*A*n integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government: The case of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality

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Graduation: June 2025

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DECLARATION

I affirm that **"*An integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government: The case of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality***" is my original work, that the sources used or quoted in this study have been duly cited and acknowledged through the NWU adopted citation method, and that this dissertation was not originally submitted before by me or any other person for degree qualification at this or any other university.

_____ _____

Signature **Date**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to investigate the existing talent management practices and challenges in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMDM), Republic of South Africa (RSA), with the purpose of developing an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development that will enhance the overall organisational performance and provide quality public services to its residents. The study adopted qualitative research methods supplemented by both descriptive and explanatory research designs. As a result, the empirical study involved an in-depth investigation of the factors influencing the current fragmented approach to talent management practices, using personal interviews supported by semi-structured questionnaire as data collection methods.

Furthermore, the study triangulated the results obtained from ten (10) participants in the empirical investigation with the theoretical and conceptual foundations of talent management, specifically for capacity development in the local sphere of government. The selection of these participants was based on two factors: (1) their multi-disciplinary experiences and knowledge, which enabled them to provide useful information on human resource management (HRM) practices in NMMDM and (2) their direct involvement in the strategic planning, policymaking, and implementation of public policies and practices related to talent management and capacity development in the NMMDM, which in turn contributed to the development of a talent management implementation framework for the Municipality.

The literature review on talent management in the NMMDM uncovered several key findings, including the importance of aligning talent management strategies with organisational goals and the necessity of adopting a holistic approach, that encompasses recruitment of municipal officials, development of skills, retention of officials, and succession planning for talent pool. The theoretical analyses of talent management theories by the researcher brought to light the importance of employee engagement, continuous training and development, performance management, diversity and inclusion, employer - employee relationships, flexible work environments, retention strategies, career management strategies, and leadership involvement. Notably, these findings call for the NMMDM to adopt an integrated

talent management framework in order to address the unique challenges facing the institution across different departments. The RSA's legislative and regulatory framework for capacity development in its local government sphere also underscores the crucial significance of training, development, and adherence to public policies that foster officials' personal growth, talent recruitment, and retention. This is required by legislative and regulatory prescripts like the Constitution of RSA, 1996, the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, and the Local Government: Municipal Staff Regulations and many others.

The empirical evidence of the study revealed significant challenges in the implementation of talent management practices, such as the absence of a talent management policy, high turnover rates, political interference, a lack of leadership and management support, limited financial resources, inadequate training opportunities, a lack of diversity and inclusion, the absence of career anchors, and a lack of strategic alignment with local governance needs. These findings directly align with the identified problem statement: **the lack of an integrated talent management implementation framework in South Africa's local sphere of government hinders effective talent management for capacity development, leading to a fragmented approach**. To address this problem, the study proposed the development of a strengthened implementation framework specifically tailored for capacity development in the NMMDM focusing on strategic alignment, employee engagement, diversity, and HRM technological enhancements, aiming to create a cohesive strategy that enhances public service delivery and organisational performance in and by the municipality.

KEYWORDS: Integrated talent management; Implementation framework; Capacity development; Local sphere of government; NMMDM; Human resource management; Theories of talent management; Career development; Training and development; Succession planning; Employee engagement; Performance management; Recruitment and selection; Organisational strategy; Diversity and inclusion; Best talent management practices.

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ACRONYMS LIST

RSA	Republic of South Africa
NMMDM	Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
AGSA	Auditor-General of South Africa
NPC	National Planning Commission
NDP	National Development Plan Vision 2030
HRM	Human Resource Management
BaSSREC	Basic and Social Science Research Ethics Committee
NWU	North-West University
OST	Organisational Support Theory
OCT	Organisational Commitment Theory
PCT	Psychological Contract Theory
HRT	Human Relations Theory
ITMIF	Integrated Talent Management Implementation Framework
CCTTMF	City of Cape Town's talent management framework
ITMMPS	Integrated Talent Management Model for Public Service
FDTMHES	Framework Development for Talent Management in the Higher Education Sector
BeamPines ITMM	BeamPines Integrated Talent Management Model
NPC	National Planning Commission
AGSA	Auditor-General of South Africa
CoGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs
MISA	Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent
LGSETA	Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority
OHSA	The Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993
MFMA	Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003
MSA	Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000
PMS	Performance management systems
LLF	Local Labour Forum
ICT	Information communication technology
TM	Talent Management
MEC	Member of Executive Committee

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, the study establishes a foundational understanding of the critical structure and scope of this research investigation. It begins with an orientation and problem statement that identifies the capacity challenges facing the local sphere of government in the Republic of South Africa (RSA), introducing the importance of adopting integrated talent management to address these challenges. Following this, the research objectives and questions are presented, outlining the specific investigations that guided the study and the primary goals to be achieved. Central theoretical statements are briefly examined to provide context for the research study, facilitating the analysis of the research outcomes. The research methodology section highlights the approaches employed to ensure validity and reliability, while ethical considerations underscore the necessity of conducting research with responsibility and integrity. Additionally, any limitations that may have affected the interpretation of results are introduced. Finally, the chapter layout in the dissertation is presented to offer a roadmap for the subsequent chapters, ensuring a consistent and coherent presentation of the study.

1.2 ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Globally, scholars and practitioners recognise that talent management is a pivotal Human Resource Management (HRM) practice for attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining employees (Tyskbo, 2021:2; Amushila & Bussin, 2021:1). However, in the South African public sector, talent management is often poorly implemented or executed in a fragmented manner, failing to enhance the capacity development of officials (Lee, 2020: v). This issue persists across all three spheres of government — national, provincial, and local (Lee & Van der Waldt, 2020:173). Furthermore, Mudzusi, Munzhedzi and Mahole (2024:4) identify the inability to execute plans and implement policies as a primary factor contributing to the failure of public policies, particularly in the local sphere of government. These shortcomings are of concern considering the constitutional mandate for public administration and the responsibilities of public employees. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (hereafter referred to as the Constitution, 1996), outlines the values and principles of effective HRM and career development as democratic imperatives in the public sector (Section 195 (1)(h)). Thus, a failure to implement HRM practices, such as talent

management, effectively infringes on these constitutional obligations. Additionally, the National Development Plan (NDP): Vision for 2030 (RSA, 2011) calls for public institutions to build the capacity of public service employees and public sector officials to understand good governance principles and deliver public services effectively (RSA, 2011:120). Notably, the national government sphere announced its intention to professionalise public institutions over a decade ago, requiring the public service to develop a vision for the career development of its employees (RSA, 2011:416).

The Constitution, 1996, and the NDP (2011) both prioritise capacity development in the Public Service. In this context, talent management emerges as a suitable HRM practice. Implementing talent management encourages employees to align with organisational strategies, develop skills through growth interventions, and maintain adequate capacity and knowledge transfer through succession planning (Efendi, 2021:537). Talent management is defined as a strategic, integrated approach to attract, develop, retain, and optimally utilise employee skills to meet current and future organisational needs (Nurimansjah, Ramly, Mallongi & Alam, 2022:69). An integrated approach to talent management can align various HRM practices — such as recruitment, performance management, coaching, and succession planning — with talent management, thereby enhancing the growth and capacity of public employees (Fernandes, Veiga, Lobo & Raposo, 2022:3).

Research indicates that for the Public Sector to achieve favourable public service delivery outcomes, it must invest in developing its employees (Zondi, 2021:2; Nkgapele, 2024:117). Adam (2020:74) argued that traditional HRM practices, such as placement and remuneration, are inadequate to meet the demands of a developmental state. Consequently, Mohammed, Hafeez-Baig and Gururajan (2019:24) advocated for municipalities to develop and implement effective HRM strategies, including talent management. The National Planning Commission (NPC) has also recommended that all public service institutions, including the local government sphere municipalities, focus on employee capacity to strengthen leadership capabilities that address overarching challenges (RSA, 2011:44).

Research supports the notion that talented employees are better equipped to navigate complex environments (Hayat, Aslam, Kiran, & Bilal, 2022:305; Kaewnaknaew, Siripipatthanakul, Phayaphrom, & Limna, 2022:1). However, RSA’s Public Sector institutions, particularly municipalities, operate under pressure in a volatile environment (Mlambo & Maserumule, 2024:216). Given the highly politicised nature of the local sphere of government, public officials may perceive administrative positions as politicised (Vilakazi & Adetiba, 2020:53). This perception hampers the public sector's ability to attract and retain

skilled officials necessary for fulfilling the demands of a developmental state (Biewenga, 2021:43). Moreover, municipalities face challenges in sourcing candidates for leadership positions in both senior and middle management (Mmatabane, Dachapalli & Schultz, 2023:11). According to Mamokhere (2024:159); and Mthintso, Saurombe & Mabaso (2024:12), municipalities face challenges in sourcing leadership candidates due to corruption, lack of ethical leadership, political interference, skills shortages, financial instability, and poor human resource management policies, necessitating improved HR strategies.

Considering the context outlined above, this study focused on the implementation of talent management practices within the realm of public HRM to enhance employee capacity development in the local sphere of government of the RSA. It posits that well-capacitated and committed municipal officials will effectively execute their responsibilities, thereby improving service delivery and supporting sustained socio-economic development within their communities. The study underscores the imperative of effectively implementing talent management practices in the local sphere of government and proposes the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework to guide these efforts. This framework will explore the theories of talent management and their applicability to the local sphere of government, aiming to enhance capacity building among municipal employees. An empirical investigation was also conducted at the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMDM) as a case study, evaluating the current implementation of talent management practices and triangulating the findings with the theoretical framework.

Briefly, NMMDM faces numerous challenges in socio-economic development and service delivery. The high prevalence of poverty and unemployment, with 67.66% of the population living in poverty, is linked to elevated unemployment rates (CoGTA, 2020:21-31). Inadequate rural transportation infrastructure limits access to essential services and economic opportunities (Kgori & Jakobo, 2022:6). Financial mismanagement and governance issues, such as poor audit outcomes, undermine public trust and hinder effective service delivery (AGSA, 2024:26). Environmental vulnerabilities, such as climate variability and degradation, increase the liability of communities to natural hazards, negatively affecting livelihoods and the local economy (Nonjola, 2021:10; Kubanza & Oladele; 2024:1).

The following Figure 1.1 illustrates the locality map of the NMMDM. It provides an overall visual representation of the Municipality’s layout, an important landmark that will be discussed in Section 1.6 of the study:

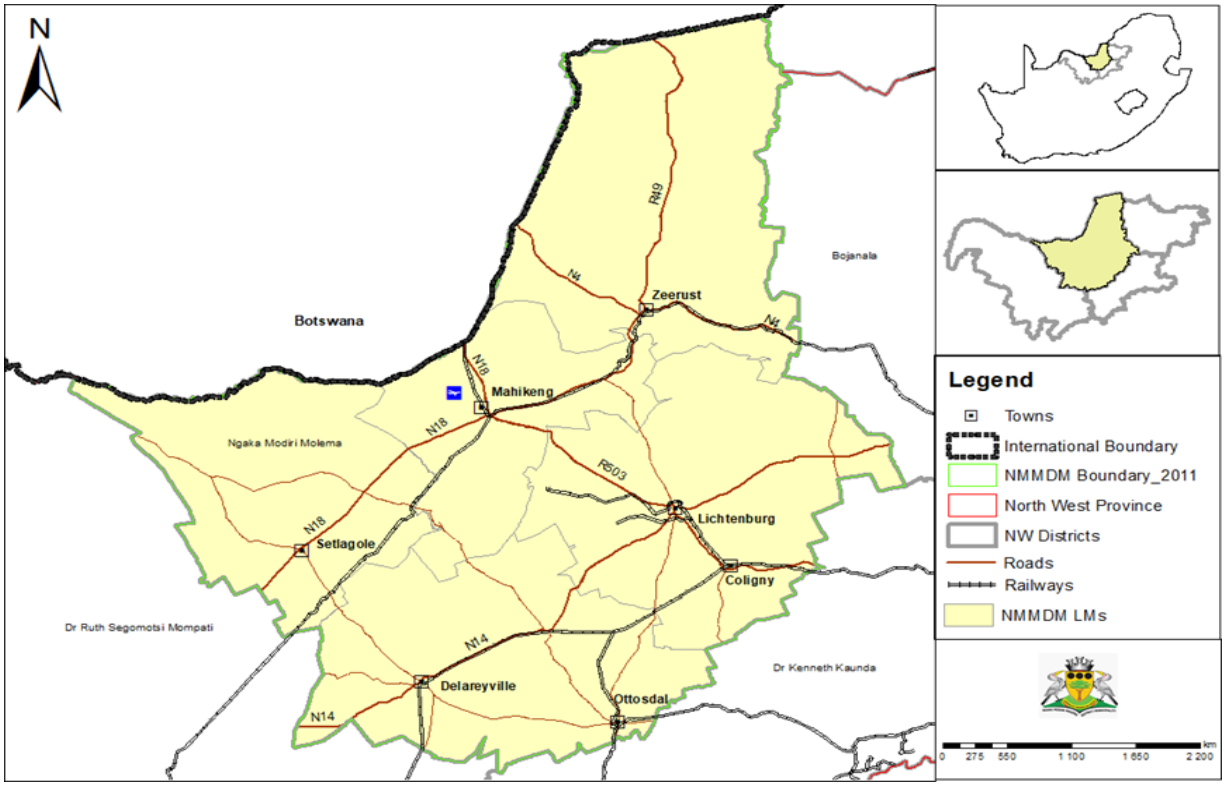

Figure 1.1: NMMDM Final 2024/25 Integrated Development Plan

Source: NMMDM (2024:12).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the numerous benefits associated with effective talent management practices, the local sphere of government in RSA has a poor track record in this area (Mjulwa, 2023:12). Research has identified several obstacles hindering the improvement of talent management in the local sphere, including the following:

- A lack of capacity among municipal leadership to implement talent management programs, as many leaders do not fully understand what talent management entails (Mlambo & Maserumule, 2024:220).
- A mismatch of skills and an inability to attract and retain scarce skills (Davids, Houston, Steyn-Kotze, Sausi, Sanchez-Betancourt, Pienaar, Kanyane, Viljoen, Ngqwala, Mchunu & Fokou 2022:9).
- The deployment of unqualified staff and political interference in administration (Zondi, 2021:2).
- A poor organisational culture arising from a highly politicised environment, which undermines talent management practices (Mbatha, 2020:19).

- A lack of managerial competency to effectively execute HRM functions such as recruitment, performance management, and organisational development (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021:2; Ndasana & Umejesi, 2022:2).
- The absence of career anchors to promote career management, development, planning, and pathing (Vermeulen, 2015:483; Biewenga, 2021:101).
- A lack of integration and misalignment between talent management and HRM practices and the overall organisational strategies (Amushila & Bussin, 2021:1).
- Challenges related to diversity, equity, nepotism, favouritism, and the politicisation of the local sphere of government (Vilakazi & Adetiba, 2020:53; Mbandlwa, Dorasamy & Fagbadebo, 2020:1643).

Experts, academics, and government institutions continue to express concerns about the skills and capacity challenges within the local sphere of government. The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) reported that the lack of skills and capacity among public service and sector officials contributes to dysfunctional governance systems and deteriorating government performance (RSA, 2020:1; 2021:5). These challenges lead to a culture of impunity, lack of oversight, lack of accountability, maladministration, and corruption (Mlambo, Zubane & Thusi, 2022:11).

The local sphere of government's inability to develop capacity and attract scarce skills significantly hampers performance, leading to mismanagement of funds and poor service delivery. This, in turn, undermines compliance with legislative frameworks designed to promote good governance (Edoun, Rameetse & Pooe, 2023:113). The non-functioning sphere of local government hampers the implementation of the developmental mandate (Nkhabu, 2021:78). Furthermore, ineffective capacity-building mechanisms fail to foster personal development or create talent pools, aggravating socio-economic challenges in the local sphere of government (Mphahlele & Zandamela, 2021:157; Subramanyam & Marais, 2022:14). Despite persistent challenges in the local sphere of government, municipalities often prioritise financial incentives over skills development and capacity-building programs, further exacerbating performance deficiencies (Ndasana & Umejesi, 2022:3; Rulashe & Ijeoma, 2022:2). The lack of formal and effective HRM development strategies, aimed at enhancing performance and capacity building, hampers the effectiveness of local governance. Notable challenges include a lack of supportive environments for talent pool development, inadequate organisational capacity for training and development, fragmented HRM policies, and inefficient use of scarce resources (Sape, 2019:89; Lee, 2020:25; Nama, Daweti, Lourens & Chikukwa, 2022:43).

As performance in the local sphere of government in the RSA has been reported to be declining, the capacity to retain talented officials and foster a culture of training and development for municipal employees is increasingly under threat. This situation is particularly challenging amid an economic downturn, where various industries and public institutions are struggling with a fragile economy, further exacerbated by the devastating impact of COVID-19 (Khambule, 2021(a):382; Zwane & Matsiliza, 2022:4). Additionally, rising inflation and a national economic crisis complicate governmental efforts to implement effective recovery measures (Sibeko & Isaacs, 2020:1-7; Lahiri & Sinha, 2021:53). Consequently, the effective functioning of local government requires skilled and capacitated employees to maximise its developmental mandate and respond effectively to the needs of citizens.

From the outset of this study (see Section 1.2), it has been evident that talent management is often either not implemented in the public sector, or where attempts are made, they are done in a fragmented manner that lacks coherence and integration. This inconsistency undermines efforts to support capacity development (Lee, 2020:201; Masale, Barkhuizen & Schutte, 2021:3). The absence of effective implementation of talent management practices prevents the local sphere of government from reaping the benefits associated with such practices, including continuous growth, development, motivation, and retention of employees. In this regard, Nzonzo and Du Plessis (2020:1) argued that successful talent management requires a unified framework that aids in informed decision-making and supports organisational objectives. Therefore, this study stresses the necessity for the local sphere of government in Republic of South Africa to adopt an integrated HRM process.

Public institutions that excel in HRM practices typically employ an integrated approach to HRM (Shikokola, 2024:2). By aligning HRM practices with the overall strategy of the institution, they can enhance their effectiveness (Parajuli, Mahat & Kandel, 2023:2). Makapela and Mtshelwane (2021:14) further affirmed that public institutions benefit from the alignment of HRM practices with strategic objectives, management tasks, and requisite skills, which positively influences institutional performance and fosters public service delivery. In this light, talent management must be viewed as a strategic approach, spearheaded by senior management, aimed at organisational effectiveness and inclusivity (Al-Dalahmeh, 2020:117; Kaliannan, Darmalinggam, Dorasamy & Abraham, 2023:2). However, in the local sphere of government, senior- and middle managers often evade accountability for their performance or failure to meet organisational objectives (AGSA, 2020:1; AGSA, 2021:7; Rulashe & Ijeoma, 2022:1). Consequently, managing talent without

accountability and support — such as coaching, mentoring, and career development — will fail to deliver the intended benefits of talent management.

