintain the level of accountability awarded to employees to meet their goals.
- Policies and procedures – continue to maintain the level of communication and application of policies and procedures relating to procurement, ethics, health, employment equity, and disciplinary processes.
- *Stakeholder satisfaction: customer* - driving and maintaining a highly customer centric environment.

- *Stakeholder satisfaction: supplier* – continue to not abuse its positional power towards its suppliers and maintain the importance of suppliers as business partners.
- *Stakeholder satisfaction: community* - maintain the company's contribution to community development and the extent to which the organisation behaves in a social responsible manner.
- *Stakeholder satisfaction: people* – maintaining job employee fit through high levels of work interest, professional and healthy organisation employee relations, communicating and highlighting job relation to business success, supporting BEE initiatives and communication, and in general the organisation's positive work environment.

From the research study improvement areas were identified and are listed in order of priority based on the potential impact of the improvement areas on a high performance culture, with recommendations proposed for management action.

6.4.1 Reward system

Assessment of the organisation's reward system indicated major deficiencies or negative perceptions held by employees. It is recommended that:-

- To address the perception of inequitable benefits at the same level, the organisation should commence a salary comparison exercise in which the remuneration packages per level are compared. Any discrepancies should be addressed to equalise salaries.
- To address the perception that employee remuneration does not match job responsibilities, a market related salary comparison should be initiated. The result thereof will inform the market competitiveness of the salaries on offer, and inform any adjustments that may or may not be required.
- To address the concern of performance not matching rewards, the organisation needs to introduce a robust performance management system (refer below for detail) which clearly defines employee KPIs and how these KPIs translate into rewards.
- To address the lack of recognition and praise for work well done, non-financial rewards such as praise and verbal recognition can also have an important and constructive effect on employee performance. It is recommended that recognition and praise is adopted as a formal agenda point in meetings to create the necessary reminder and awareness to recognise employees. Sessions such as a "town hall" session, where all sales employees are present, present an ideal opportunity to recognise employees in the presence of their peers which can also assist with increasing employee motivation levels.

6.4.2   Performance management

Assessment of the organisation's performance management system indicated deficiencies. Urgent management intervention is required considering the undisputable positive link between effective performance management and key business performance metrics. It is recommended that:

- To ensure consistent agreement and setting of employee performance goals it is proposed that a standardised performance agreement template is developed which contains all relevant key performance indicators (KPIs) which should be populated for each employee. KPIs should be clear and follow the "SMART" (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) principle. A clearly documented performance agreement for the period will also avoid any misunderstanding between employees self-view of performance and actual awarded performance rating. Further, to avoid any misalignment between performance and financial rewards, KPIs should also clearly translate to the rewards on offer if the KPIs are met.

- To address the concern related to insufficient work performance feedback, part of the performance management process should include formal quarterly performance assessment discussions where the employee and manager engage to assess performance. Management should provide progress feedback to employees indicating if the employee's performance is below expectations, acceptable, or exceeding expectations.

- To address the concern around meaningful and frequent discussion of career paths, and alignment between people development initiatives and business strategy it is proposed that career path ladders are formally developed for sales individuals to enable constructive people development initiatives and career path discussions. Career path ladders should indicate the full range of advancement options and requirements (skills and experience) for the different sales positions in the organisation. These career path ladders should take into consideration the requirements of the organisation's business strategy to ensure that a pipeline of suitably skilled and experienced employees are ready and available to fulfil future organisational requirements.

6.4.3   Work environment

Creating a "fun" work environment featured in the *leadership* and *stakeholder satisfaction: people* dimensions. Considering that this research has been conducted in a period affected by the Covid pandemic which has necessitated that employees work remotely and with less social interaction, it is recommended that:-

- Timeslots are intentionally created for on-line social events where employees can get together and converse informally and have social discussions that are ideally not work related. For example, there are companies who offer virtual team building exercises which can be considered.

The need for a healthy work life balance featured in the *Stakeholder satisfaction: people* dimension. It is recommended that:-

- A resource loading assessment be completed per employee to understand which employees are overloaded and which employees are under loaded. The result of which will enable resource balancing to occur where work can be redistributed to balance work load more evenly and address certain employees being overworked.
- Management be more open and considers flexible work arrangements relating to place and working hours, subject to the organisation's business needs.