Although numerous studies have examined talent management within the public service, particularly in the local sphere of government (Masale *et al.,* 2021:1), a notable gap exists in the literature regarding the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework, specifically for capacity development in this context. The primary problem investigated in this study is: **because of the absence of an integrated talent management implementation framework for the local sphere of government, NMMDM, the effective implementation of talent management practices for capacity development is obstructed by various challenges, leading to a fragmented approach.** To address this problem, the study proposes the development of a talent management implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development within the local sphere of government.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study seeks to fulfil the following objectives to thoroughly address the research problem statement.

1.4.1 General research objective

The primary focus of this study is to investigate the research problem and develop the following general research objective:

1.4.1.1 To establish the essence of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government of the RSA.

1.4.2 Specific research objectives

To achieve the general research objective, the following specific research objectives guide the study:

1.4.2.1 To review national and international theories and integrated frameworks of talent management to establish guidelines for developing an integrated talent management implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development in NMMDM (Chapter 2).

1.4.2.2 To analyse the context and capacity challenges of local government in the Republic of South Africa by examining statutory and regulatory frameworks, ensuring that the integrated talent management implementation framework aligns with local government goals and supports effective talent management strategies (Chapter 3).

1.4.2.3 To outline and justify the research methodology employed in the study of integrated talent management practices in the NMMDM, highlighting research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical approaches to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings (Chapter 4).

1.4.2.4 To empirically investigate the current talent management practices and challenges for capacity development in the NMMDM (Chapter 5).

1.4.2.5 To develop an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local government specifically tailored for NMMDM, employing synthesis approach to analyse theoretical reviews, contextual analyses, and empirical evidence for alignment and effectiveness (Chapter 6).

1.4.2.6 To analyse the study findings to formulate actionable recommendations and draw informed conclusions (Chapter 7).

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1.5.1 General research question

To investigate the research problem, the following general research question guide the study:

1.5.1.1 What constitutes the essence of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government in the RSA?

1.5.2 Specific research questions

To address the general research question, the following specific research questions guide the study:

1.5.2.1 What are the national and international theories and integrated frameworks of talent management that can guide the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM?

1.5.2.2 What are the context and challenges, as well as the statutory and regulatory framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government?

1.5.2.3 What research methodology will be adopted in the study to ensure the reliability and validity of findings on integrated talent management practices in the NMMDM?

1.5.2.4 What are the current practices and challenges of talent management for capacity development in the NMMDM as identified through empirical investigation?

1.5.2.5 What are the key components of an integrated talent management that will inform the development of an implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM, based on theoretical reviews, contextual analyses, and empirical evidence?

1.5.2.6 What actionable recommendations and informed conclusions can be drawn from the study findings?

1.6 CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS

This research aims to develop an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development within the local sphere of government of the RSA, specifically focusing on the NMMDM. The study is guided by HRM theories, particularly those related to talent management and capacity development, as well as international integrated talent management frameworks and models. Fundamentally, the study adheres to an integrated HRM approach that aligns talent management practices with an institution's overall strategy (Mbatha, 2020:25). This approach ensures that talent management is not addressed in isolation but is integrated with related HRM practices to support overall capacity development within municipalities. The following statements serve as the fundamental principles and form the basis for this investigation:

- The **local sphere of government** in RSA constitutes the third tier of government, alongside national and provincial spheres. This sphere is tasked with providing essential public services and exercising executive authority within its jurisdiction (Mlambo & Maserumule, 2024:216). It is organised into three categories, as shown in Table 1.1 (RSA, 1996:104; Madumo & Koma, 2019:583).

Table 1.1: Categories of local government in the Republic of South Africa

Type of Municipality	Category of Municipality	Dimension of Municipality	Number of Municipalities in South Africa
Metropolitan municipality	A category	Urban areas with large populations	8 (eight)
Districts municipality	C category	Rural areas with multiple local municipalities	44 (forty-four)
Local municipality	B category	Smaller urban or rural regions	205 (two hundred and five)

Source: (RSA, 1996:75); (Madumo & Koma, 2019:583).

- The **Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality** is one of the four districts (Category C) in North-West Province. Formed under the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998, NMMDM consists of five local municipalities: Mahikeng Local Municipality, located in the capital city of North West Province in Mahikeng; Ratlou Local Municipality in Setlagole; Tswaing Local Municipality in Delareyville; Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality in Zeerust; and Ditsobotla Local Municipality in Lichtenburg. This District Municipality functions as a key administrative and governance entity within the region (RSA, 1998:15; NMMDM, 2024:12). The municipality is mandated to amongst other basic services, provide clean water and decent sanitation infrastructure while promoting local economic development and social welfare in local communities (RSA, 1996:58). However, it faces significant challenges, including skills and capacity constraints, lack of strategic planning, high levels of poverty, unemployment, and inadequate infrastructure, that impede reliable public service provision and development (CoGTA, 2020:4). Therefore, the NMMDM serves as a pertinent case study due to its unique challenges and opportunities in talent management within the context of local sphere of government.
- **Talent management** is increasingly recognised as a strategic approach to attracting, developing, and retaining individuals with the requisite skills to achieve organisational objectives (Rožman, Tominc, & Štrukelj, 2023:373). It is a critical aspect of organisational success that impacts performance, employee retention, innovation, diversity, and strategic alignment (Kumar & Kumar, 2022:78). As institutions navigate the complexities of the modern environment, investing in effective talent management practices is essential for sustainable competitive advantage. In the context of the local sphere of government, effectively integrating talent management practices ensures alignment with HRM practices, the institution's overall strategy, and community needs, thereby enhancing public service delivery.

- **An implementation framework** is essential for the effective execution of talent management strategies, offering a systematic approach to processes and performance measures (Khan, Khan, & Khan, 2021:112). To develop such a framework, it is necessary to examine existing ideas, ideologies, and perspectives while assessing their relevance and applicability in practical contexts (Lee, 2020:47). In this regard, an implementation framework for the NMMDM will address its unique skills and capacity challenges combined with socio-economic factors, ensuring that the talent management strategies implemented are both practical and effective.
- **Capacity development** refers to the enhancement of skills and competencies in individuals and institutions (Davids *et al.,* 2022:3). In the local sphere of government, capacity development is crucial for addressing the multifaceted challenges communities face, especially considering evolving constitutional mandates (Orgill, Marchal, Shung-King, Sikuza & Gilson, 2021:2). As municipalities are often the first point of contact for citizens and residents seeking public services and support, enhancing their capacity ensures effective responses to pressing issues such as economic development, social equity, and environmental sustainability (Mashamaite & Lethoko, 2018:118; World Bank, 2023:42). Current challenges — including resource constraints, poor public service delivery, mismanagement of funds, inadequate infrastructure, lack of skills, rapid urbanisation, and the need for transparent governance — demand a robust framework for capacity building that empowers municipality officials and enhances institutional effectiveness (Khambule, 2021(b):507). By investing in the skills, knowledge, and resources of municipalities, it will not only strengthen democratic governance but also foster resilience and adaptability, leading to improved public service delivery and enhanced quality of life for all citizens and residents (Johnson, 2023:101).
- **Theories of talent management**, such as the Psychological Contract Theory, Organisational Support Theory, Organisational Commitment Theory, Generational Theory, and Human Capital Theory, underscore the importance of human resources as a source of competitive advantage (Barney & Wright, 2020:102). Guest (2024:6), and Levine and Markowitz (2024:155) explain that these theories provide explanations, predictions, and insights into the phenomena under investigation. In many instances, theories challenge and extend existing knowledge within the scope of a study. Applying these theories to the local sphere of government can yield valuable insights into the effectiveness of talent management strategies in enhancing individual and organisational performance.
- A **framework** provides a description of implementation objectives based on research, offering guidelines for the necessary interventions, innovations, and evidence needed for effective execution (Salawu, Shamsuddin & Bolatitio, 2023:2104). Adherence to these

guidelines and the successful implementation of strategies informed by research will yield positive outcomes in talent management practices (Damschroder, Reardon, Widerquist & Lowery, 2022:10). Moreover, a well-structured framework facilitates communication and the formulation of implementation strategies, encompassing aspects such as needs assessment, process evaluation, implementation effectiveness, success mechanisms, and impact assessment (Huybrechts, Declercq, Verté, Raeymaeckers & Anthierens, 2021:10-11). Given this context, the study aims to develop an integrated talent management implementation framework that aligns HRM practices with the NMMDM's overall goals and objectives. This alignment will ensure that the right employees are positioned effectively, equipped with the necessary skills to address current and future municipal challenges.

To improve capacity development in the South African local sphere of government, it is critical to integrate talent management with a robust implementation framework. As a result, the NMMDM serves as a critical case study, illustrating how these concepts can be operationalised to enhance both individual and organisational capacity, which in turn will improve the delivery of public services as required. Furthermore, this study's implementation framework outlines the necessary actions and resources needed to significantly alter talent management practices and policies for municipal capacity development. The framework proposed in this study underscores a systematic approach to identifying, developing, and retaining talent within a municipality. It includes specific strategies such as the following:

1. **Assessment of current practices**: Conducting a thorough analysis of existing talent management practices within the NMMDM to identify gaps and areas for improvement. This assessment will help in understanding the current state of capacity and the effectiveness of existing initiatives.
2. **Stakeholder engagement**: Actively involving key stakeholders, including municipal officials, community representatives, and relevant government agencies, in the design and implementation of talent management strategies. This collaboration will ensure that the framework is responsive to the needs and expectations of all parties involved.
3. **Capacity building programs**: Developing targeted training and development programs aimed at enhancing the skills and competencies of municipal officials. These programs should be aligned with the municipality's strategic objectives and the identified needs of the community.
4. **Performance management systems**: Implementing effective performance management systems that are aligned with talent management practices. These include

setting clear performance indicators, regular evaluations, and feedback mechanisms to foster accountability and continuous improvement.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation**: Establishing robust monitoring and evaluation processes to assess the effectiveness of talent management initiatives. This will facilitate ongoing adjustments and refinements to the framework, ensuring that it remains relevant and impactful over time.
6. **Resource allocation**: Ensuring that sufficient resources — financial, human, and technological — are allocated to support the implementation of the talent management framework. This includes securing funding for training programs, recruitment efforts, and necessary infrastructure to facilitate talent development.
7. **Integration with strategic planning**: Aligning talent management practices with the municipality's broader strategic planning and development goals. This integration will ensure that talent management is not seen as an unconnected initiative but as a vital component of the municipality's overall approach to governance and public service delivery.
8. **Leadership development**: Focusing on cultivating leadership skills within the municipality. Developing a pipeline of capable leaders will not only improve organisational effectiveness but also ensure the sustainability of talent management practices in the long-term.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology serves as a roadmap for a study, outlining the systematic processes that include assumptions, principles, and procedures for the selected approach (Jiyane, 2020:7; Khan, Raman, Sambamoorthy & Prashanth, 2023:3). This section elaborates on the research methodology utilised in this study, covering the research approach, research design, literature review and document analysis, data collection instruments, population and sampling, and data analysis procedures.

1.7.1 Research approach

This study adopted a qualitative research approach, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the theories surrounding talent management. Qualitative research focuses on describing and interpreting social phenomena through interpretative techniques, analysing beliefs, understandings, knowledge, values, and experiences (Gautam & Gautam, 2023:150). This interpretive approach employed inductive analysis of qualitative data to identify recurring themes and derive meaningful insights.

According to Renjith, Yesodharan, Noronha, Ladd and George (2021:1), qualitative data collection methods typically include personal interviews, ethnography, observations, grounded theory, document analysis, and literature reviews, contrasting with quantitative methods reliant on numerical data. In this study, data were collected through a literature review, document analysis, and semi-structured personal interviews.

1.7.2 Research design

Kumar (2019:154) asserted that research design plays a crucial role in justifying the *"what"* and *"how"* questions of research, affecting the validity of discoveries (Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri, 2021:27). Research designs can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory (Kumar, 2019:15). This study employed both descriptive and explanatory research designs. A descriptive research design narratively interprets, categorises, and measures relationships within the studied phenomenon (Siedlecki, 2020:9). This design enabled the exploration of the phenomenon of talent management, its theories, and the context, challenges, and regulatory framework within the local sphere of government.

Conversely, an explanatory research design elucidates the relationships between variables, combining *"why"* and *"how"* questions (Kumar, 2019:15; Sarwono, 2022:8). This design clarified the relationship between talent management theories and the implementation of talent management practices within the local sphere of government. Consequently, this study identified the potential for applying these theories to enhance capacity development through a developed theoretical construct and implementation framework.

1.7.3 Literature review and document analysis

A literature review is a critical component of research, aiming to analyse and evaluate existing knowledge on a specific topic (Kumar, 2019:58; Ebidor & Ikhide, 2024:212). It also identifies gaps within the field of study (Kumar, 2019:58) and assists in selecting suitable research methods and instruments (Kariya, 2023). This study conducted a comprehensive literature review focusing on talent management theories. The literature review provided insights into the context and challenges in the local sphere of government and established the statutory and regulatory framework for talent management. Relevant artifacts for the literature review included books, scholarly articles, and conference papers.

Additionally, document analysis was performed as a systematic review of both printed and electronic documents. This analysis included public records, which refer to the official

documents of an organisation's activities and outcomes (Haupka, Culbert, Schniedermann, Jahn & Mayr, 2024:3). Given the constitutional and legislative framework governing the local sphere of government in the RSA, the document analysis in this study encompassed legislation, policies, frameworks, and official reports relevant to talent management. Various databases were consulted to source pertinent materials for this research, including NEXUS, Sabinet, EBSCOhost, and government websites. The literature review and document analysis culminated in conclusions regarding the applicability of talent management theories within the local sphere of government of the RSA… and particularly in NMMDM. This analysis facilitated the alignment of talent management practices with HRM policies and strategies, contributing to the development of a theoretical construct that informed the talent management implementation framework.

1.7.4 Empirical research methods

The primary aim of this study has been to investigate the challenges hindering the implementation of talent management practices for capacity development in the local sphere of government in the RSA. As a result, the empirical study conducted an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the fragmented approach to talent management practices, using the NMMDM as a case study. The empirical methods employed for data collection included personal interviews and a questionnaire.

1.7.4.1 Personal interviews

Kumar (2019:220) described interviews as a method of data collection involving direct interaction between two or more individuals. Interviews aim to elicit information, beliefs, or opinions pertinent to the research case. The advantage of interviews lies in the researcher's ability to tailor the format, wording, content, and sequence of questions. This study utilised semi-structured interviews, which are flexible and allow for follow-up questions, facilitating the exploration of additional information (Elhami & Khoshnevisan, 2022:1). Semi-structured interviews incorporate both structured and unstructured questions within a predetermined schedule, fostering in-depth discussion (Biewenga, 2021:22). Given that talent management should be strategically driven by senior management, personal interviews were conducted with key officials in the NMMDM, including the Municipal Manager, senior managers, the Director of Corporate Services, and senior officials in the Human Resource Development (HRM) Directorate. These individuals were directly involved in strategic planning, public policymaking, and the implementation of talent management and capacity development initiatives. Open-ended questions allowed participants to share their knowledge,

experiences, and challenges in depth, aiding the identification of root causes related to talent management issues.

1.7.4.2 Population and sampling

Ahmad, Alias and Razak (2023:20) defined a population as a group of units from which the study sample is drawn, while Willie (2024:76) describes it as a group of individuals meeting specific criteria for the research study. In this study, the population consisted of senior officials in the NMMDM who possess expertise in talent management and capacity development from a strategic perspective. This focus on senior officials is warranted as talent management is inherently a strategic initiative that should be guided by those in leadership positions.

The purposive, non-probability sampling technique was employed to select the sample. Purposive sampling facilitates the selection of specific individuals who can provide critical information pertinent to the study (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024:90). This method is based on the researcher's assessment of which participants will yield the most insightful contributions to the research questions. The selected sample included senior officials who were (1) knowledgeable about talent management and capacity development from a strategic perspective, and/or (2) actively engaged in the public planning, policymaking, and implementation of talent management and capacity development initiatives. Table 1.2 summarises the total population and sample for the study:

Table 1.2: Population and sampling

Population	**Total**	**Sample**	**Total**
Municipal Manager	1	Municipal Manager	1
Senior managers	5	Senior managers	4
Director: Corporate Services	1	Director: Corporate Services	1
Senior officials in the HRM Directorate	8	Senior officials in the HRM Directorate	4
Total: (*n*=)	15		10

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Qualitative research typically involves smaller sample sizes to gather rich, detailed data (Kumar, 2019:293; Mbatha, 2020:37).

1.7.4.3 Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of selecting, categorising, refining, and discarding data (Taherdoost, 2021:32). These activities are critical for maintaining data accuracy and transforming data into a form suitable for analysis and interpretation (Van Kessel, 2021:21). For this study, thematic analysis was employed to examine and interpret the information and data collected from participants. This approach involved generating themes from the data obtained through personal interviews and secondary sources, such as literature reviews and document analysis.

The thematic analysis method adheres to ethical standards, ensuring that data analysis is carried out in a precise, consistent, and transparent manner. This process allows readers to assess the credibility of the findings (Kiger & Varpio, 2020:850). The study adopted a six-phase thematic analysis framework, which included the following:

1. **Becoming familiar with the data:** Reading through the data to gain a comprehensive understanding.
2. **Creating initial codes:** Identifying significant features of the data and categorising them.
3. **Searching for themes:** Organising codes into broader themes that represent significant patterns in the data.
4. **Reviewing themes:** Ensuring that themes accurately reflect the data set and that they fit together cohesively.
5. **Defining themes:** Clearly articulating the essence of each theme and how it relates to the research questions.
6. **Writing up the report:** Presenting the findings in a coherent narrative that conveys the study's outcomes (Kiger & Varpio, 2020:850).

1.7.4.4 Data monitoring

Data monitoring involves a systematic and ongoing review of the data collected during a study to ensure its quality, accuracy, and completeness (Mbatha, 2020:40; Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020:2695). The aim of data monitoring is to uphold the integrity of the research and the validity of its findings. The following sections outline the concepts of reliability, validity, and trustworthiness as essential components of data monitoring for this study:

- **Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency and reproducibility of results obtained from a study or measurement (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020:2695). It reflects how a measure consistently produces results when applied repeatedly under similar conditions. Various methods can assess reliability, including test-retest reliability, inter-rater reliability, and internal consistency reliability. Mbatha (2020:40) highlighted the importance of establishing and reporting the reliability of research measures to ensure the validity and credibility of findings. Greater reliability increases confidence in the accuracy of the results. To ensure reliability in this study, appropriate sampling methods were adopted, multiple measurements were conducted, and all stages of the research process were documented to enhance transparency and accountability.

- **Validity**

Validity is defined as the extent to which a study accurately measures or reflects the concepts it claims to study (Hayashi, Abib & Hoppen, 2019:98; Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020:2695). Researchers strive for multiple types of validity, including internal, external, construct, and statistical conclusion validity. For this study, the researcher carefully defined the research questions and identified an appropriate population and sample size. Reliable and valid data-gathering instruments were employed, and the study design was aligned with the research questions. Multiple methods and sources of data were utilised to triangulate findings, and potential limitations, biases, and sources of error were critically evaluated and reported to maximise transparency and accuracy.

- **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness refers to the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of a study's findings (Ahmed, 2024:2). To establish credibility, the researcher ensured that the research methodology was rigorous and coherent. This was achieved through triangulation and systematic data collection and analysis. Transferability was enhanced by providing a detailed description of the research process and context, allowing reviewers to assess the relevance of the findings to other contexts.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In social science research, ethical standards must be adhered to protect the rights participants rights and ensure the integrity of the study (Greeff, 2022:37). Ethical concerns include preventing harm to participants, ensuring privacy and confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent (Mokgethi, 2021:14). The informed consent process is critical in research, requiring that participants receive sufficient information about the study to make an informed decision regarding their participation (O'Sullivan, Feeney, Crowley, Sukumar, McAuliffe & Doran, 2021:2). The process included the following:

1. Clear explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits.
2. Opportunity for participants to ask questions and clarify any concerns.
3. Disclosure of potential risks and discomforts.
4. Assurance of privacy and confidentiality.
5. Explanation of the voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw at any time.
6. Provision of a consent form for participants to sign.

Additionally, it is essential to ensure that participants have ample time to consider their involvement (Xu, Baysari, Stocker, Leow, Day & Carland, 2020:3). Participants are informed that they can access the research information and details regarding their rights in the study. This study also ensured confidentiality, with participants not identified by name or position in any documentation. Data will only be used for research purposes and shared in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013. Regarding this study ethical approval was obtained from the Basic and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)(NWU), and gatekeeper approval was secured from the Accounting Officer of the NMMDM before initiating interviews. Participants were not offered reimbursement for their involvement, but refreshments were provided during interviews, as stated in the consent form.

Ethical considerations are paramount in ensuring the integrity and credibility of the research process (Mirza, Mirza, & Bellalem, 2023:443). This study adhered to ethical standards, particularly addressing concerns such as plagiarism, falsification, and fabrication of data. Plagiarism involves the unauthorised use of another's ideas or text without proper acknowledgment, while falsification and fabrication refer to the intentional misrepresentation

of information and the creation of false data, respectively (Haven & Van Woudenberg, 2021:544).

To prevent plagiarism, all literature utilised in this study was carefully paraphrased, and proper citations were provided throughout the dissertation. It is important to note that this study builds upon preliminary research conducted at the Honours level, which reviewed several talent management theories but did not develop an extensive theoretical construct for implementing talent management practices within the local sphere of government in the RSA.

- **Conflicts of interest**

Conflicts of interest arise when personal or financial interests could compromise the objectivity and integrity of the research (Mirza *et al.,* 2023:443). In this study, the researcher did not foresee any potential conflicts of interest, whether financial or non-financial. Furthermore, the research supervisor, who is free from any conflicts of interest and is not an employee of the NMMDM, oversaw the research process to ensure its integrity. Additionally, the study was conducted in accordance with the stringent research policies of North-West University (NWU), which provide guidance on handling specific issues that may arise during the research process. The literature review was conducted based on well-established scholarly theories, and no information was fabricated or manipulated to achieve a predetermined outcome. The researcher ensured that the integrity of the research findings was upheld by adhering to ethical standards throughout the study.

- **Credibility and Trustworthiness**

Credibility refers to the extent to which study participants agree with the conclusions drawn from the investigation (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021:6). To enhance credibility, the researcher and co-coder collaborated in the data analysis process to ensure that the findings were consistent and well-documented. Trustworthiness encompasses the study's credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Ahmed, 2024:2). To achieve these standards, the researcher ensured that the methodology was rigorous and that the research process was transparently documented. Transferability was supported by providing a detailed description of the research context, allowing readers to assess the relevance of the findings to other settings. Dependability was maintained by means of thorough documentation of decisions made throughout the research process, ensuring objectivity and neutrality.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Every scientific study has its limitations. One external factor that may have influenced this research is the commitment and willingness of participants to engage in interviews. To address this, the researcher scheduled interviews at convenient times and locations for the participants. Additionally, it is important to note that this study focused on a single case, namely the NMMDM, which is only one of 278 municipalities in the RSA. As a result, the findings cannot be generalised across the entire local sphere of government. However, it is anticipated that many municipalities face similar challenges in implementing integrated talent management practices for capacity development. Notably, this study did not include lower-level personnel and non-managerial employees. The rationale behind this decision is the belief that senior officials are better qualified and experienced to provide insights relevant to the study's focus.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study addresses a significant gap in empirical research regarding the implementation of talent management practices within the local sphere of government in RSA. The integrated talent management implementation framework developed herein will assist HRM managers and line managers in local government to devise effective strategies and policies aimed at cultivating well-capacitated, capable, and committed municipal employees. This will enable them to perform their duties effectively, thereby enhancing service delivery to local communities and contributing to sustained socio-economic development. Academically, this study will enrich the existing body of knowledge in Public HRM as a sub-discipline of Public Administration. It will serve as a valuable resource for students in Public Administration, particularly those specialising in Public HRM, helping them to better understand the underlying theories and integrated implementation frameworks relevant to talent management.

1.11 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The structure of this study is organised into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

This chapter presents a general introduction and orientation to the study. It outlines the research problem and motivates its significance, alongside the central theoretical statements that guide the research. Additionally, the research methodology utilised for this study will be described and elaborated upon.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework for talent management

In this chapter, a theoretical framework for talent management is established. An extensive literature review will be conducted on both national and international theories and integrated frameworks of talent management to establish guidelines for developing an integrated talent management implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development in local government, particularly within the NMMDM.

Chapter 3: Statutory and regulatory framework for capacity development in local government: context and challenges

Chapter 3 of the study analyses the context and capacity challenges of local government in RSA. Through the examination of the statutory and regulatory frameworks, the study ensures that the integrated talent management implementation framework aligns with local government goals and supports effective talent management strategies.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

This chapter outlines and justifies the research methodology employed in the study of integrated talent management practices in the NMMDM, accentuating research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical approaches to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.

Chapter 5: Talent management practices in the NMMDM: empirical findings

In this chapter, the results of the personal interviews are presented and interpreted. The beliefs and views of senior officials in the NMMDM regarding talent management practices for capacity building within the municipality are explored. The findings and analyses are aligned with the research questions that underpin the study's objectives.

Chapter 6: Integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM

This chapter will develop an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local government of specifically tailored for NMMDM, employing synthesis approach to analyse theoretical reviews, contextual analyses, and empirical evidence for alignment and effectiveness.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and actionable recommendations

In this chapter, the study will draw informed conclusions about the current state of talent management practices within the NMMDM and their impact on capacity development. Based on this analysis, the study will formulate actionable recommendations aimed at addressing identified gaps and enhancing the NMMDM approach to talent attraction, retention, and development. These recommendations will serve as a roadmap for implementing an integrated talent management framework, ultimately contributing to improved organisational effectiveness in the local sphere of government, targeting the NMMDM.

1.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter has laid the foundation for understanding the critical role of talent management in the local sphere of government in RSA. Given the multitude of public service delivery challenges facing local government, the urgency to attract, develop, and retain top talent has never been greater. The problem statement articulated herein emphasises the necessity of establishing an integrated talent management implementation framework to effectively manage talent pools within NMMDM. This approach promises to enhance organisational performance, training and development, retention, diversity and innovation, career management and employee engagement.

With the orientation and problem statement clearly defined, Chapter 2 will provide a comprehensive and critical review of literature on talent management, examining existing theories and integrated frameworks. This review will not only deepen the understanding of the complexities surrounding talent management but also set the stage for the subsequent chapters of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

TALENT MANAGEMENT LITERATURE REVIEW AND FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1, Section 1.2, draws attention to the urgent need for an integrated talent management implementation framework within the local government of the RSA. Moreover, it highlights the importance of local government in public service delivery and community development, asserting that integrating talent management practices are essential for developing a skilled workforce. This chapter aims to conduct a comprehensive literature review on integrated talent management and its implications for capacity development, particularly in the NMMDM. To set the stage, this chapter will define key concepts of talent management and integrated frameworks, explore their interconnections in the local government context, and discuss various theoretical frameworks that support talent management strategies.

2.2 TALENT MANAGEMENT

Prior to conducting a review of talent management, it is essential to initially explore and fully comprehend both the concept of “talent” and “management”.

2.2.1 Talent: meaning and context

The "war for talent" has sparked considerable debate among scholars and HR practitioners (Al Aina & Atan, 2020:1; Kwon & Jang, 2022:4). Proponents argue that such investments enhance productivity, employee engagement, and retention, while critics caution against the finite nature of talent, suggesting that an excessive focus on acquiring top performers may lead to the neglect of current employees (LeFevre-Levy, Melson-Silimon, Harmata, Hulett, & Carter, 2023:1). Differing views on the origins of talent further complicate this debate; some scholars assert that talent is largely genetic (Ala'a, Bazzaz & Al-Mafraji, 2023:2431; LeFevre-Levy *et al.,* 2023:1), while others argue that development and training can develop talent (Chatterjee, Chaudhuri, Vrontis, Mahto & Kraus*,* 2023:78; Vardi & Collings, 2023:4).

Vardi and Collings (2023:2) argued that the notion of innate talent is outdated as it perpetuates fixed traits and can lead to discrimination. In contrast, Kwon and Jang (2022:4), and Ala'a *et al*., (2023:2431) advocated for a shift towards recognising talent as a product of education and training. Critics of this perspective warned that an overemphasis on talent acquisition may result in the undervaluation of existing employees and hinder internal promotions (Edwards, 2023:9). To

address these challenges, institutions should prioritise the development and engagement of their current workforce rather than solely focusing on acquiring new talent.

The above debate extends to the measurement and recognition of talent, with some researchers arguing for objective assessments through standardised tests (Pienaar, 2020:8), while others stressed the subjective nature of talent, shaped by individual perceptions and biases (Bauer, Job & Hannover, 2023:2). This ongoing disagreement raises questions about whether talent is an individual characteristic or a product of organisational context, with Edwards (2023:5) who highlighted the often-overlooked role of environment in shaping ability.

Notably, most institutions face a dilemma of whether to focus on identifying and retaining top performers or to develop talent more broadly across their workforce. Lee (2020:151) and Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* (2022:5-4) noted that few employers equate talent with conformity and resilience, leading to varying definitions of who qualifies as "talented." This complexity highlights the need for institutions to strike a balance between talent acquisition and retention while fostering the development and engagement of their existing employees. The forthcoming section highlights the key features that are typically associated with highly skilled personnel.

2.2.2 Traits and attributes of a highly skilled workforce

The terms "traits" and "attributes" refer to the key features associated with individuals who excel in their fields. Traits are inherent qualities such as intellect, ingenuity, tenacity, and compassion (Kell, 2019:2; Dawson, Carmona, González-Suárez, Jönsson, Chichorro, Mallen-Cooper, Melero, Moor, Simaika & Duthie, 2021:16434). On the other hand, attributes refer to skills that individuals can develop over time, such as critical thinking, conflict resolution, effective communication, technical knowledge, flexibility, and leadership (Biewenga, 2021:38). Both traits and attributes are essential for achieving success and expertise in professional environments. Table 2.1 below, demonstrates traits and attributes of a highly skilled workforce:

Table 2.1: Traits and attributes of a highly skilled workforce

Traits	Attributes
• Leadership skills	• Proactive
• Emotional intelligence	• Strong work ethic
• Creativity	• Reliability

• Self-motivation	• Positive attitude
• Strategic thinking	• Adaptability
• Attention to detail	• Collaboration
• Continuous learning	• Continuous learning
• Results-driven	• Persistent

Sources: (Kell, 2019:2); (Lee, 2020:22); (Biewenga, 2021:31); (Dawson *et al*., 2021:16434).

As demonstrated above in Table 2.1, the understanding of traits and attributes of skilled personnel in the workplace is critical for institutions to identify and recruit top performers, develop training programs, foster a positive work culture, and improve performance and productivity. The following section explores the concept of "management" as a prerequisite for the execution of talent management practices within an institution.

2.2.3 Management defined

The concept of management is complex and lacks a universally accepted definition (Kaehler, Grundei, Kaehler & Grundei, 2019:7). Urinov (2024:110) described management as a systematic process that involves strategising, coordinating, supervising, and controlling resources to achieve organisational objectives. Management operates at three hierarchical levels: top-level, middle-level, and lower-level, each with distinct responsibilities (Arıcıoğlu, Gökce, & Gülnar, 2020:342). However, effective management requires a diverse set of competencies, including strong communication skills, empathy, a growth mindset, and a strategic outlook (Arıcıoğlu *et al.,* 2020:343; Aly, Moustafa El-Shanawany, Ghanem & Lotfy, 2023:443; Groenewald, Groenewald, Uy, Kilag, Abendan & Pernites, 2024:96).

Line managers play a crucial role in talent management by directing, empowering, and developing employees (Lee, 2020:84; Guidotti, Demarie, Ciaccioni & Capranica, 2023:2). These individuals are involved in talent management practices such as recruitment and performance management but often face challenges due to insufficient training and resources (Dalgaard, Gayed, Grytnes, Nielsen, Kirkegaard, Uldall, Ingerslev, Skakon & Jacobsen, 2023:3; Mahsa, Shahla, Mosadeghrad, Elham & Mirmolaei, 2023:4). Ordinarily, the success of talent management initiatives relies on collaboration among all management levels, with senior management's commitment being vital (Mjulwa, 2023:24). As highlighted earlier, challenges such as limited resources and bureaucratic constraints further complicate the ability of line managers to effectively implement talent management (Dube, 2022:45). Overall, successful talent management requires support and

coordination among line managers, senior executives, and HR departments (Theys & Schultz (2020:4). The next section will explore the historical context and various perspectives on talent management.

2.2.4 Talent management: Context and perspectives

This section explores the historical trajectory and contemporary perspectives of talent management, focusing on how businesses attract, develop, and retain their most valuable employees.

2.2.4.1 Historical shift in talent management

Talent management has evolved significantly from its initial focus on identifying and managing high-potential executives to encompassing a broader range of personnel within organisations (Fatol & Draghici, 2020:78). In the mid-twentieth century, the primary concern was succession planning and developing future leaders (Das, 2022:72). Organisations recognised the importance of nurturing employees with leadership potential (Chethana & Noronha, 2022:612-615). The 1970s and 1980s saw a shift towards employee training and development, with organisations investing in initiatives to enhance workforce competencies (Jooss, Burbach & Ruël, 2019:3).

During the 1990s, talent management began to incorporate strategic considerations, leading to the development of comprehensive frameworks that align talent recognition, enhancement, and retention with organisational goals (Chethana & Noronha, 2022:612-615; Hassanein & Özgít, 2022:1). In the 21st century, the integration of digital talent analytics emerged, allowing organisations to apply data-driven strategies to assess employee performance and capabilities (Akter, Ahmed, Sentosa & Hizam, 2022:9; Chethana & Noronha, 2022:614). This shift has improved decision-making in recruitment, skills enhancement, and career development (Fatol & Draghici, 2020:338; Das, 2022:72-73). Groenewald, Groenewald, Kilag, Andrin, Pernites and Macapaz (2024:93) commented that recent changes in talent management have also been influenced by labour market and a heightened focus on diversity and inclusion. The next section presents talent management perspectives from different scholars and practitioners.

2.2.4.2 Talent management perspectives

Despite the lack of a universally accepted definition, the literature reveals identifiable trends and perspectives within the talent management field.

Table 2.2: Talent management perspectives

Definition	Perspective
Strategic significance to HRM	• This is an initiative-taking approach that encompasses the identification, development, and deployment of individuals possessing the requisite skills to fulfil an organisation's objectives.
Ongoing process and corporate strategy	• This involves establishing systems for acquiring, developing, and retaining individuals with the requisite skills.
Employees with high potential	• This refers to individuals who demonstrate exceptional performance and leadership potential and are often prioritised in talent management strategies.
Talent management as an integrated approach	• Talent management is a critical aspect of organisational success, encompassing a range of functions and strategies aimed at identifying, developing, and retaining valuable employees
Talent management as organisational success	• It aims to maximise individual potential and retain skilled employees amidst fierce competition.
Aspects of the employee lifecycle	• It includes professional development, career advancement, and fostering a positive work environment that encourages engagement and retention.
Data analytics in talent management	• This strategy includes predictive analytics to identify high-potential employees and performance data analysis to address skill deficiencies.
Strategic approach in talent management	• There is a consensus that talent management involves a systematic process of attracting, developing, mentoring, and retaining a skilled workforce.

Source: (Fatol, Robescu, Farkas & Draghici, 2020:338); (Lee, 2020:52); (Das, 2022:68); (Nurimansjah *et al.,* 2022:69); (Fernandes *et al.,* 2022:9); (Hassanein & Özgıt, 2022:2); (Modise & Raga, 2023:1902).

Table 2.2 above highlights that talent management is a strategic process that aligns workforce planning with corporate strategy to drive sustainable growth. The integration of talent management functions enhances the identification and development of high-potential employees, fostering employee engagement and performance. Additionally, data analytics strengthens this process by providing predictive insights and identifying skill gaps. However, talent management is widely recognised by both academics and industry professionals as a complex, multidimensional concept shaped by diverse perspectives. The next section explores talent management processes within organisations.

2.3 TALENT MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

Section 2.2.4.2 outlined that talent management encompasses various beliefs and viewpoints designed to efficiently attract, recruit, develop, evaluate, and retain competent individuals within the organisation. As a result, it is essential to provide an in-depth examination of the key processes involved in talent management.

2.3.1 Talent strategic planning

The talent supply chain within an organisation begins with strategic talent planning, which is essential for defining current and future capabilities (Odom & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2022:30; Smit, Hengst, Bhulai & Mehdad, 2022:1). This planning process enables organisations to align their talent management strategies with strategic objectives and the competitive landscape (Van der Merwe, Nel & Hoole, 2023:5). Nevertheless, this process is confronted by a number of challenges including imbalances between workload demands and the availability of skilled employees, prompting organisations to develop strategies for talent development and retention (Barkhuizen & Masale, 2022:3; Xulu & Parumasur, 2023:361). In view of that, effective talent acquisition and management are crucial for aligning business goals and understanding the job market (Al-Qudah, Obeidat, Shrouf & Abusweilem, 2020:221; Odom & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2022:30). Moreover, organisations should assess their talent needs, focusing on critical positions and necessary skills to maintain a competitive edge (Al-Qudah *et al.,* 2020:222).