6.4.4   Level (extent) to which the organisation looks after its' employees

The level (extent) to which the organisation looks after its employees featured in the *stakeholder satisfaction: people* dimension. The level to which the organisation looks after its employees is related to other factors such as work life balance and reward system and any interventions addressing these areas will also address this concern. In addition the following is recommended:-

- From an empathetic perspective listen to employees to understand their concerns and challenges and then provide the right support needed. This forms part of meaningful relationship building and getting to know employees on a level beyond just related to work output.
- Hosting "wellness" days periodically throughout the year with the intention to educate employees on health related practices and also to provide medical screening services such as blood pressure, sugar levels etc.

6.4.5 Communication

Communication featured in three dimensions including: *vision and strategy, core capability of the organisation and core capability of the group/team* with specific concerns relating to ineffective communication on the strategy of the organisation, communication on the organisation's financial standing and job related communication. Therefore, specific communication targeting these aspects are being requested by employees. The recommendations include:-

- Quarterly "town hall" sessions be held where all sales employees are invited in which tailored communication is shared on the strategy of the organisation and the organisation's financial standing. This is an opportune time to share and provide feedback on the organisation's KPIs so that employees are aware of financial and other pertinent business status information.

- Monthly localised team meetings be convened where line or regional management shares and discusses pertinent job related communication. This platform will allow for open dialogue for employees to seek clarification on job related matters. Support functions representing human resources, information management and the financial department should be present to field any related questions.

6.4.6 Involvement of suppliers in business decisions and the importance of supplier feedback

The involvement of suppliers in business decisions and the importance of supplier feedback featured in the *Stakeholder satisfaction: supplier* dimension. The following are recommended:-

- Relating to supplier input into business decisions, the organisation should ensure that service level agreements (SLAs) are clear that stipulate targets and performance standards. Further, the organisation should include in SLAs certain supplier responsibilities that are beyond the product or specific service being procured. For example, the organisation may consider including in supplier SLAs supplier responsibilities such as advising on emerging market trends that can affect the organisation in the short and medium term.

- Relating to the importance of supplier feedback, considering that the organisation is extremely customer centric the same approach should be adopted for suppliers. Supplier feedback should be treated and actioned in a similar manner. Therefore current customer centric practices should be adopted for suppliers.

6.4.7 Employee involvement in community upliftment initiatives

Employee involvement in community upliftment initiatives featured in the *stakeholder satisfaction: community* dimension. To improve in this area, it is recommended that:-

- The organisation encourages employees to be brand ambassadors by sponsoring employees with organisation branded memorabilia which can be distributed at community development initiatives by employees.
- The organisation allows employees "special" leave, limited to for example 2 days per year, to participate in and support community development projects.

6.4.8 Employment equity practices

More proactive behaviour relating to the organisation's employment equity (EE) practices featured in the *stakeholder satisfaction: people* dimension. Within the context that the organisation subscribes to diversity and regulated employment equity practices the following is recommended:-

- The organisation more proactively publishes its progress with regards to meeting its employment equity commitments. The EE progress can be part of the organisations' KPIs which should be shared with employees at the "town hall" sessions.

6.4.9 Willingness of employees to put in extra effort

The willingness of employees to put in extra effort featured in the *core capability of the organisation* dimension and is considered an outcome of other factors such as the performance management system, reward system, extent to which the organisation looks after its employees and the work environment. Therefore, no specific additional recommendations are proposed.

6.5 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The managerial implications of this research study are significant. This research has made it clear to the organisation how the organisation compares to a set of selected high performance organisational culture characteristics (as part of twelve dimensions) and which of those characteristics need to be reinforced by management to establish or continue to support high performance in a sales-driven environment. This study has provided insight into organisational cultural factors that should be enhanced, prioritised, and/or addressed to sustain and elevate organisational sales performance. Further, this study also revealed the degree to which this

company complies with a high performance culture, thereby creating the necessary awareness and inform action by the organisations' management for improvement and to reinforce positive areas that support a high performance culture. One of the main benefits of the study is to ultimately improve the performance level of sales personnel and thereby improve business profitability and sustainability, and create shared value. Other organisational benefits include reducing sales personnel turnover and retaining key sales personnel by creating an environment for these individuals to thrive in.