Mumba and Outieshat (2023:20-22) argued that capacity development for high performers is necessary for future leadership roles, however, an over-reliance on external recruitment can lead to disengagement among existing employees. Consequently, talent planning is integral to business strategy, enhancing talent effectiveness and competitive advantage (Odom & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2022:30; Carvalho, Nascimento, Carmona, Barthmann, Lopes & Moraes*,* 2023:1216). However, in RSA context, some governmental bodies mistakenly treat talent planning as a compliance task, undermining its potential to improve organisational performance (Davids *et al.,*

2022:11; Modise & Raga, 2023:1909). Thus, ineffective forecasting of future talent needs can lead to poor performance and diminished public trust in government services, ultimately affecting citizen satisfaction.

2.3.2 Talent recruitment and selection

Talent recruitment and selection, when integrated with talent planning, are essential for an organisation's success (Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* 2022:4; Rioba & Samson, 2023:309). Talent acquisition involves identifying, attracting, and recruiting qualified candidates (Kontinen, 2019:15). Strong employment branding and engaging talent attraction strategies are crucial for attracting skilled personnel (Saurombe & Barkhuizen, 2022:87), with effective employer branding reflecting employee attraction (Barkhuizen & Masale, 2022:3). Organisations should cultivate a talent pool that enhances performance through diverse recruitment strategies such as targeted outreach programs, inclusive hiring practices, skills-based assessments, partnerships with educational institutions, and the use of technology to reduce bias in the selection process. (Odom & Hyams-Ssekasi, 2022:38), while government entities must implement employment equity plans to foster inclusivity (Omar & Kiley, 2022:4; Karthik, 2023:3412). The recruitment of skilled individuals is vital for operational efficiency (Coffie, Odikro & Turkson, 2022:91).

Moreover, organisations should prioritise candidates with professional qualities and adaptability to changing business environment (Chege, Wanyembi, & Nyamboga, 2022:68). In a dynamic business environment, organisations should prioritise candidates with professional qualities and adaptability, as these attributes are essential for maintaining competitiveness, fostering innovation, and ensuring long-term sustainability. Aimed rapid technological advancements, shifting market requirements, and economic turmoil, employees who demonstrate professionalism and adaptability can effectively navigate challenges, seize new opportunities, and contribute to organisational growth (Collings *et al.,* 2021:10; Sethupathy & Joshy, 2023:5). Attracting and retaining top talent can lead to improved organisational outcomes and reduced recruitment costs (Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* 2022:4). To remain competitive, HR departments must adopt robust strategies (Barkhuizen & Masale, 2022:4). Innovative recruitment strategies can also help address market skill shortages (Ogbulu, Amah & Okocha, 2024:15). Notably, many municipalities in RSA struggle to compete with the private sector for skilled professionals due to factors such as lower salaries, limited career advancement opportunities, political interference, nepotism, and challenging working conditions (Mjulwa, 2023:67). This often results in a talent shortage, which hinders effective service delivery and overall governance.

2.3.3 Talent on-boarding

Onboarding is essential for integrating new employees into an organisation, familiarising them with policies, culture, and job responsibilities (Vijayalakshmi & Kumaran, 2021:1). It plays a vital role in ensuring that new employees feel welcomed and supported, which fosters a positive mindset for their tasks (Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019:3). An effective onboarding process encompasses orientation, training, and ongoing support, significantly influencing employee job satisfaction, performance, and retention (Uys, 2021:265; Kirchner & Stull, 2022:267). However, there is a notable inconsistency in the quality of on-boarding across organisations, with many HR professionals lacking a comprehensive understanding of its components (Uys, 2021:265). Often, organisations misallocate resources, prioritising inspiring employees with organisational culture over facilitating their integration (Shufutinsky & Cox, 2019:4). This misalignment may result in an adverse focus on conformity, suppressing creativity and personal identity, and potentially sparking internal conflict among new employees (Gasela, 2022:2). Therefore, onboarding programs that prioritise socialising are crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and commitment.

Moreover, the transformation of onboarding processes through technology, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted the need for clear communication and virtual engagement (Hoogeveen, 2024: i), and Chu (2024:33). Issues pertaining to internet connectivity, infrastructure, hardware, and the accessibility of electricity posed challenges during the on-boarding process, particularly in local sphere of government RSA (Nel-Sanders & Malomane, 2022:1; Oberholzer, Schultz & Lessing, 2024:2). Given the foregoing, local government must ensure effective talent onboarding to equip newly appointed municipal officials with policies and procedures, enabling them to effectively address public service delivery challenges, including financial constraints.

2.3.4 Talent development and training

The primary objective of development and training is to enhance employee skills and competencies, enabling them to reach their full potential (Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* 2022:4; Arulsamy, Singh, Kumar, Panchal & Bajaj, 2023:408). In today's competitive corporate environment, continuous talent development is vital for maintaining operational effectiveness (Mitosis, Lamnisos & Talias, 2021:8; Barkhuizen & Masale, 2022:3). Integrating talent development into human resource strategies is essential for increasing employee engagement, reducing retention rates, strengthening employer branding, and fostering innovation and adaptability, alongside data-driven decision-making (Ghani, Hyder, Yoo & Han, 2023:9; Mjulwa, 2023:44). Consequently, development and training provide opportunities for capacity building, equipping individuals with the skills necessary to enhance performance (Donkoh, On & Donkor, 2021:5). Consistently prioritising

capacity development initiatives consistently empowers individuals to assume more significant roles in delivering quality services (Rustiawan, Safariningsih & Zen 2023:234).

Madlabana, Mashamba-Thompson and Petersen (2020:6) and Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* (2022:5) emphasised that development and training are systematic processes that help organisations achieve strategic objectives. Kwon and Jang (2022:5) argued that organisations must not only develop talent for current operations but also plan for future challenges to ensure long-term success. Creating a culture of learning through a combination of formal and informal opportunities is crucial for maximising return on investment (Al Aina & Atan, 2020:1; Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* 2022:5). However, addressing complex capacity challenges requires consideration of factors such as political will and resource allocation, especially in the local sphere of government context (Thusi, Matyana & Jili, 2023:137; Fernandez & Madumo, 2024:152).

2.3.5 Performance management

Performance management (PM) focuses on systematic evaluation and enhancement of employee performance to boost organisational effectiveness (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021:15). It encompasses activities like goal setting, performance appraisal, feedback, and development that align individual contributions with organisational objectives (Govender & Bussin, 2020:1; Matlala & Uwizeyimana, 2020:250). Theoretical foundations include goal-setting theory and expectancy theory, which suggest that specific, challenging goals and anticipated outcomes influence motivation and performance (Vroom, 1964:17; Locke & Latham, 2002:705). Frameworks like the Balanced Scorecard and Performance Prism are popular for measuring performance across various dimensions (Severgnini, Galdamez & Camacho, 2019:2). However, the local sphere of government in RSA faces several challenges in implementing performance management, including capacity limitations, insufficient training, resistance to change, unclear performance indicators, political interference, and inconsistent monitoring (Van der Waldt, 2020:50; Ngcobo & Dlamini, 2021:15; Mthembu & Phiri, 2022:98; Nyathi & Masuku, 2023:78). Despite these obstacles, PM can significantly contribute to capacity development and service delivery by identifying skills gaps, promoting accountability, improving decision-making, motivating employees, and encouraging resource utilisation (Mokone & Ramoroka, 2023:112; Mphahlele & Mothapo, 2023:67). Therefore, while PMS is essential for enhancing governance and service delivery, its effectiveness depends on addressing implementation challenges through targeted training, leadership support, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Additionally, many organisations struggle to define clear performance indicators, complicating the alignment of individual performance with organisational goals (Kraus, Clauss, Breier, Gast, Zardini & Tiberius, 2020:10). Moreover, technology plays a transformative role in performance

management, with data analytics and performance management software enabling real-time performance monitoring. The shift toward agile and continuous performance management reflects the need for adaptability in changing environments (Amajuoyi, Benjamin & Adeus, 2024:259). Therefore, senior municipal officials should possess a high level of skills and competencies in designing performance metrics, providing constructive feedback, and aligning talent development initiatives with long-term organisational goals.

2.3.6 Succession planning

Succession planning is increasingly recognized as a vital component of talent management, particularly due to heightened competition and a shortage of skilled employees (Mitosis *et al.,* 2021:10; Yudianto, Sekawarna, Susilaningsih, Ramoo & Somantri 2023:6–13). Karthik (2023:3413) defined succession planning as a dynamic process for identifying and developing key employees for future leadership roles, aligning operational needs with organisational strategy. This process involves recognising critical positions and implementing capacity development initiatives to ensure a pool of qualified candidates (Chia, Razak & Ghavifekr, 2023:1). Despite its benefits, effective implementation of succession planning faces challenges such as lack of capacity, inadequate training, and resistance to change (Van der Waldt, 2020:50).

Mitosis *et al.,* (2021:10) and Acheampong, Baidoo and Somuah (2023:67) underlined that preparing individual for greater responsibilities fosters talent development and creates promotional opportunities. Karthik (2023:3413) described succession planning as a structured internal mechanism to mitigate potential vacancies and enhance competencies for current and future roles. Marrelli (2022:630) highlighted the importance of retaining talent for efficient knowledge management, with coaching and mentoring providing necessary support. Organisations that overlook succession planning face management challenges, viewing it as an administrative burden rather than a competitive advantage (Yudianto *et al.,* 2023:10; Acheampong *et al.,* 2023:74). The integration of succession planning with talent management is crucial, as treating employees differently can undermine effectiveness (Al Suwaidi, Jabeen, Stachowicz-Stanusch & Webb, 2020:2).

2.3.7 Talent retention

Organisational success increasingly hinges on the retention of talented individuals, which is as crucial as attracting and selecting skilled employees (Amelia & Rofaida, 2023:49). Talent retention covers strategies that keep employees engaged and committed, thereby reducing turnover (Al-Suraihi, Samikon, Al-Suraihi, & Ibrahim, 2021:2). Effective management of individual capabilities is essential to prevent talent loss to competitors (Kamalaveni, Ramesh & Vetrivel, 2019:1). However,

challenges arise from heightened competition and the dynamic nature of global markets influenced by globalisation (Kamalaveni *et al*., 2019:3; Hayat *et al.,* 2022:306). The complexities of attracting and retaining skilled individuals have strengthened (Jooss *et al.,* 2019:3; Fatol *et al.,* 2020:338), making talent management extend beyond recruitment to include retention (Barties, 2020:21). Failure to retain talent can result in negative outcomes like understaffing and employee burnout (Singh, 2019:426; Mazlan & Jambulingam, 2023:80), highlighting the need for targeted retention strategies.

Aligning retention strategies with human resource practices can enhance effectiveness (Mabaso, Maja, Kavir, Lekwape, Makhasane & Khumalo, 2021:2). Recognising the intrinsic value of skilled personnel and understanding their motivations are crucial for retention (Kamalaveni *et al.,* 2019:2; Hayat *et al.,* 2022:360). The multifaceted nature of talent retention lacks a one-size-fits-all solution (Mazlan & Jambulingam, 2023:80), with factors like professional growth opportunities, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment influencing retention. Competition from the private sector, which often offers superior compensation and benefits, exacerbates the challenge of retaining talented individuals in the local government sector (Thusi & Chauke, 2023:121; Mazlan & Jambulingam, 2023:80).

2.3.8 Career management

Career management is essential for both individual and organisational development, involving strategic planning for professional growth. Biewenga (2021:65) defined it as a proactive process that guides employees toward achieving their personal and professional goals. Adhikari (2023:15) underscored its significance in fostering lifelong learning and adaptability in dynamic work environments. Successful career trajectories hinge on key elements such as self-awareness, goal setting, and skill development (Greco & Kraimer, 2020:40; Layton, Solberg, Jahangir, Hall, Ponder, Micoli & Vanderford, 2022:4), while Karakus (2021:68) advocated for the concept of limitless careers, reinforcing flexibility and ownership in career development. Organisations play a crucial role in facilitating employee career management through development opportunities, mentorship, and training (Els & Meyer, 2023:2). Structured career paths and performance feedback, as highlighted by Modise and Raga (2023:3436) and Umezu (2024:14), align employee aspirations with organisational goals, promoting continuous learning and talent retention.

Mentorship is equally important for line managers, enhancing their capacity to support subordinates and improve job satisfaction. Equally, the influence of technology and globalisation on career opportunities is profound, as individuals increasingly rely on online platforms for career navigation (Singh, Bala, Dey & Filieri, 2022:272; Sahut & Lissillour, 2023:10). However, the career management practices vary across local government in RSA, with many municipalities lacking

mentorship programs. Challenges such as resource constraints and resistance to change hinder these practices (Mafunisa, 2020:11; Van der Waldt, 2020:50). To enhance career management, the local sphere of government should invest in training and development, promote merit-based advancement, and foster a supportive environment for employee growth.

2.4 KEY ROLE PLAYERS IN TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Despite the enterprise-wide responsibility for talent management, the HR department holds the stewardship for this process (Sulistyorini, 2022:19670; Karthik, 2023:3412). This department is responsible for identifying and implementing effective employee engagement strategies, yet there is a prevailing concern that both HR and line managers may be reluctant to take ownership of talent management (Jindal & Shaikh, 2020:204; Karthik, 2023:3412). Consequently, several researchers, including Siddiqui, Zafar and Khan (2022:512), and Sharma and Syal (2023:22) have identified critical questions regarding the ownership of talent management, such as the following:

1. Who is responsible for talent management?
2. Who coordinate talent management within the organisation?
3. Who is accountable for the outcomes of talent management initiatives?

Reflecting on the above-mentioned concerns, the conclusions drawn by Musakuro and De Klerk (2021:5) as well as Xulu and Parumasur (2023:364-365) support the idea that talent management should be a shared responsibility involving all stakeholders, rather than being solely entrusted to executives and line managers. Table 2.3 below provides a list of role players that are principal stakeholders involved in the practice of talent management:

Table 2.3: Role-players involved in the implementation of talent management

Role players	Responsibilities
Senior leadership	• Responsible for creating a vision and developing strategies to achieve talent management objectives.
Human practitioners	• Partner with senior leaders to design and implement talent management programs that align with the organisation's goals and strategies.
Line managers or supervisors	• Essential for identifying, developing, and rewarding talent, as well as providing coaching and mentoring to help employees reach their full potential.
Employees	• Execute the organisation's strategy and deliver results;

	key in talent management efforts.
Learning and development Specialists	• Develop and implement training programs to enhance employee's competencies and ensure individuals possess the right requisite skills and knowledge to execute their duties efficiently.
Recruitment specialists	• Ensure the workforce has the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to meet organisational objectives.

Sources: (Musakuro & De Klerk, 2021); (Karthik, 2023); (Xulu & Parumasur, 2023)

The successful implementation of talent management, as detailed in Table 2.3, requires the active engagement and collaboration of all relevant stakeholders to effectively identify, develop, and retain exceptional employees, which is essential for meeting organisational goals. Ndou, Mofokeng and Khosa (2021:568-569) pointed out that some stakeholders may underestimate the importance of teamwork and the potential benefits of cross-functional roles in the process. To mitigate this challenge, organisations can create a cross-functional talent management team that includes representatives from each stakeholder group. This approach not only guarantees the involvement of all stakeholders in talent management but also enhances collaboration and communication across different departments. The following section will explore strategies for the effective implementation of talent management.

2.5 STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT WITHIN AN ORGANISATION

This section explores key strategies for effective talent management implementation, including identifying key positions and roles, building a talent pipeline, training, and coaching line managers, employee engagement, competitive compensation and benefits, strong employer branding, and measuring the success of the strategy. Through adopting these strategies, the researcher can establish an effective talent management implementation framework that not only enhances employee engagement and performance but also attracts, develops, and retains municipal officials in the NMMDM.

2.5.1 Identifying key positions and roles

In the contemporary organisational landscape, the responsibility of identifying critical roles and selecting qualified candidates rests heavily on employers (Mitosis *et al.,* 2021:10; Karthik, 2023:3413). To facilitate this process, it is essential for organisations to establish clear performance expectations, provide continuous learning opportunities, and implement transparent

performance evaluation systems (Nkala, Mudimu & Mbengwa, 2021:199; Fernandes *et al.,* 2022:3). According to Jadhav (2019:5) and Fatol *et al.,* (2020:338), organisations should view talent management strategies as an ongoing endeavour that requires regular evaluation and adaptation to meet the changing needs of both the organisation and its workforce. Organisations can make their talent management plans more effective by including regular training and performance reviews. This will make sure that the processes are legitimate, and that ongoing skill development is in line with changing business needs (Fatol *et al.,* 2020:338). Failing to identify key positions and roles in an organisation for talent development can lead to skill gaps, ineffective training, resource misallocations, and negative organisational culture (McKinsey & Company, 2021:5; Deloitte, 2022:12).

2.5.2 Building a talent pipeline

In today's competitive landscape, building a robust talent pipeline is crucial for organisations aiming to ensure a steady influx of skilled employees (Hajeema & Afrose, 2023:622). To facilitate this process, various initiatives such as mentorship programs, career development plans, and performance feedback systems play a vital role (Alok, Banerjee & Khan, 2021:110; Kathukya, Mwangi & Machogu, 2022:46). Additionally, cultivating a culture of continuous learning and development empowers employees to actively manage their career trajectories, equipping them with essential resources and support (Ndou *et al.,* 2021:569; Siddiqui *et al.,* 2022:510). Although initiatives such as job rotations and cross-functional projects might facilitate employee development, it however, may also result in difficulties such as increased responsibilities and reduced motivation. On the other hand, Chege *et al.,* (2022:68) signified that investing in employee development not only aids in retaining top talent but also attracts new talent seeking growth opportunities. However, external factors like economic instability and industry disruption can still impact these strategies, regardless of a strong talent pipeline (Schuler, 2019:368).

2.5.3 Training and coaching for line managers

Line managers are critical to the success of talent management strategies, as highlighted by Enwereji and Emmanuel (2022:420), who emphasise their role in identifying and developing talent within teams. Dalgaard *et al.,* (2023:1) and Guidotti *et al.,* (2023:2) collectively supported this assertion, arguing that line managers must possess unique skills and knowledge to effectively manage and support the career growth of their employees (Ben-Hador, 2023:2). However, the effectiveness of line managers in this capacity is contingent upon adequate coaching and training, which are essential for equipping them with the necessary skills to implement talent management strategies and foster the career development of their subordinates (Al Hammadi & Noor, 2020:68; Monteiro, Santos, Reis, Sampaio, Sousa, Martinho, José-Sousa & Au-Yong-Oliveira, 2020:8).

Nonetheless, investing in employee development alone may not suffice to retain top talent, particularly in toxic environments. A toxic environment can drive away top talent, hinder their performance, and create a cycle of negativity that impacts the entire organisation, according to Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed and Iqbal (2021:2). In that perspective, talent management is a critical aspect of organisational success, and organisations must prioritise the development and retention of their top talent through capable and competent line managers.

2.5.4 Employee engagement

Thus far, employee engagement has been another component that is useful to organisations in retaining top talent, as engaged employees are more likely to be satisfied with their work and stay with the organisation (Fasieh, Thoyib & Suryadi, 2023:181). Järvi and Khoreva (2020:76) cautioned organisations not only to focus on employee development, but also to create a positive work environment and offer competitive compensation and benefits to retain their top talent. Practically, an organisation might invest in training and coaching for their line managers to identify and develop high-potential employees, as well as offer competitive salaries and benefits to retain their top talent (Guidotti *et al.,* 2023:2; Kravariti *et al.,* 2023:1788). Regardless of line managers' training and coaching, if the work culture is toxic and employees feel undervalued or unsupported (Saba, 2023:303-304), even the most talented employees may choose to leave for a more conducive work environment (Shammout, 2021:89). Organisations should give attention to employee engagement programmes, including team-building programmes, regular feedback sessions, and opportunities for growth and development.

2.5.5 Competitive compensation and benefits

Competitive remuneration and awards are crucial components of talent management strategies, since these factors are fundamental for attracting, retaining, and motivating talented employees (Fong & Ng, 2021:2796; Enwereji & Emmanuel, 2022:427). Organisations that provide compensation packages aligned with industry standards can effectively draw in top talent while also retaining their existing workforce (Alzoubi & Kasem, 2021:84). Moreover, additional rewards such as bonuses, promotions, and recognition programs serve to enhance employee motivation, which in turn fosters increased productivity and overall organisational performance (Kakkar & Singh, 2020:145). Conversely, the absence of competitive compensation and rewards can lead to the loss of top performers, jeopardising an organisation's ability to thrive in a competitive labour market (Inayat & Rasa, 2021:2310). However, it is important to note that a positive work culture (Lee & Choi, 2023:3184) and supportive leadership can often be more influential than even the most attractive salary and benefits (Ashikali, Groeneveld & Kuipers, 2020:1; Dai & Fang, 2023:1).

2.5.6 Strong employer branding

Developing a strong employer brand is crucial for organisations, as it incorporates a long-term strategy aimed at enhancing employee awareness and perceptions among current and prospective employees, as well as other stakeholders (Kaoud & ElBolok, 2022:453; Blashevski & Blasevska, 2023:26). This process involves creating a recognisable and distinctive employer identity that differentiates the organisation from its competitors, thereby raising its profile in the minds of employees (Kaoud & ElBolok, 2022:453). A robust employer brand is instrumental in attracting and retaining top talent, as it allows organisations to showcase their values, mission, and culture, helping potential employees assess alignment with their personal values and career aspirations (Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019:174). However, it is crucial to understand that even with a strong employer brand, employees may leave their jobs if individuals find their workplace unfulfilling or not aligned with their values (Geofanny & Fraza, 2023:146).

Conversely, organisations that prioritise profit over social responsibility may deter employees who seek to make a positive impact, despite offering attractive benefits (De Boer, Ambrosini, Singh, Baykan, Buse, Tassoreli, Jensen, Pozo-Rosich & Terwindt, 2022:1505). Strong employer branding in local government closely correlates with the quality of services provided to communities (Thusi & Selepe, 2023:689; Shongwe & Meyer, 2023:137). This branding is characterised by a reputation for delivering high-quality, efficient services that cater to residents' needs (Patience & Nel, 2022:3; Wirba, 2023:4). Thus, engaging motivated employees who are committed to excellent service, along with fostering transparency, accountability, and client engagement, is vital for building trust and commitment to the organisation.

2.5.7 Diversity and inclusion

Academics such as Umesi (2022:246) and Dai and Fang (2023:3) have widely acknowledged the increasing importance on diversity and inclusion within organisations, highlighting its significance in fostering innovation, creativity, and overall business success. Kitamura and Brehm (2020:15) further asserted that proactive measures to enhance diversity and inclusion can attract highly skilled individuals from varied backgrounds, thereby cultivating a more vibrant and competitive workforce. This inclusive environment not only boosts employee engagement and retention but also enhances productivity, ultimately benefiting the overall performance.

Studies by Ekejiuba, Muritala, Abubakar and Sharma (2023:454) indicated that promoting diversity and inclusion improves decision-making processes, as collaboration among employees from diverse backgrounds leads to more comprehensive and innovative solutions to complex problems. This strategic approach can provide a competitive advantage in the marketplace, as noted by

Mousa, Massoud and Ayoubi (2020:1249). Thus, embracing diversity and inclusion is not only ethically sound but also strategically advantageous in today's interconnected global landscape. However, Kwon and Jang (2022:3) argued that while diverse perspectives can enrich a business, it may also lead to conflicts and misunderstandings that could impede productivity and decision-making. Practically, an exclusive focus on diversity may inadvertently neglect other critical factors such as cultural differences, perceived inequalities, differing values and beliefs, skills, experience, and qualifications during hiring and promotion processes (Uys, 2021:265).

2.5.8 Measuring the success of the strategy

The effectiveness of talent management strategies can be assessed through various metrics, including employee retention and turnover rates (Al-Suraihi, Samikon, Al-Suraihi & Ibrahim, 2021:2) and levels of employee satisfaction and engagement (Siddiqui *et al.,* 2022:510). However, Giermindl, Strich, Christ, Leicht-Deobald and Redzepi (2022:2) cautioned that these metrics may not accurately reflect true employee engagement, as high retention rates can exist alongside feelings of stagnation. Dutta and Mishra (2021:436-437) further supported this view by suggesting that employees may stay in their positions for security rather than for genuine satisfaction. Sindhura (2022:3406) emphasised the necessity of aligning talent management strategies with broader business goals to achieve desired outcomes. This alignment necessitates tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) such as revenue growth, customer satisfaction, and market share (Lee, 2020:48; Wolor, Khairunnisa, Purwana, 2020:1244). Additionally, assessing the return on investment (ROI) by comparing implementation costs with benefits is vital (Dayel, Debrah & Mulyata, 2020:6). However, relying solely on KPIs and ROI may not provide a complete picture of a talent management strategy's effectiveness, as these measures often neglect crucial aspects such as employee morale and job satisfaction (Abiwu, 2021:67-77). In the following section, the study will examine various theories of talent management that provide a deeper understanding of how organisations can effectively attract, develop, and retain top talent.

2.6 THEORIES OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

Levine and Markowitz (2024:155) explained that theories offer explanations, predict, and facilitate an understanding of the phenomena at dispute. Theories often confront and extend existing knowledge within the scope of a study. Applying these theories to the local sphere of government can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of talent management strategies in enhancing individual and organisational performance (Becker, Huselid & Ulrich, 2021:64). The following theories will be examined, namely: Psychological Contract theory, Organisational Support Theory, Organisational Commitment Theory, Human Relation Theory and Generational Theory.

2.6.1 Psychological Contract Theory

Psychological Contract Theory, as articulated by Lee (2020:81), highlights the informal obligations and shared beliefs between employers and employees, shaped by employee psychological patterns regarding employment relationships. Morsch, Van Dijk and Kodden (2020:38) underscored the importance of employer-employee interactions and mutual engagement, while Coyle-Shapiro, Pereira-Costa, Doden and Chang (2019:92) identified critical exchange conditions, including job security and career development. These authors differentiated between transactional contracts, which focus on economic exchanges, and relational contracts, which underscore socio-emotional aspects (Coyle-Shapiro *et al.,* 2019:93).

The effectiveness of relational contracts is contingent upon personal support from managers and the dynamics between subordinates and supervisors (Badru, Karadas, Olugbade, & Hassanie, 2024:2), with transparent communication being essential for maintaining employee commitment (Morsch *et al.,* 2020:48). Suhartini, Muafi, Widodo and Suprihanto (2023:15) argued that employees reciprocate relational contracts with loyalty and commitment, which can lead to promotions and job security, while Snyman and Ferreira (2023:2) suggested that these contracts align employee obligations with skills development and enhance job satisfaction. Although transactional contracts are significant, relational contracts have a more profound impact on employee motivation and performance, with HRM practices playing a crucial role in shaping these dynamics (Chapter 1, Section 1.2.; Al-Qudah *et al.,* 2020:1). Thus, engagements during performance reviews are central to the psychological contract, as legal contracts do not solely dictate employment relationships (Caldwell & Peters, 2018:5; Gresse & Linde, 2020:3).

2.6.2 Organisational Support Theory

Organisational Support Theory (OST) is intricately linked to Psychological Contract Theory, highlighting the significance of workforce relationships in boosting organisational performance (Caesens, Stinglhamber, Demoulin, De Wilde & Mierop, 2019:6). Trust and mutual welfare between employees and employers are essential components of these relationships (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels & Hall, 2018:19). Organisations that prioritise employee well-being often see lower absenteeism and turnover rates (Lee, 2021:100). OST is characterised by employee perceptions of their employer's value in relation to their contributions and goals (Govender & Bussin, 2020:6). Furthermore, Lin, Shao, Li, Guo and Zhan (2021:320) highlighted that OST includes employee attributions and social enhancement, indicating that HRM practices significantly influence perceived organisational support.

A key element of OST is the expectation of favourable treatment from employers, regardless of external circumstances (Maan, Abid, Butt, Ashfaq & Ahmed, 2020:1). Employee experiences with HRM practices shape their judgements and behaviours towards the organisation (Amah & Oyetunde, 2019:1), making effective HRM practices aligned with organisational strategy vital for achieving positive outcomes (Phiri, Phiri, Mutono-Mwanza, & Mwange, 2024:171). Social exchange, a critical aspect of OST, involves interdependent interactions that create mutual obligations (Cortez & Johnston, 2020:126), thereby strengthening employer-employee relationships, reducing workplace conflict, and enhancing overall performance (Inam, Ho, Zafar, Khan, Sheikh & Najam, 2021:4). Employees who perceive strong organisational support are more likely to exert greater effort or increase their performance within the organisation.

2.6.3 Organisational Commitment Theory

Organisational Commitment Theory (OCT), as defined by Al-Jabari and Ghazzawi (2019:78) comprehends an employee's loyalty to their organisation, perceived obligation to exert effort, alignment of personal and organisational goals, and the necessity of maintaining the employee-employer relationship. Arasanmi and Krishna (2019:117) supported this definition by reinforcing that OCT goes beyond mere loyalty, implying a profound attachment to the organisation. Lo, Lu, Chang and Wu (2024:2) further asserted that such commitment positively influences organisational outcomes, enhancing productivity and performance. Therefore, theory outlines three approaches to understanding and measuring organisational commitment: the calculative, attitudinal, and multidimensional approaches.

The **calculative approach**, as defined by Ngobeni, Saurombe and Joseph (2022:15), focuses on willingness of employees to stay with an organisation based on the personal investments made by the organisation. This approach highlights the risks of employee turnover, suggesting that organisations can reduce attrition through incentives like wage increases and performance rewards (Mujajati, Ferreira & Du Plessis, 2024:2). In contrast, the **attitudinal approach**, described by Potgieter, Coetzee and Ferreira (2021:2) as effective commitment, focuses on the emotional attachment employees have towards their organisation and its goals, necessitating an exploration of work-related behaviours and attitudes. Potgieter *et al.,* (2021:2) argued that human beings have diverse needs that Organisational Commitment Theory (OCT) seeks to reconcile between employees and employers. The attitudinal approach also highlights the significance of value compatibility, as employees often prioritise their interests, leading them to seek better opportunities (Nagimova, 2021:1037).

The **multidimensional approach** to OCT encompasses various forms, including commitment to the organisation, teams, leaders, and personal career (Wziątek-Staśko, Michalik & Vveinhardt,

2023:538). These commitments play a crucial role in influencing work behaviour and organisational effectiveness (Charalampous, Grant, Tramontano and Michailidis, 2019:3). Kesumayani, Eliyana, Akbar and Sebayang (2020:313) highlighted the importance of talent management in enhancing organisational commitment through the attraction, maintenance, and development of talent. Additionally, Mitosis *et al.,* (2021:1) argued that organisations should foster a supportive working environment by providing clear career development paths and training opportunities. This aligns with Psychological Contract Theory and Organisational Support Theory, which focus on employee-employer relationships and psychological needs. Organisational Commitment Theory (OCT) advocates for intentional strategies to enhance employee commitment, highlighting the potential for advocating for such strategies through a calculated approach.

2.6.4 Human Relations Theory

Human Relations Theory emphasises the importance of treating employees with dignity and respect, viewing them as human beings rather than mere machines (Omodan, Tsotetsi & Dube, 2020:6). Pandya (2024:51) warned against a narrow focus on productivity that neglects employee motivation and rewards, as this can lead to alienation and resistance. The theory arose from a growing recognition of the impact of interpersonal relationships on organisational culture and performance (Lee, 2020:83). Commentators like Sulieman (2019:12) and Omolawal (2021:2) argued that the essence of Human Relations Theory lies in the belief that "the lifeblood of an organisation is its people," advocating for professional relationships that contrast with hierarchical management styles.

Furthermore, the theory highlights the role of organisational culture in determining effectiveness and success, influencing employee commitment (Sarhan *et al*., 2020:184), and Bogale and Debela (2024:47) suggested that organisations should prioritise employee commitment in shaping their culture for effective policy implementation. Cameron (2019:1) noted that Human Relations Theory affects employee interactions, responses to rewards, and the execution of strategies. Despite challenges in creating a healthy work environment, scholars like Ward (2021) expressed concerns about the ability of managers abilities to manage workplace conflicts while adhering to these principles. Lee (2020:84) emphasised that a conducive work environment and strong interpersonal relationships are vital for organisational success. Consequently, management should prioritise a safe and secure working environment, demonstrating coordinated human resource management practices and strategic planning across organisational units.

2.6.5 Generational Theory

Generational Theory posits that the historical and social circumstances experienced during formative years shape the attitudes, values, and behaviours of individuals within a generation (Olckers & Booysen, 2021:2). This theory distinguishes between "contemporaries" and "coevals," asserting that shared experiences during critical developmental periods significantly influence generational consciousness (Pina-Cabra & Theodossopoulos, 2022:457). The literature identifies five generational cohorts: the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y, with a fifth generations the Millennials. Each generation exhibits unique characteristics that impact workplace dynamics, including motivation, engagement, and performance (Bodenchuk, 2020:127).

Table 2.4: Generational Theory unique characteristics

Generation	Birth period	Unique characteristics
Silent Generation	1928 to1945	• Strong work ethic, loyalty, and preference for stability in the workplace. • Values hierarchy and structured environments. • Formal communication style and commitment towards the employers.
Baby Boomers	1946 to 1964	• Strong work ethic, a deep sense of connection between their careers and personal identity. • Loyalty to their employers • Prefer face-to-face communication
Generation X	1965 to 1980	• Independence and self-reliance, • Ambiguity toward authority, work-life balance, technological adaptability. • Focus on personal development and distinct work ethic and communication styles.
Generation Y	1980 to 2000	• Technology-driven environments and values meaningful work over monetary compensation. • Seek growth and development from employers.
Millennials	2000 upwards	• Technological savvy,

		• Work-Life balance, purpose-driven, collaborative work style. • Career mobility and job security.

Source: (Le Roux, 2019:16); (Alferjany *et al.,* 2020:1498); (Bodenchuk, 2020:136); (Eisenberg, 2020:112); (Chan & Lee, 2023:2); (Damron *et al.,* 2024:4); (Pramana *et al.,* 2024:934).

As demonstrated in Table 2.4 above, Generational Theories are integral to developing integrated talent management practices for capacity building within an organisation. Consequently, acknowledging the unique values, work ethics, and communication styles of each generation is essential for fostering an environment in which employees of all ages feel engaged, respected, and motivated. The next part presents a comparative analysis and practical applications of theories within organisations.

2.7 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THEORIES IN ORGANISATIONS

This section outlines the significance and applicability of the analysed talent management theories, starting with core concepts and principles, followed by comparative analysis and practical application for the organisations.

Table 2.5: Summary of core concepts and principles

Talent Management Theory	Unique Aspects
Psychological Contract Theory (PCT)	• Unwritten set of expectations and obligations between employees and employers. • Subjective nature of the employment relationship and how perceptions can influence job satisfaction and commitment. • Importance of trust and mutual understanding in the workplace.
Organisational Support Theory (OST)	• Perception of support that employees receive from their organisation. • Employees feeling valued and supported, exhibiting positive behaviours, such as increased job performance and organisational commitment. • Perceived organisational support as a key factor influencing employee attitudes and behaviours.
Organisational Commitment Theory	• Psychological attachment of employees to their

(OCT)	organisation. • Affective attachment (emotional attachment), continuance attachment (cost-based attachment), and normative attachment (obligation-based attachment) attachment. • Importance of commitment in reducing turnover and enhancing performance.
Human Relations Theory (HRT)	• Social relationships and employee well-being in the workplace. • Employee motivation and productivity are influenced by social factors, such as group dynamics and interpersonal relationships. • Humanistic approach to management, focusing on employee needs and satisfaction.
Generational Theory (GT)	• Understanding generational differences, beliefs and perspectives to improve employee engagement. • Impact of historical and cultural events on the attitudes and behaviours of different generations.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

The five theories discussed in Table 2.5 above, stress how important it is for an employer - employees relationship in building trust, support, and maintain mutual respect within the organisation. Additionally, these frameworks highlight how organisational support influences employee attitudes, how commitment enhances performance and reduces turnover, and the role of social relationships in motivating employees. Additionally, generational differences shape engagement and behaviour, offering critical insights for customised talent management strategies in an organisation.

Table 2.6: Comparison and contrast of examined TM theories

Talent Management Theory	Complementary Aspects
PCT and OST	• Both theories emphasise the importance of mutual expectations and support in the employer-employee relationship. These theories complement each other by highlighting how perceived support can influence the psychological contract.
OCT and HRT	• Both theories focus on employee attachment and well-

	being. Hence, complement each other by suggesting that strong interpersonal relationships can enhance organisational commitment.
GT	• The GT has potential to complement the other theories by providing context on how different age groups may perceive psychological contracts, support, and commitment differently, influencing their workplace behaviour.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

As demonstrated in Table 2.6 provides key insights into employer-employee relationships, organisational commitment, and workplace behaviour. These theories emphasise the importance of mutual support, interpersonal relationships, and psychological contracts in cultivating a positive work environment. Additionally, by understanding how different generations perceive these elements, organisations can tailor their talent management strategies to improve employee engagement, commitment, and well-being, fostering a more productive and harmonious workforce.