6.6   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

No study goes without limitations as there are always some uncertainties to deal with. The following limitations were present in this study: -

- The research data gathered from respondents completing the research instrument (questionnaire) were not independently verified and the data will have to be taken at face value.
- Lack of resources, due to COVID 19 implications limited the scope of this study to the single organisation within a wider group of similar companies. The study scope could not include the wider group of companies due to demographics which would have extended this research study duration beyond the required timeline.
- Considering the relative small sample size and that the survey was limited to the population of sales personnel of a single private organisation operating in the chemical and energy sector in South Africa, the findings of this research study cannot be generalised beyond the organisation of interest.

6.7   DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

During this research study the following areas have been identified for future research:-

- Further research is needed to explore the effect of high performance culture dimensions on each other considering that certain dimensions like *vision and strategy* and *core capability at the organisational level* were moderately to strongly associate with each of the other eleven dimensions. Future research would be beneficial in assisting to prioritise high performance culture dimensions.
- Relatively little research is available on how *customers* and *suppliers as stakeholders* could be incorporated into an organisation's decision making process to effect

organisational improvement without losing any of the organisation's competitive advantage.

- Relatively little research is available that proposes a model linking an organisation's *reward system* to the organisation's *performance management* system in a sales context. Considering that both these dimensions are related, any future research would be beneficial to tactically direct organisations as to how to systematically develop these systems.

6.8   FINAL CONCLUSION

The study was successful in addressing the research problem and addressing both primary and secondary research objectives. The study demonstrated that high performance organisational culture characteristics are prevalent in the organisation, to a lesser extent in certain dimensions and not at all for the *reward system* dimension. Based on the study, it is asserted that characteristics relating to the dimensions of *leadership*, *core capability (organisation, group/team and individual level), policies and procedures,* and *stakeholder satisfaction at the customer level* manifested extremely positively in the organisation, while characteristics related to *vision and strategy*, *stakeholder satisfaction at the supplier, community and people level* was evident to an average degree. The organisation performed poorly in those characteristics related to the dimensions of *performance management* and *reward system*.

Further, it can be concluded from the study that the organisation's leadership is highly effective in establishing a high performance culture in the sales team, that the organisation has to a large extent the requisite core capability at all three levels (organisation, group/team, and individual) to support a high performance culture, that the organisation lacks an effective reward system and performance management system, and that *customer stakeholder satisfaction* features to an extremely large extent while s*upplier, community, and people stakeholder satisfaction* features to a much lesser extent as part of the culture in the sales team.

Finally, as part of this study practical recommendations have been made to inform action by the organisations' management for improvement and to reinforce positive areas that support a high performance culture in the organisation. No study goes without having some limitations and in this study the biggest limitation is beyond anyone's control – the COVID 19 pandemic and its influence on a broader population and the actual number of respondents. Due to a relative small sample size the findings cannot be generalised. However, the sample size was adequate to produce valid and reliable results to the selected organisation.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: COMPANY PERMISSION LETTER

1 Pinelands Hill Business Park
Maxwell Drive, Founders Hill
South Africa

T +27 11 971 0400

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter serves to confirm that Mrs. N. Moodley (student number 37079018), as part of her MBA research study at North West University, has permission to conduct her research study titled "Assessing the prevalence of a high performance culture in a selected sales-driven organisation in South Africa" within the AECI Water (Improchem) organisation. She will be granted access to the sales personnel as required to conduct her research.

Mr D. Mulqueeny

Executive AECI Water (Improchem)

Date: 05 March 2021

ANNEXURE B: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Assessing High Performance Culture

Questionnaire

	INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is designed to assess high performance culture and will assess how well your organisation performs against each of the dimensions of a theoretical model.

STRUCTURE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

There are no right or wrong answers. The researcher is only interested in your perspective to each of the questions. Please feel open to answer as honestly as possible.

Your individual response will be treated confidentially. No one will be identified as an individual in any way. **PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.**

The questionnaire has been designed to take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consists of two sections: Section One asks for Biographical information and Section Two consists of the questionnaire items.