The subsequent section presents contradictory aspects of examined TM theories:

- Generational Theory may contradict views of Organisational Commitment Theory if it suggests that younger generations (i.e., millennials) are less committed to traditional organisational structures compared to older generations. This could challenge the assumption that commitment is universally valued across all age groups.
- Human Relations Theory may conflict with more traditional management theories that prioritise productivity and efficiency over employee well-being, suggesting a potential tension between profit-driven and people-driven approaches.

The next Table 2.7, presents a summary of practical implications of examined TM theories within the organisations:

Table 2.7: Practical implications of examined TM theories in the organisations

TM Theory	Application in Organisation	Action
PCT	• Organisations can conduct surveys or interviews to understand employee	• Constant communication. • Establish feedback mechanisms. • Fulfilment of promises.

	expectations and perceptions regarding their roles and the organisation.	
OST	• Organisations can assess the level of perceived organisational support through employee surveys and feedback.	• Implement mentorship programs. • Recognition and rewards programs. • Ensure resource allocation.
OCT	• Organisations can measure levels of commitment through surveys that assess employee's emotional attachment, perceived costs of leaving the organisation, and sense of obligation.	• Provide career development opportunities. • Foster engagement Initiatives. • Align of values with employee's personal values.
HRT	• Organisations can create a culture that prioritises employee well-being and interpersonal relationships.	• Organise team-building activities. • Implement work-life balance initiatives. • Provide access to employee support programs.
GT	• Organisations can analyse the generational composition of their workforce to tailor their talent management strategies accordingly.	• Offer diverse learning opportunities • Implement flexible working arrangements. • Develop recognition programs.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Talent management theories are essential for understanding and addressing employee needs in today's workforce. These theories can assist the local sphere of government in building a committed workforce by fostering a supportive environment and recognising diverse perspectives. As RSA's public service - public sectors evolve, these theories will be crucial in shaping effective talent management strategies. The integration of talent management theories provides a multifaceted perspective from which organisations can assess the various factors affecting organisational effectiveness, employee motivation, and commitment. These theories offer essential insights into managing workforce dynamics and creating environments that promote high organisational performance and employee satisfaction. A thorough exploration of talent management frameworks uncovers the intricate interplay of factors that shape organisational success. By examining these dynamics, the theories highlight how strategic talent management practices can elevate both individual performance and overall organisational success. In the pursuit of excellence, fostering high performance and job satisfaction emerges as a fundamental

priority, highlighting the need for alignment between talent management strategies and broader organisational objectives. In the end, using these insights helps companies create an environment where both employees and the company can grow. This supports long-term success in a business world that is becoming more and more competitive. The following section will explore existing integrated talent management frameworks, both nationally and internationally.

2.8 EXAMINATION OF INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS

This section reviews national and international best practices for integrated talent management (ITM) to develop a framework for capacity building in NMMDM. ITM is a holistic approach that aligns talent acquisition, development, performance management, and retention with organisational goals. The study recommends adopting talent management frameworks from both the private and public sectors to achieve shared objectives. By showcasing these frameworks, local government in the Republic of South Africa can better understand the benefits of ITM strategies, enhancing its HRM regulatory frameworks and positioning itself as a model for effective municipal governance in the Republic of South Africa. The analysis will cover best practices, frameworks, and models in talent management, introduce a theoretical framework for integrated approaches, and highlight essential components for creating an effective ITM framework for capacity development. The subsequent subsection will delve into themes related to integrated frameworks, best practices, and models.

2.8.1 Themes related to integrated frameworks, best practices, and models

At this point, it is important to recall that Chapter 1, Section 1.3., of the study identified a lack of integration and a misalignment between talent management and HRM practices, and the overall organisational strategies as a challenge for the implementation of talent management. Therefore, it is imperative to explain the related concept of “integrated talent management” to establish a fundamental basis for the main area of investigation.

2.8.1.1 Integrated frameworks

Understanding the concept of an integrated framework requires an analysis of its two fundamental elements: "integration" and "frameworks." The concept of "integration" within the integrated talent management framework is crucial for enhancing organisational effectiveness, improving employee experiences, and driving strategic alignment (Ajayi & Udeh, 2024:1121). Likewise, integration is characterised by the harmonious collaboration of various components, systems, or processes to function as a cohesive unit (Prasetyo, Ambarwati, & Fitriyah, 2023:256). This notion includes

coordination, collaboration, alignment, and seamless interaction among elements aimed at achieving common objectives (Wang, Tian, Wang, Liu, Wang & Song, 2023:21):

- **Coordination** is defined as the systematic alignment of functions, departments, and stakeholders to enhance organisational performance (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020:966). Thus, a coordinated talent management approach enables organisations to identify necessary skills and competencies, thereby informing recruitment and talent development strategies.
- **Collaboration** can be defined as active participation and resource sharing among groups, which promotes open communication and mutual respect (Hadorn & Sager, 2024:3). However, challenges such as bureaucratic barriers and differing organisational cultures can impede effective collaboration (Claessens, Lammens, Barbier & Huys, 2024:144).
- **Alignment** is another critical aspect of integrated talent management, referring to the integration of organisational goals, strategies, structures, and cultures to optimise performance (Ali *et al.,* 2023:138). Additionally, aligning HR practices with strategic goals enhances employee performance and organisational effectiveness (Phiri *et al.,* 2024:172). Table 2.8, below, shows different dimensions of the concept alignment:

Table 2.8: Different components of alignment

Dimension	Components
Vertical	• Draws attention to the importance of aligning various hierarchical levels to effectively translate top-level strategies into actionable plans at lower levels.
Horizontal	• Focuses on fostering collaboration among various departments or functions, which is crucial for achieving shared organisational goals.
Temporal	• Highlights the short-term actions with long-term strategic objectives, ensuring that immediate decisions support the overarching vision of the organisation.

Source: (Sydow & Windeler, 2019:2); (Toebes, 2021:24); (Avivi *et al.,* 2024:166).

- **Seamless interaction** is defined by the integration of multiple communication channels and technologies, enabling users to engage without interruptions (Jones, 2024:112). This concept encompasses both digital and face-to-face interactions, striving to deliver a unified experience that reduces conflicts and boosts user satisfaction (Olabode, 2024:67). Furthermore, seamless interaction plays a crucial role in organisations by promoting collaboration, knowledge sharing, and efficient decision-making processes.

Going forward, this study aims to establish an integrated talent management frameworks for capacity development in NMMDM, promoting collaboration, coordination, alignment, and streamlined processes across various departments and functions in the municipality. The term "**framework"** typically offers a systematic method to comprehend, assess, or advance a specific subject or system (Lee, 2020:90). Nevertheless, other frameworks that have been identified in both research and practice, include the following:

Table 2.9: Types of frameworks

Type of framework	Functionality
Theoretical framework	• Serves as a foundation for understanding the relationships between variables in research and guides the research design and methodology.
Conceptual framework	• Defined as a visual or written product that provides a graphic or narrative explanation of the main subjects under study.
Policy framework	• Outlines the principles and guidelines for decision-making and action.

Source: (Smith, 2020:45); (Van der Waldt, 2020:12).

Against this backdrop, an integrated framework is a comprehensive structure that offers a holistic view of a specific discipline, covering various components, principles, and guidelines for public decision-making and problem-solving. As a result, the study adopted both a theoretical and conceptual framework with the aim of building an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government, which can serve as an HRM policy framework for NMMDM.

2.8.1.2 Best practices

The term "best practices," as articulated by Menon (2024:66-67), incorporates methods, techniques, or processes that have been validated through empirical evidence to yield optimal results within a particular setting. Institutions recognise this concept as the most effective and efficient way to achieve desired outcomes. Notably, successful case studies, industry standards, and expert recommendations often inform best practices. Phan *et al.,* (2018:2-3) and Brooks, Lahens, Mrčela and Grant (2024:1) further asserted that these practices serve as benchmarks for organisations aiming to enhance performance, improve quality, and maintain consistency.

2.8.1.3 Integrated models

Models are structured frameworks that illustrate the interactions and operations of components within a system or process. According to Lee and Van der Waldt (2020:177), models serve as structured frameworks that illustrate the interactions and operations of components within a system or process. Notably, models are crucial in talent management, providing a conceptual foundation for areas such as recruitment, development, performance management, and retention. Models offer a structured approach to understanding complex systems, use diagrams or charts to illustrate relationships, provide foundational concepts for decision-making and strategy development, and are applicable across various scenarios and industries.

Against this backdrop, **Integrated models** serve as specific representations of systems or processes within a broader framework, enhancing our understanding of the interconnections among various components (Piquer-Martinez *et al.,* 2024:2). While the integrated framework provides a comprehensive structure, the integrated model offers detailed insights that help to implement the framework's principles effectively (Lee, 2020:91). This relationship directs the significance of integrated models in applying the framework's guidelines, thus fostering a practical comprehension of overarching concepts. Consequently, this investigation explored integrated talent management frameworks and models interchangeably, highlighting their complementary roles in the operationalisation of talent management. The following section examines practical steps for effective implementation of integrated talent management practices in an institution.

2.9. PRACTICAL STEPS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Based on the above preceding conversation, integrating talent management practices in an institution can pose a serious challenge. However, through the implementation of a small set of common steps, such as defining a clear strategy, assessing current practices, establishing cross-functional collaboration and many more, institutions can create an integrated and effective talent management framework that drives success. The following Table 2.10, outlines detailed steps and typical actions for the successful integration of talent management practices:

Table 2.10: Steps for effective implementation of integrated talent management

Step	Description	Action
1	**Define a clear strategy**	• Establish a clear talent management strategy aligned with organisational goals and objectives. Identify the key areas to integrate, such as recruitment, performance management,

		learning and development, and succession planning.
2	**Assess current practices**	• Evaluate existing talent management practices to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Also, determine which practices can be integrated to complement each other.
3	**Establish cross-functional collaboration**	• Foster collaboration and communication among different departments or functions involved in talent management. Encourage sharing of information, best practices, and insights to ensure a cohesive approach.
4	**Standardise processes**	• Develop standardised processes and guidelines for talent management practices to ensure consistency and fairness across the organisation. This includes defining clear criteria for recruitment, performance evaluation, and career development.
5	**Leverage technology**	• Utilise technology solutions, such as integrated HR systems or talent management software, to streamline and automate talent management processes. This enables efficient data management, reporting, and analysis.
6	**Provide training and development**	• Offer training and development programs to HR professionals and managers involved in talent management. This ensures employees have the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively implement and integrate practices.
7	**Monitor and evaluate**	• Continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of integrated talent management practices. Collect feedback from employees, track key metrics, and adjust where necessary to optimise outcomes.
8	**Foster a culture of integration**	• Promote a culture that values integration and collaboration across the organisation. Encourage cross-functional teamwork, knowledge sharing, and a shared understanding of the importance of integrated talent management.

Sources: (Wahyuningtyas, 2015:202); (Shabane, 2017:167); (Mabope, 2018:83); (Nzonzo & Du Plessis, 2020:5).

Table 2.10 above highlights the necessity of following a sequential process for integrated talent management (ITM) within institutions. This approach ensures systematic alignment with institutional objectives, promotes efficient resource allocation, and establishes a fair and consistent method for talent development and succession planning. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing any gaps or challenges that may occur during implementation. The

subsequent section will explore both national and international frameworks for integrated talent management.

2.10 ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS

As discussed in Section 2.6 of the study, various scientific theories and research findings support national and international integrated talent management frameworks, highlighting their importance in aligning talent strategies with organisational goals, enhancing employee engagement, promoting diversity, facilitating global talent mobility, leveraging data for decision-making, and ensuring adaptability in a changing environment. Therefore, leveraging research evidence from these frameworks and models will provide the study with insight, tools, and strategies to strengthen the development of an integrated talent management framework for capacity development, which is due to be presented in Chapter 6 of the study.

2.10.1 Integrated talent management frameworks: local context

The literature review on national ITM will explore successful talent management initiatives within local context, highlighting successfully implemented strategies and tools in the public service and public sector.

2.10.1.1 Kock and Burke Integrated Talent Management Wheel

Kock and Burke (2008:463-466) established an integrated talent management wheel aimed to enhance employee engagement within organisations. Both practitioners listed key components of talent management that contribute to successful organisational outcomes, such as:

- Talent identification.
- Talent classification.
- Career management.
- Talent balance sheet.
- Talent planning, and
- Employee engagement.

Employee engagement plays a pivotal role in organisational success; it is defined by the psychological and emotional commitment of employees to the organisation's vision, mission, and values. This commitment is essential for enhancing productivity and efficiency, which ultimately contributes to achieving organisational goals and objectives, thereby promoting stable employment

and retaining skilled employees. While financial incentives are significant motivators, they are not the sole drivers of engagement: a supportive work environment, effective communication, trust, and alignment with the organisation's goals are critical factors that enhance job satisfaction and commitment. Therefore, this study aimed to create an integrated talent management implementation framework that prioritises capacity development and places employee engagement at its core.

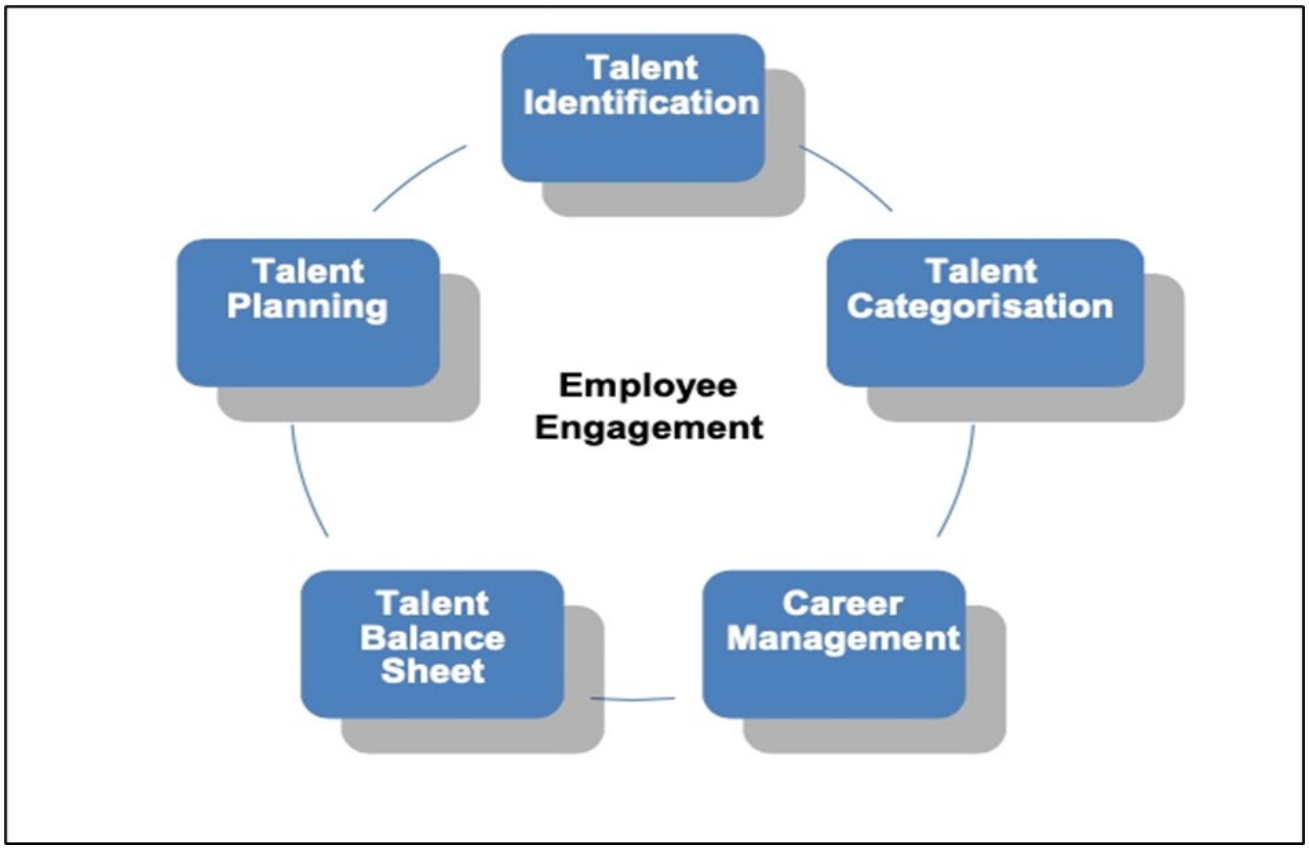

Figure 2.1: Kock and Burke Integrated Talent Management Wheel
Source: (Kock & Burke 2008:463).

Several core HRM components underpin the integrated talent management model, each playing a critical role in the overall process (Kock & Burke 2008:463). See the following:

- *Talent planning* serves as the initial step, focusing on assessing the current skills within the organisation and comparing them to the essential skills needed to achieve strategic objectives.
- *Talent identification* involves recognising high-performing employees and evaluating their competencies to ascertain their readiness for advanced roles.
- *Talent classification* analyses the data gathered during the identification phase, facilitating informed discussions among senior management regarding employee categorisation.
- *Career management* is also vital, as organisations must support employees in their career growth, aligning personal aspirations with organisational goals.

- *Talent balance sheet* consolidates HR-related data from various processes, enabling organisations to reflect on their talent management strategies.
- *Employee engagement* reflects the emotional and rational commitment of employees, which significantly influences productivity and retention. Basically, engaged employees, motivated by factors other than financial rewards, contribute to a positive work environment and align with the organisation's mission and values, thereby enhancing overall job satisfaction and commitment.

The following section explores the City of Cape Town's Talent Management Framework.

2.10.1.2 City of Cape Town Talent Management Framework

The City of Cape Town has acknowledged the necessity of a strong talent management framework to improve its governance and service delivery (Koketso, 2011:26-27). The City of Cape Town's talent management framework (CCTTMF) is distinguished by its innovative design, which is specifically adapted to the region's socio-economic context.