There are 77 items in Section Two. Read each question carefully and decide on your response. Mark your response clearly as demonstrated below:

EXAMPLE

	1. Not considered at all	2.	3.	4.	5. Considered to a large extent
To what extent is your organisation considered to be world class?					✖

Only one response is required for each question. Please answer all questions.

ETHICS INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant

This **Informed Consent Statement** serves to confirm the following information as it relates to the officially approved research project at the North-West University on "*Assessing the prevalence of a high performance culture in a selected sales-driven organisation in South Africa*".

1. The sole purpose of this study is to obtain information from sales people like yourself to determine how you perceive and interpret characteristics that support a high performance sales culture.
2. Participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. You may also decide not to answer specific questions.
3. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.
4. The procedure to be followed is quantitative research design, which entails a questionnaire. Basic background information will be asked e.g. your age, and related experience to the topic.
5. Confidentiality of the data is guaranteed and only the combined results will be used for research and publication purposes.
6. The data gathered from the questionnaires will only be used for research purposes and to inform management improvement actions. If required participants can request access to the data.
7. Please note that there are five classifying variables in Section 1 (age band, sales experience, sales role category, gender and region) which will be used only to profile the respondents who participated in this study. It may only be used in comparative analysis to distinguish certain trends. Note that only the combined results will be used and at no stage will any specific respondent or his/her data entry be isolated and analysed.
8. Also note that this study does not have a correct or incorrect answer to any of the questions. This means that in comparing profiles of respondents, there is not a correct or incorrect profile regarding characteristics as experienced.

1. Please indicate your consent

I hereby give my consent after having read the above information that my data may be used as stated above.	YES ◯	NO ◯

Thank you for your time.

Student:

Narisha Moodley (082 8005175)

Narisha.moodley@aeciworld.com

Supervisor:

Prof. Yvonne Du Plessis

Yvonne.duplessis@nwu.ac.za

2. Please indicate your Sales position role category in the organisation
   Please mark the applicable box

HEAD OF SALES	◯
BUSINESS MANAGER	◯
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER	◯
ACCOUNT MANAGER	◯
SERVICE SPECIALIST	◯

3. Please indicate your sales work experience (years)
   Please mark the applicable box

SALES EXPERIENCE (YRS)	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	> 20
	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

4. Please indicate your gender
   Please mark the applicable box

MALE	◯
FEMALE	◯

5. Please indicate your age group
   Please mark the applicable box

18-24	◯	25-30	◯	31-34	◯	35-40	◯	41-50	◯	51- >60	◯

6. Please indicate the region in which you primarily work
   Please mark the applicable box

Western Cape	◯	Eastern Cape	◯	North West	◯	Free State	◯	Kwazulu Natal	◯	Gauteng	◯	Limpopo	◯	Mpumalanga	◯

VISION & STRATEGY

	1	2	3	4	5
7. How well does management focus simultaneously on long term sustainability as well as short term goals?	1. Very poor ○	2. ○	3. Fairly Well ○	4. ○	5. Very well ○
8. How optimistic are you about management plans for the future?	1. Very pessimistic ○	2. ○	3. Optimistic ○	4. ○	5. Very optimistic ○
9. How sufficient is communication on the organisation's strategy?	1. Totally insufficient ○	2. ○	3. Sufficient ○	4. ○	5. Highly sufficient ○
10. How inspired are you about top management's vision for the future?	1. Totally uninspired ○	2. ○	3. Inspired ○	4. ○	5. Highly inspired ○
11. How strongly does your manager believe that there's a future for your organisation?	1. Does not believe ○	2. ○	3. Does Believe ○	4. ○	5. Strongly believes ○
12. How well are the people development strategies aligned with the organisation's business strategy?	1. Poorly aligned ○	2. ○	3. Aligned ○	4. ○	5. Very well aligned ○

LEADERSHIP

	1	2	3	4	5
13. How strongly do you believe that management will successfully lead the organisation into the future?	1. Do not believe at all ○	2. ○	3. Fair Belief ○	4. ○	5. Believe very strongly ○
14. How much does top management encourage employees to become committed to change?	1. No encouragement ○	2. ○	3. Does ○	4. ○	5. High encouragement ○
15. How strongly does top management embrace the organisation's values?	1. Do not embrace at all ○	2. ○	3. Generally ○	4. ○	5. Strongly embrace ○
16. To what extent does top management accept only the best?	1. Never ○	2. ○	3. Generally ○	4. ○	5. Always ○
17. How open is your immediate manager to new ideas?	1. Not open at all ○	2. ○	3. Open ○	4. ○	5. Very open ○
18. How passionate is your immediate manager about creating a fun working environment?	1. Not passionate ○	2. ○	3. Passionate ○	4. ○	5. Very passionate ○
19. How passionate is your immediate manager about your company's brand?	1. Not passionate ○	2. ○	3. Passionate ○	4. ○	5. Very passionate ○

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CORE CAPABILITY - ORGANISATION

Question	1	2	3	4	5
20. To what extent is the culture of your organisation described as trustworthy?	1. Not at all	2	3. Does exist	4	5. To a large extent
21. How important is respecting diversity in your organisation?	1. Not important at all	2	3. Fairly important	4	5. Very important
22. How sufficient is the communication of the organisation's financial standing to all employees?	1. Totally insufficient	2	3. Sufficient	4	5. Highly sufficient
23. How willing are the people in this organisation to go the extra mile?	1. Not willing at all	2	3. Generally	4	5. Very willing
24. How trustworthy is management in your organisation?	1. Not trustworthy	2	3. Fairly	4	5. Very trustworthy
25. To what extent does your organisation ensure that employees are provided with learning opportunities to do their job better?	1. Never	2	3. Generally	4	5. Always
26. How beneficial is the competitive environment for the employees in your organisation?	1. Not beneficial at all	2	3. Beneficial	4	5. Very beneficial

CORE CAPABILITY – GROUP/TEAM

Question	1	2	3	4	5
27. How often does your team seek new ways of doing things?	1. Never	2	3. Fairly	4	5. Always
28. How well does your team understand their goals?	1. No understanding	2	3. Fair Understanding	4	5. Very good understanding
29. To what extent are your colleagues/peers free to share their suggestions with management?	1. Not free at all	2	3. Generally Free	4	5. Very free
30. To what extent do managers and employees respect each others' different interests?	1. No respect	2	3. Fair respect	4	5. High respect
31. How well are employees kept up-to-date on matters that affect their jobs?	1. Very poor	2	3. Fairly Well	4	5. Very well
32. To what extent do your team members support each other?	1. No support	2	3. Fair extent	4	5. Large support
33. To what extent do your team members respect each other?	1. No respect	2	3. Fair respect	4	5. High respect

CORE CAPABILTY - INDIVIDUAL

Question	1	2	3	4	5
34. How empowered are you to take control of your own development within your organisation?	1. Not empowered	2	3. Fairly Empowered	4	5. Highly empowered
35. To what extent do you believe that you have the relevant	1. Do not believe at all	2	3. Believe	4	5. Believe very strongly

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	competence to meet the challenges of your job?	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○
36.	How well do you cope with your current workload?	1. Not coping at all ○	2. ○	3. Coping ○	4. ○	5. Coping very well ○
37.	How satisfied are you with the amount of responsibility that you have been given in your job?	1. Not satisfied at all ○	2. ○	3. Satisfied ○	4. ○	5. Highly satisfied ○
38.	To what extent do you use your initiative at work?	1. Never ○	2. ○	3. Sometimes ○	4. ○	5. Always ○
39.	How accountable are you for the quality of your work?	1. Not accountable ○	2. ○	3. Fairly Accountable ○	4. ○	5. Highly accountable ○
40.	How sufficient are your physical working conditions (e.g. workspace, heat, light, noise etc)?	1. Totally insufficient ○	2. ○	3. Fairly Sufficient ○	4. ○	5. Highly sufficient ○
41.	To what extent are you encouraged to come up with innovative solutions to work-related issues?	1. Never ○	2. ○	3. Sometimes ○	4. ○	5. Always ○
42.	How positive are your work relationships?	1. Negative ○	2. ○	3. Fair ○	4. ○	5. Positive ○