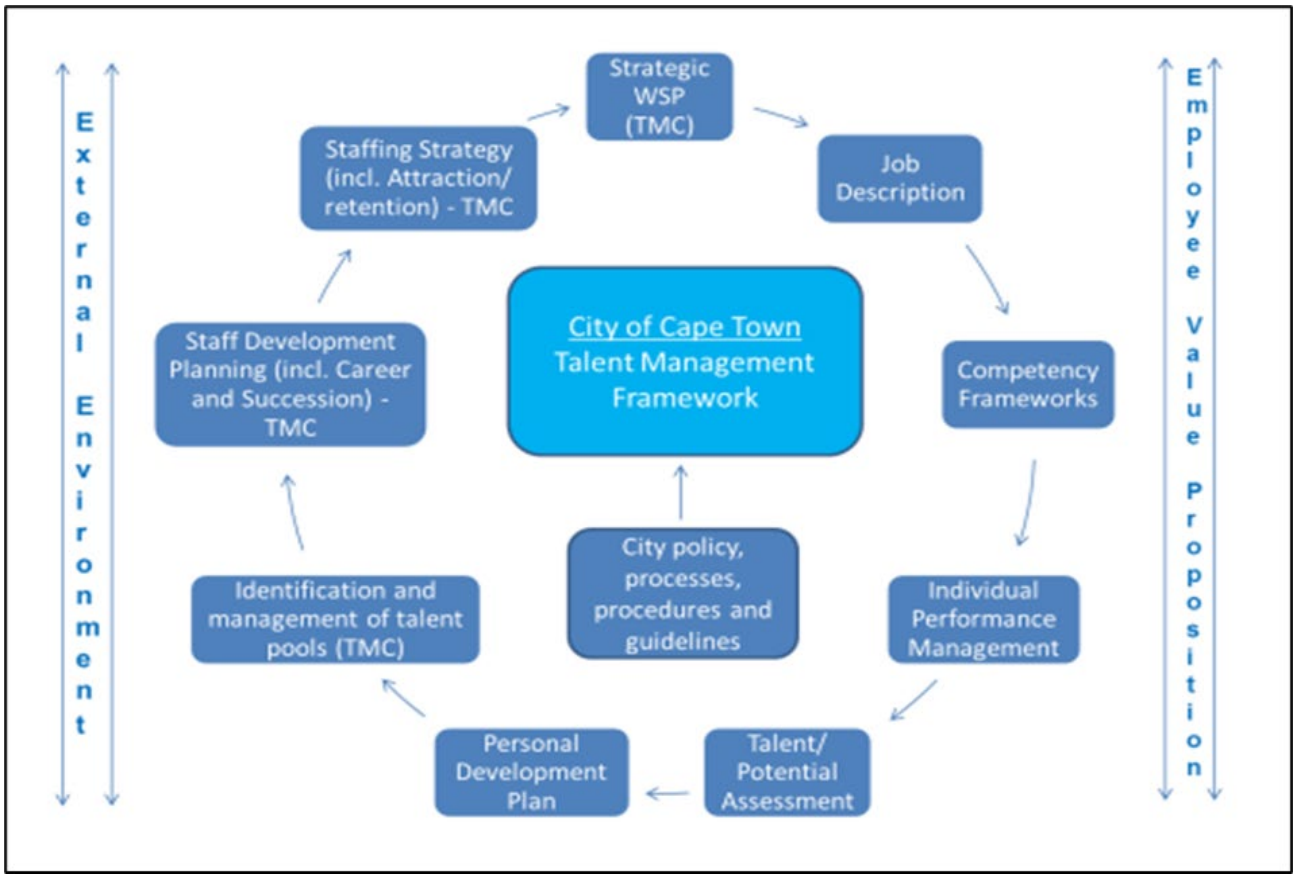

Figure 2.2: The City of Cape Town Talent Management Framework

Source: (Koketso, 2011:26-27).

This framework involves various elements, such as targeted recruitment strategies, extensive employee development programs, and performance management systems, all aimed at cultivating a culture of excellence and accountability:

- *Strategic workforce skill planning*: This process identifies necessary skills and competencies for current and future roles, aligning training programs to ensure employees meet organisational goals. It aids in identifying skill gaps and fostering a culture of continuous learning.
- *Job Descriptions*: Clear job descriptions outline responsibilities and expectations, aiding in talent acquisition, performance management, and career development.
- *Competency frameworks (CFs):* CFs supplement job descriptions and support the broader talent management strategy by delineating performance requirements across all organisational levels.
- *Individual performance management*: The CCTTMF employs mechanisms such as goal setting, performance reviews, and recognition programs to align individual goals with organisational objectives, promoting continuous improvement.
- *Personal development plans (PDP's):* PDP's outline developmental objectives and are reviewed annually to clarify expectations and identify growth areas, benefiting both employees and the municipality.
- *Identification and management of talent pool:* Various programs, including performance evaluations and leadership development initiatives, are used to identify and nurture high-potential individuals for future leadership roles.
- *Staff development planning*: This process focuses on assessing current employee skills, creating development plans, and evaluating the effectiveness of training initiatives.
- *Strategic staffing strategy*: The City's staffing strategy ensures the effective hiring and retention of individuals with the right skills at the right time, serving as the foundation for its talent management process.
- *Policies, processes, procedures, and guidelines* underpin the City of Cape Town's talent management framework, aiming to foster a skilled and engaged workforce.
- *External environment*: Analysing the external environment and *employee value proposition* (EVP) is crucial for understanding challenges and opportunities in talent management, with the value proposition serving as an incentive for attracting skilled individuals.

The City's talent management framework is characterised by key components such as competency frameworks, PDPs, and technology solutions that facilitate their integration. The external environment and the employee EVP positively influence the successful implementation of this integrated framework. Senior leadership is crucial to driving talent management throughout the organisation, ensuring effective execution that reflects the organisational culture and engages all employees in the process. Additionally, the City of Cape Town recognises that talent management

technology extends beyond modest software implementation, requiring a thorough understanding of the external business environment to effectively inform its talent management strategy.

2.10.1.3 Lee and Van Der Waldt Integrated Talent Management Model for Public Service

The RSA public sector is facing significant workforce management challenges, including skill shortages, high turnover rates, and the need for enhanced employee engagement (Chapter 1, Section 1.3). As the demand for effective public service delivery rises, strategic talent management has become essential. To address these issues, the Lee and Van der Waldt Integrated Talent Management Model for Public Service (ITMMPS) offers a comprehensive framework specifically designed for the unique needs of the public service. This model successfully integrates various talent management components, balancing essential and non-essential elements while considering the influences of the external macro-environment, meso-environment, and internal microenvironment (Lee & Van der Waldt, 2020:184).

Level (**A)** represents the macroenvironment, encompassing various factors, such as political, economic, social, technological, and business settings, that significantly impact talent management operations. This layer not only addresses the strategic elements of talent management but also considers the broader supply and demand dynamics affecting the availability of skilled labour. Additionally, the macro layer includes several other critical areas that further influence talent management practices such as the following:

- An examination of the external environment of public institutions is conducted, with a specific focus on identifying the important strategic key drivers and restricting variables that have an impact on talent management.
- This model provides an analysis of the legal and regulatory environment in RSA that influences human resource management and talent management practices in the public service.
- An assessment of the international best practices and the principles that underpin talent management is conducted, with a specific focus on their application in public service and public sector contexts.
- An evaluation of the various viewpoints on talent management is conducted in the context of establishing and utilising support guidelines for the implementation of the integrated talent management framework within the public service.

Notably, the external macro-environment serves as the outermost component of the ITMMPS. The ITMMPS's meso-level environment is similar. The meso-level environment of the Integrated Talent Management Model for Public Service (ITMMPS) is defined by two distinct functions: core

components (B) and non-core support components (C). This second tier emphasise the crucial role of senior and middle managers in the public sector in effectively executing talent management strategies. Conversely, the non-core support functions focus on developing various processes, tools, and methodologies across government institutions to aid in the successful implementation of talent management's key elements. A graphical representation of the ITMMPS is presented in Figure 2.3, below:

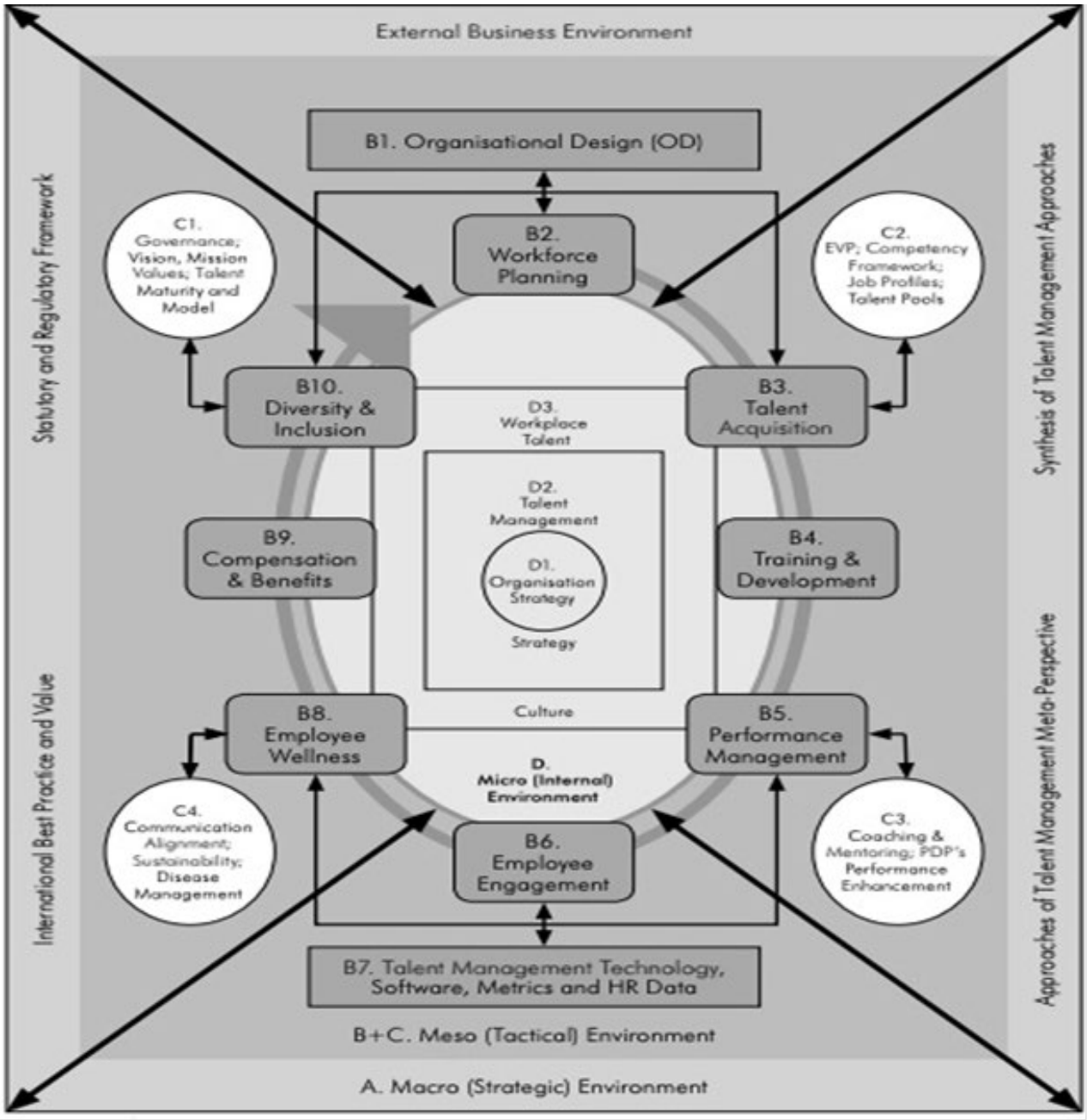

Figure 2.3: Lee and Van der Waldt integrated talent management model for Public Service
Source: (Lee & Van der Waldt, 2020:13).

Central to the ITMMPS are the micro-level dimensions of talent management **(D),** which encompass the following range of specific functions essential for operational success:

- Establishing a workplace environment that values and nurtures talent is crucial.
- Formulating a comprehensive strategy for managing talent within the organisation.
- Ensuring that these components are in line with the overall organisational and departmental strategies.

The micro-level functions are essential components of the ITMMPS, as they inform and influence decision-making by political leadership and senior management. These functions, linked to the operational aspects of public institutions, necessitate engagement between front-line personnel and customer service employees across various divisions. The micro-components act as foundational elements for organisational performance, highlighting the importance of a robust base for advancing an integrated talent management model.

The ITMMPS is characterised by its flexibility and recognition of the importance of incorporating employee input, which significantly enhances employee engagement and job satisfaction. Additionally, the integration of bottom-up and top-down interfaces supports the model's effectiveness by promoting alignment between departmental strategic objectives and employee's aspirations for talent development. The study points out that the ITMMPS cultivates a talent culture and a career development mindset, resulting in a more motivated, skilled, and loyal workforce, which in turn drives greater success and innovation. Therefore, it is essential for the three environmental layers of the model to be well-aligned to positively influence employee productivity, efficiency, competency, and capacity.

2.10.1.4 A Framework Development for Talent Management in the Higher Education Sector

The development of a talent management A Framework Development for Talent Management in the Higher Education Sector (FDTMHES) is motivated by a number of key factors. Firstly, these institutions face significant challenges in attracting and retaining high-quality academic staff, exacerbated by an ageing workforce nearing retirement. This approach established an urgent need for new talent to ensure the sustainability and competitive advantage of universities. Additionally, there is a growing demand for academic staff, which further complicates retention efforts. Despite the importance of talent management in achieving organisational goals, there is limited research on integrated talent management systems specific to South African universities (Musakuro, 2022:10). The unique aspects and principles of a FDTMHES include the following:

- Attracting talent.
- Acquiring talent.
- Growing talent.

- Management and talent retention.

Talent management policies and governance systems support all these components, with continuous measurement and review. Next, is the graphical presentation of FDTMHES.

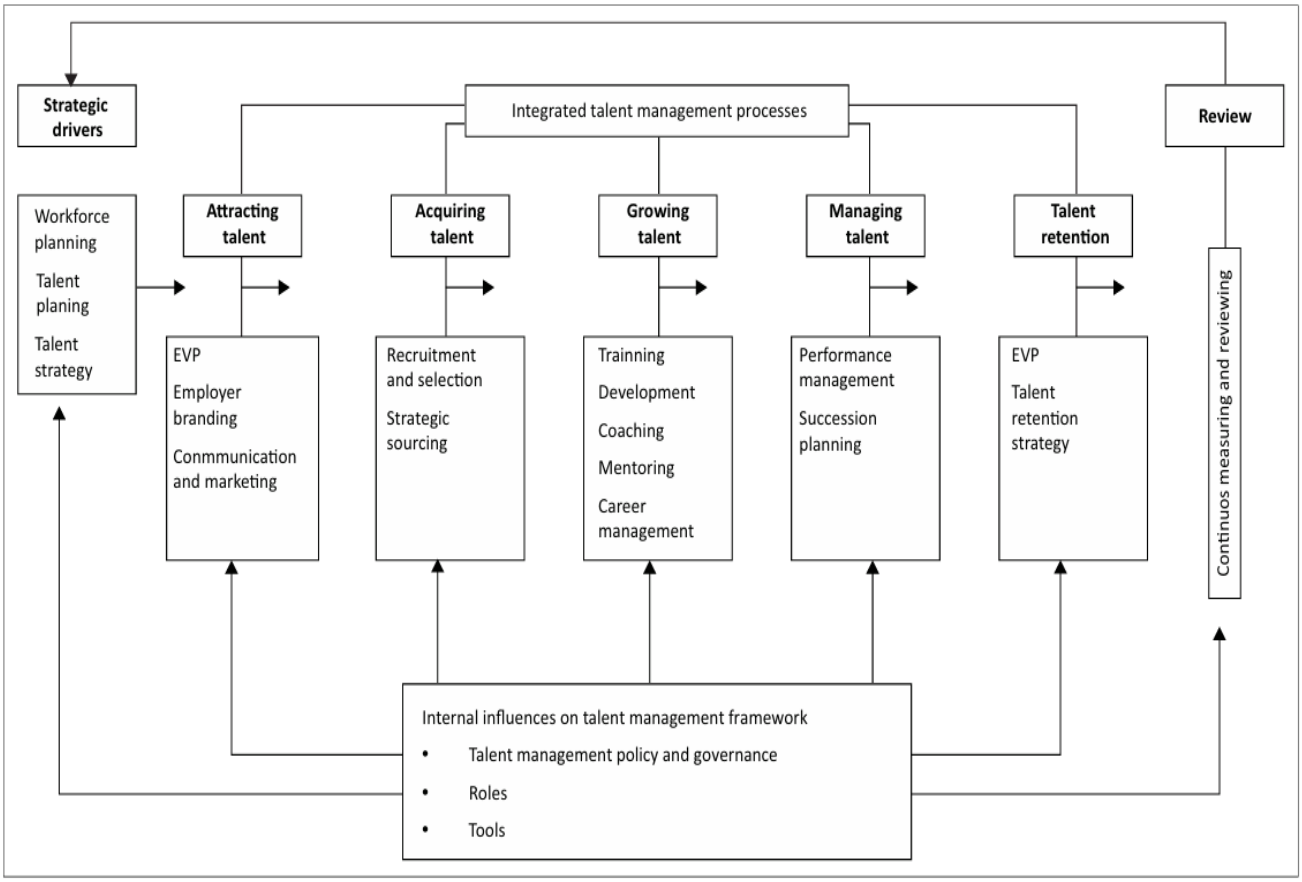

Figure 2.4: A framework development for talent management in the higher education sector
Source: (Musakuro, 2022:10).

Figure 2.4 above noted that, an examination of integrated talent management frameworks at the public sector and public services in RSA, it is now imperative to investigate international integrated management frameworks to broaden the perspective on best practices and global approaches.

2.10.2 Integrated talent management frameworks: global context

The international review on integrated talent management highlights the importance of understanding global practices to enhance local talent management in the RSA public institutions. By leveraging international literature, the study aims to identify best practices and successful case studies that can serve as benchmarks. It features the introduction of innovative, evidence-based approaches that can improve local talent management practices. The research adapted strategies from other regions to address specific challenges faced by the NMMDM, such as skills shortages,

employee engagement, and talent development. Additionally, exposure to international practices encourages creativity, innovation, and collaboration for knowledge exchange. This literature review aims to inform framework development, and promote cultural sensitivity, leading to more inclusive and effective talent management in NMMDM. The next section discusses the Wahyuningtyas Integrated Talent Management System.

2.10.2.1 Wahyuningtyas Integrated Talent Management System

A proactive and systematic approach to human resource management enhances the effectiveness of organisational structure, underlining the necessity for organisations to implement structured talent management processes to achieve sustained competitive advantage. As depicted in Figure 2.5., below, this system aligns corporate strategy with business strategy and holds three primary blocks, as noted by Wahyuningtyas (2015:202). The reminder blocks encompass talent recruiting processes, talent development, and talent retention.