REWARD SYSTEM

43.	To what extent do all employees at the same level receive equitable benefits in your organisation?	1. No employees ○	2. ○	3. Some Employees ○	4. ○	5. All employees ○
44.	To what extent does your total remuneration package (e.g. salary, bonus or/and incentives) match the responsibilities that you have?	1. Totally unmatched ○	2. ○	3. Matched ○	4. ○	5. Matched very well ○
45.	How often are people, in your organisation, who perform well, rewarded accordingly?	1. Never ○	2. ○	3. Generally ○	4. ○	5. Always ○
46.	How often have you, in the last six months, received recognition for work that you had done well?	1. Not at all ○	2. ○	3. Sometimes ○	4. ○	5. Consistently ○
47.	How often do you receive praise when you do a good job?	1. Never ○	2. ○	3. Sometimes ○	4. ○	5. Always ○

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

48.	To what extent have your goals been agreed to with your manager?	1. No agreement ○	2. ○	3. Some Agreement ○	4. ○	5. Full agreement ○
49.	To what extent does your direct manager give you honest positive and negative feedback related to your performance?	1. Very seldom ○	2. ○	3. Generally ○	4. ○	5. Very often ○
50.	How well does your organisation conduct fair performance reviews?	1. Very poorly ○	2. ○	3. Average ○	4. ○	5. Very well ○
51.	How often, in the last six months, has your career path in the organisation been discussed?	1. Not at all ○	2. ○	3. Fairly often ○	4. ○	5. Consistently ○

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Question	1	2	3	4	5
52. To what extent do you believe that your performance is linked to a good performance rating?	1. Do not believe ○	2. ○	3. Believe ○	4. ○	5. Strongly believe ○
53. To what extent does your organisation keep you accountable for meeting your goals?	1. Not accountable ○	2. ○	3. Fairly Accountable ○	4. ○	5. Highly accountable ○
54. How sufficient is the feedback you receive regarding your work performance?	1. Totally insufficient ○	2. ○	3. Fairly Sufficient ○	4. ○	5. Highly sufficient ○

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Question	1	2	3	4	5
55. To what extent are the company policies and procedures clearly communicated to our team?	1. Not clear at all ○	2. ○	3. Fairly Clear ○	4. ○	5. Extremely clear ○
56. To what extent are the staff procurement procedures applied fairly in your organisation?	1. Poorly applied ○	2. ○	3. Adequately ○	4. ○	5. Applied very well ○
57. How well do you understand the company's ethics policy?	1. Don't understand at all ○	2. ○	3. Understand ○	4. ○	5. Understand very well ○
58. How committed is your organisation with a clear policy and commitment towards dealing with HIV/Aids in the workplace?	1. Not-committed ○	2.	3. Fairly committed ○	4. ○	5. Highly committed ○
59. How well do you understand the link between Employment Equity plans and business success?	1. Very poor ○	2.	3. Fairly Well ○	4.	5. Very well ○
60. To what extent are the disciplinary procedures applied fairly to all employees?	1. Poorly applied ○	2.	3. Fair extent ○	4. ○	5. Applied very well ○

STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION - CUSTOMER

Question	1	2	3	4	5
61. How accurate is the feedback from customers to your organisation?	1. Totally inaccurate ○	2. ○	3. Fairly Accurate ○	4. ○	5. Very accurate ○
62. How much value does your organisation place on customer feedback?	1. No value ○	2. ○	3. Average Value ○	4. ○	5. High value ○
63. To what extent does your organisation consider the customers' needs and expectations when making decisions?	1. Not considered ○	2. ○	3. Somtimes ○	4. ○	5. Always considered ○
64. To what extent does your organisation ensure that its products and services meet the requirements of the customer?	1. Seldom ○	2. ○	3. Generally ○	4. ○	5. Always ○
65. To what extent has your organisation refrained from abusing its power/position towards its customers?	1. Has not refrained ○	2. ○	3. Fairly refrained ○	4. ○	5. Totally refrained ○

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STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION - SUPPLIER

	1. Never	2.	3. Sometimes	4.	5. Always
66. To what extent does your organisation allow its suppliers to participate in business decisions?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Has not refrained	2.	3. Fairly Refrained	4.	5. Totally refrained
67. To what extent has your organisation refrained from abusing its power/position towards its suppliers?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. No value	2.	3. Average Value	4.	5. High value
68. How much value does your organisation place on supplier feedback?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. No emphasis	2.	3. Average emphasis	4.	5. High emphasis
69. How much emphasis does your company place on its suppliers being important partners in their business?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION - COMMUNITY

	1. Not significant	2.	3. Fairly Significant	4.	5. Extremely significant
70. How significant is your company's contribution to the development of the community?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Not evident	2.	3. Fairly Evident	4.	5. Highly evident
71. To what extent does your organisation act in a socially responsible way/manner?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. No encouragement	2.	3. Average encouragement	4.	5. High encouragement
72. To what extent does your organisation encourage employees to become involved in community upliftment?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION - PEOPLE

	1. No encouragement	2.	3. Average encouragement	4.	5. High encouragement
73. To what extent does your organisation encourage a healthy balance between work and life issues?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Totally unsatisfied	2.	3. Fairly Satisfied	4.	5. Extremely satisfied
74. How satisfied are you that your job gives you the opportunity to do what you are best at doing?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Not interesting	2.	3. Fairly interesting	4.	5. Very interesting
75 How interesting is your work?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Very poor	2.	3. Average	4.	5. Very good
76. To what extent has your company established a good relationship with employees?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Do not believe	2.	3. Believe	4.	5. Strongly believe
77. How strongly do your believe that your job contributes to the success of the business?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Not promoted	2.	3. Generally promoted	4.	5. Always promoted
78. To what extent are black suppliers promoted within your organisation's commercial policy?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Not communicated	2.	3. Sometimes	4.	5. Consistently communicated
79. To what extent has your organisation's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy been communicated to all staff?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
	1. Not fun	2.	3. Sometimes fun	4.	5. Extremely fun
80. To what extent is your workplace a fun place to work?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

		1. Very poorly	2.	3. Average	4.	5. Very well
81.	To what extent does your organisation look after its people?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

		1. Not proactive	2.	3. Fairly proactive	4.	5. Highly proactive
82.	How proactive is your organisation in the advancement of previously disadvantaged individuals/people?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

		1. Not easily	2.	3. Fairly easily	4.	5. Very easily
83.	How easily would you encourage your friends to join your organisation?	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.

ANNEXURE C: ETHICS INFORMED CONSENT

NWU®

ETHICS INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant

This **Informed Consent Statement** serves to confirm the following information as it relates to the officially approved research project at the North-West University on *"Assessing the prevalence of a high performance culture in a selected sales-driven organisation in South Africa"*.

1. The sole purpose of this study is to obtain information from sales people like yourself to determine how you perceive and interpret characteristics that support a high performance sales culture.
2. Participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. You may also decide not to answer specific questions.
3. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.
4. The procedure to be followed is quantitative research design, which entails a questionnaire. Basic background information will be asked e.g. your age, and related experience to the topic.
5. Confidentiality of the data is guaranteed and only the combined results will be used for research and publication purposes.
6. The data gathered from the questionnaires will only be used for research purposes and to inform management improvement actions. If required participants can request access to the data.
7. Please note that there are five classifying variables in Section 1 (age band, sales experience, sales role category, gender and region) which will be used only to profile the respondents who participated in this study. It may only be used in comparative analysis to distinguish certain trends. Note that only the combined results will be used and at no stage will any specific respondent or his/her data entry be isolated and analysed.
8. Also note that this study does not have a correct or incorrect answer to any of the questions. This means that in comparing profiles of respondents, there is not a correct or incorrect profile regarding characteristics as experienced.

Please indicate your consent

I hereby give my consent after having read the above information that my data may be used as stated above.	YES	NO

Thank you for your time.

Student:

Narisha Moodley (082 8005175)

Narisha.moodley@aeciworld.com

Supervisor:

Prof. Yvonne Du Plessis

Yvonne.duplessis@nwu.ac.za

ANNEXURE D: ETHICAL CONDUCT DECLARATION

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCHERS

This code of conduct is applicable to all NWU researchers.

As a researcher of the North-West University (NWU), I subscribe to the rules of the NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC), all applicable policies of the NWU as well as all national and international laws and regulations applicable to my field of study. Furthermore, I commit myself to abide by the ethical principles and responsibilities as set out in the Singapore statement on Research Integrity (22 September 2010), in any and all research endeavours that I undertake as a researcher of the NWU.

The four major principles of research integrity to which I will adhere and that will guide my research are:

- Honesty in all aspects of research
- Accountability in the conduct of research
- Professional courtesy and fairness in working with others
- Good stewardship of research on behalf of others

Consequently I will also adhere to the following ethical responsibilities:

1. I will take responsibility for the originality and trustworthiness of my research.

2. I will stay abreast of and adhere to all institutional, national, and international laws, regulations, and policies applicable and related to my research.

3. I will at all times employ appropriate research methods, base my conclusions on critical analysis of the evidence and report my findings and interpretations fully and objectively.

4. I will keep clear and accurate records of all research that I have conducted in a manner that will allow verification and replication of my work by others, if applicable.

5. I will, where applicable, share my data and findings openly and promptly, in line with external funding rules. This will be done as soon as possible after I have had an opportunity to establish priority and ownership claims.

6. I will take responsibility for my own contributions to publications, funding applications, reports and other representations of my research. I will also and only include authors who meet valid authorship criteria.

7. I will acknowledge the names and roles of those who made significant contributions to my research in publications, including writers, funders, sponsors, and others, but do not meet authorship criteria.

8. In my peer reviews, I will provide fair, prompt and rigorous evaluations and I will respect confidentiality when I review others' work.

9. I will disclose all conflicts of interest (financial and other) that could compromise the trustworthiness of my work in research proposals, publications, public communications, and in review activities.

10. When I publically address a community in the spirit of academic freedom, I will in all stages base my professional comments on research findings (if applicable) and my expertise. I will distinguish between professional comments and opinions based on personal views.

11. Should any irresponsible research practices and/or research misconduct become known to me or brought under my attention, I will report such irresponsible research activities to the appropriate authorities.

12. I will respond to irresponsible research practices or conduct, by taking prompt actions as set out in the procedures of the university. I will also protect those who report misconduct in good faith, to the best of my abilities.

13. I will endeavour to create and sustain an environment that encourage research integrity through education of students, research teams and peers, as well as abide by policies, and reasonable standards for advancement.

14. I will at all times weigh societal benefits against the risks inherent in my work.

Name: Narisha Moodley

Signature: @Moodley

Date: 19 March 2021

ANNEXURE E: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

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)

14 April 2021

Prof Y du Plessis
Per e-mail
Dear Prof du Plessis

EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 26032021 (Round Robin)
Student: Moodley, N (37079018)(NWU-00048-21-A4)
Applicant: Prof Y du Plessis - MBA

Your ethics application on, *Assessing the prevalence of a high performance culture within a selected sales-driven organisation in South Africa,* which served Round Robin, refers.

Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number **NWU-00048-21-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: 2021.04.15 10:04:17 +02'00'

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

ANNEXURE F: PERMISSION TO USE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

From: roodtg8@gmail.com
Date: January 27, 2021 at 7:59:27 PM GMT+2
To: Narisha Moodley <Narisha.Moodley@aeciworld.com>
Subject: RE: Request to utilize Questionnaire for Research

Dear Narisha

You are welcome to use the questionnaire. Please find a copy attached.

Please acknowledge authorship in your publications and please do not use this questionnaire for commercial purposes without my permission.

Good luck with your research project.

Best regards

Prof Gert

ANNEXURE G: LANGUAGE EDITING CONFIRMATION

CONFRIMATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

I, Annelise Venter, hereby confirm that I did the language editing for mrs. N Moodley for her mini-dissertation *Assessing the prevalence of a high performance culture in a selected sales-driven organisation in South Africa* as part of her degree (Master in Business Administration at the North West University).

Yours faithfully

Dr. Annelise Venter
E-mail: annelise@simplex.net.za

ANNEXURE H: TURNITIN SUMMARY REPORT

Body only as on 20 November 2021   Narisha Moodley

9%	**8**%	**2**%	**3**%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	repository.up.ac.za Internet Source	**2**%
2	Submitted to North West University Student Paper	**1**%
3	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	**1**%
4	repository.nwu.ac.za Internet Source	**1**%
5	www.abacademies.org Internet Source	<**1**%
6	www.globalelectronics.ca Internet Source	<**1**%
7	Van Heerden, W, and G Roodt. "The development of a measuring instrument for assessing a high performance culture", SA Journal of Industrial Psychology, 2007. Publication	<**1**%
8	www.saibw.co.za Internet Source	<**1**%