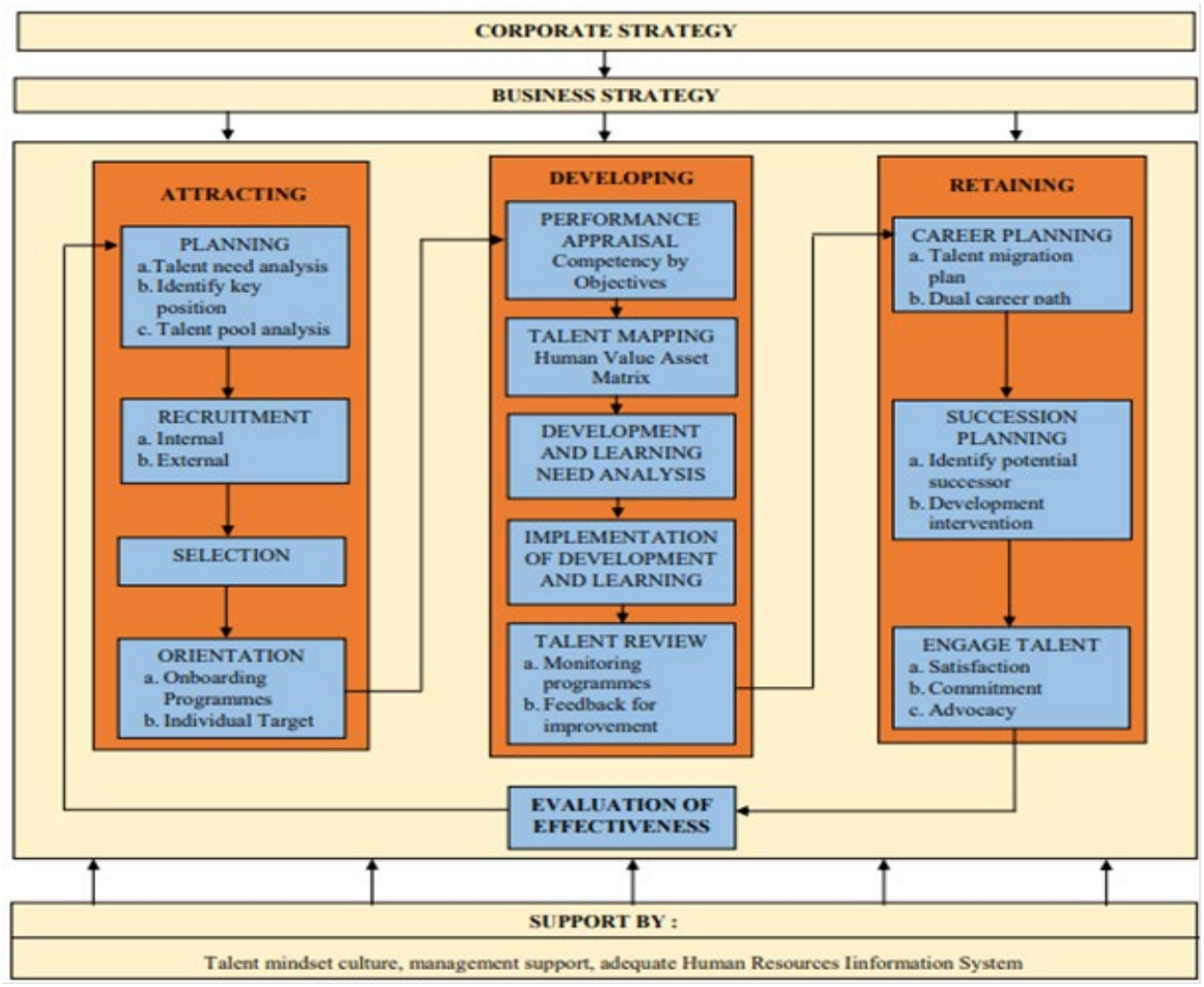

Figure 2.5 Wahyuningtyas integrated talent management system

Source: (Wahyuningtyas, 2015:198).

The *corporate strategy* serves to define an organisation's overarching direction and goals, thereby guiding high-level decision-making and resource allocation. Accordingly, it establishes a framework for *business strategy*, ensuring that all initiatives align with the organisation's long-term vision and objectives. Consequently, business strategy translates the broader corporate vision into actionable plans that address competitive positioning, market entry, and operational efficiency.

The *evaluation and effectiveness* framework aims to assess the impact and success of talent management initiatives by systematically measuring the outcomes of efforts related to talent attraction, development, and retention. This model stresses the critical components that underpin effective talent management, including a talent mindset culture, management support, and HRM information systems:

- A talent *mindset culture*, which values employees as essential assets, promotes engagement, continuous learning, and diversity, thereby enhancing innovation and aligning with corporate strategies.
- Furthermore, *management support* plays a vital role in resource allocation, mentorship, and performance recognition, which motivates employees and aligns their individual goals with organisational objectives.
- Additionally, effective HRM information systems are crucial for enabling data-driven decision-making, automating HR functions, and tracking employee development, allowing HR professionals to concentrate on strategic initiatives.

These components collectively synchronise talent management processes with corporate and business strategy, ultimately fuelling the organisational performance.

2.10.2.2 BeamPines Integrated Talent Management Model

The development of the BeamPines Integrated Talent Management Model (BeamPines ITMM) can be attributed to BeamPines, a renowned consulting business specialising in talent management. The model consists of eight talent management blocks which includes:

- talent acquisition and onboarding;
- talent development and learning;
- career pathing;
- engagement and wellness;
- performance management; and
- succession and workforce planning (BeamPines, 2019:1).

Figure 2.6: BeamPines integrated talent management model

Source: (BeamPines, 2019:1-5).

The BeamPines ITMM effectively integrates the *talent strategy* with the business strategy by ensuring that talent management practices are aligned with the organisation's strategic goals and objectives. This alignment facilitates talent acquisition, development, and retention efforts that directly support the business strategy. Consequently, the talent strategy ensures that the institution possesses the right individuals in appropriate roles, equipped with the necessary skills and capabilities to enhance business performance and achieve strategic objectives. Thus, the talent strategy serves as a vital link between the business strategy and talent management as HRM practices in the organisation. The model's distinctive aspect is its spotlight on "engagement & wellness," which is crucial for fostering a productive and efficient workplace. As noted by BeamPines (2019:1), employee engagement and motivation are essential for achieving optimal performance. Moreover, the BeamPines ITMM strategy relies on multiple key enablers that are critical for its success. Below is Figure 2.7, which presents a graphical representation of BeamPines Talent Management Enablers:

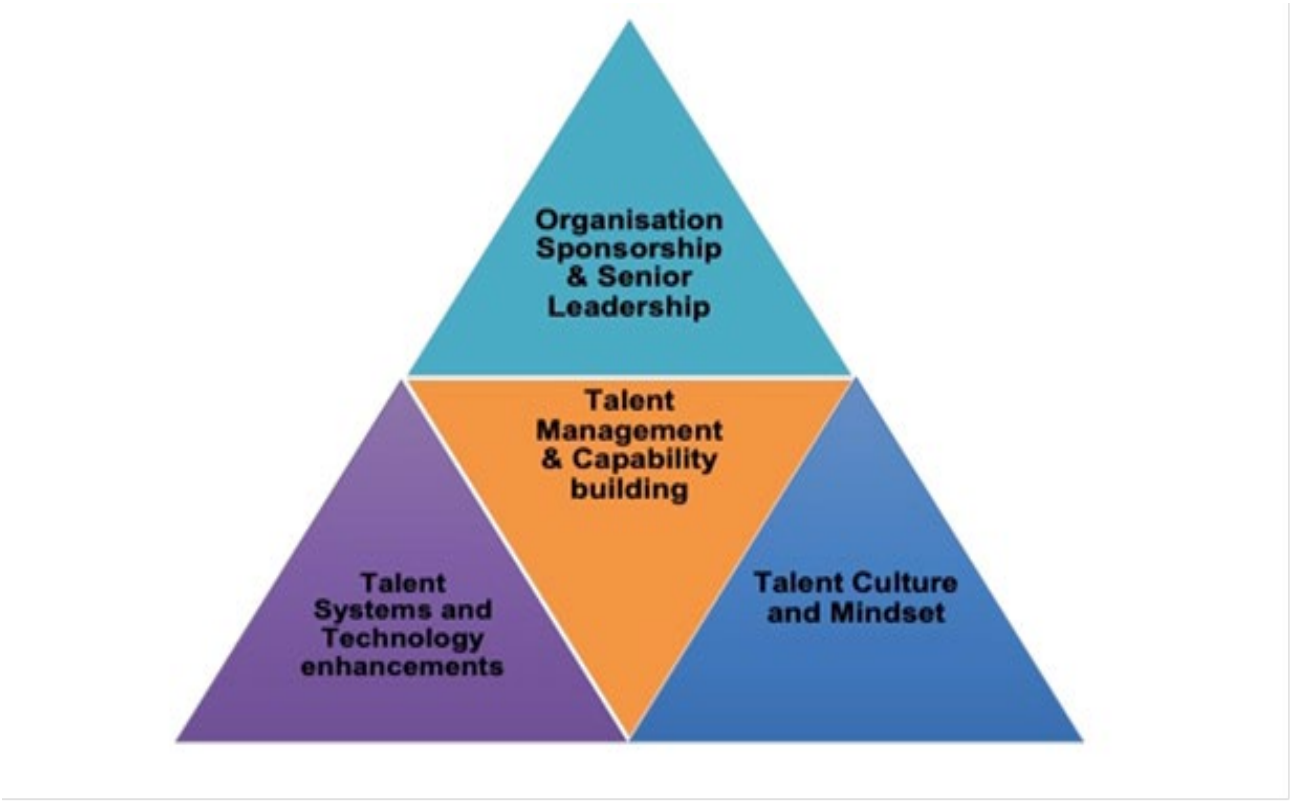

Figure 2.7: BeamPines Talent Management Enablers

Sources: (BeamPines, 2019:1-5).

- Organisational sponsorship and senior leadership are crucial, since they set a tone and guarantee the engagement and commitment of all key stakeholders.
- *Talent management and capacity building* within the organisation is vital for the long-term integration of talent management practices.
- The role of *technology, data analysis, and reporting* in facilitating the implementation and ongoing maintenance of talent management initiatives through trend analyses cannot be overlooked.
- Fostering a *supportive workplace culture* enhances employee development, satisfaction, and motivation, ultimately leading to favourable talent outcomes.

2.10.2.3 Faqihi and Miah Artificial Intelligence-Driven Talent Management Framework

The Faqihi and Maih Artificial Intelligence-Driven Talent Management Framework signifies a notable progression in the application of artificial intelligence (AI) within talent management, aimed at improving various HR functions. The use of AI technologies in the framework improves talent recruitment, talent development, employee engagement, performance management and talent retention (Faqihi & Miah, 2023:14). A visual representation of the Faqihi and Maih artificial intelligence-driven talent management framework is displayed in Figure 2.10.2.3 below.

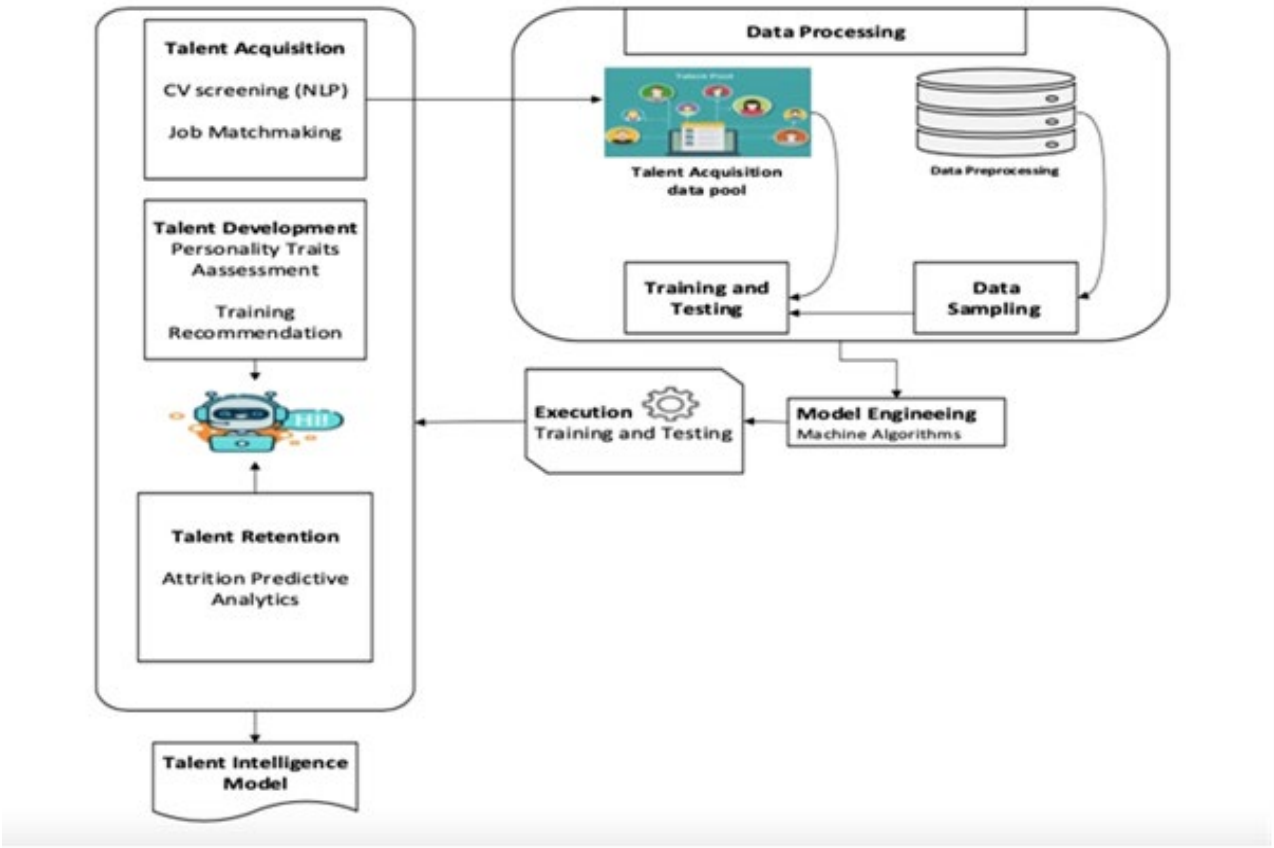

Figure 2.8 Faqihi and Miah Artificial Intelligence-Driven Talent Management Framework
Source: (Faqihi & Miah, 2023:14).

The framework has the following key features:

- Data-driven decision-making.
- Predictive analytics.
- Personalised employee experiences.
- Routine HR tasks that can be automated.
- Continuous learning and development.

Through employing data-driven decision-making and predictive analytics, organisations can effectively identify top performers, evaluate potential risks, and make informed strategic decisions that boost employee engagement and productivity. This approach allows HR practitioners to focus on more strategic initiatives, such as automating routine tasks and fostering continuous learning to equip employees with essential skills for a rapidly changing business landscape. In summary, the Faqihi and Maih artificial intelligence-driven talent management framework provides a comprehensive solution for organisations seeking to maximise the potential of their workforce. Thus, the integration of AI in talent management practices not only streamlines processes but also

necessitates a commitment to ethical practices, ensuring fairness and inclusivity while enhancing organisational effectiveness.

2.11 SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

This section provides an overview of integrated talent management frameworks from both national and international perspectives. It further explores key principles, strategies, and practices that guide effective talent management in diverse organisational contexts.

Table 2.11: Comparative analysis of reviewed integrated TM frameworks

Talent Management Frameworks	Core elements
Kock & Burke Integrated Talent Management Wheel	• Employee engagement • Emotional and rational commitment • Positive work environment • Capacity development
The City of Cape Town's Talent Management Framework	• Employee value proposition • Technology solutions • Competency frameworks • Personal development plans • External environment
Lee & Van Der Waldt Integrated Talent Management Model for Public Service	• Organisational design • Workforce planning • Talent acquisition • Training and development • Performance management • Employee engagement and wellness • Compensation and benefits • Diversity and inclusion • Technology, software, metrics and data • Workplace talent culture • Organisational strategy
A Framework Development for Talent Management in the Higher Education Sector	• Identifying and nurturing top talent • Professional development • Innovation and collaboration • Diversity and inclusion

	• Supportive environment
Wahyuningtyas Integrated Talent Management system	• Talent mindset, • Management support, • Adequate HR information system
BeamPines Integrated Talent Management Model	• Enterprise sponsorship and investment, • Talent management capability and process, • Technology, data analysis and reporting, • Supportive workplace culture
Faqihi & Maih Artificial Intelligence-Driven Talent Management Framework	• Talent data-driven decision-making • Predictive analytics • Personalised employee experiences • Automating routine HR tasks • Continuous learning and development.

Source: (Kock & Burke, 2008:463–466); (Koketso, 2011:26-27); (Wahyuningtyas, 2015:198), (BeamPines, 2019:1-5); (Lee & Van der Waldt, 2020:11-13); (Musakuro, 2022:10); (Faqihi & Miah, 2023:14).

Table 2.11, above, illustrates that national and international talent management frameworks exhibit equivalent fundamental components, including talent acquisition, employee development, and performance management. Nevertheless, international frameworks distinguish themselves from local contexts by incorporating diverse cultural viewpoints, opening access to a worldwide talent pool, utilising technology, and ensuring uniformity in processes across the board. Therefore, the local sphere of the government realm is essential in influencing their implementation to better service their residents.

2.12 CONCLUSION

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive review of national and international theories and frameworks of talent management, intensifying their relevance to local government, particularly within the NMMDM context. It synthesises various theoretical perspectives and practical frameworks to establish a foundational understanding of effective talent management components. The findings highlight that successful talent management requires a tailored implementation framework that addresses the unique challenges and opportunities of the local government sector. The integration of best practices from various contexts pointed out the necessity for adaptability and contextualisation in developing a robust talent management strategy. Furthermore, the insights gained from this review offer essential guidelines for creating an integrated talent management

implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development within the NMMDM. By aligning talent management practices with established theories and frameworks, the NMMDM can cultivate a more skilled workforce, ultimately improving public service delivery and community development.

As the research advances, it is crucial for NMMDM to engage stakeholders at all levels to ensure that the proposed framework is both theoretically sound and practically applicable to community needs. This collaborative approach is vital for promoting a culture of continuous learning and aligning talent management practices with the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Thereby establishing a foundation for sustainable growth in the NMMDM region. The subsequent chapter will address context and capacity challenges, along with the statutory and regulatory framework for capacity development in local government.

CHAPTER THREE
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCAL SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT: LEGISLATIVE AND IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In South Africa, the local sphere of government plays a significant role in ensuring the delivery of essential services and the promotion of social well-being among its citizens. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the legislative and regulatory frameworks that underpin the operations of local government, with a specific focus on the local sphere of government. It will explore the context, circumstances, and capacity challenges faced by local government entities in implementing effective talent management practices. By examining the unique dynamics and constraints within the local sphere, the chapter sets the stage for a deeper understanding of the complex factors that influence talent management in this sector. These factors include limited resources and organisational capacity, as well as the need to navigate evolving regulatory requirements. The chapter further highlights the entanglements that the local sphere of government encounters in balancing the challenges while striving to enhance workforce capabilities and service delivery effectiveness.

The Constitution of South Africa, 1996, along with various regulatory frameworks, establishes the foundation for local sphere governance systems, clearly defining the powers, responsibilities, and functions of local authorities. Furthermore, these frameworks aim to foster principles of democratic governance, accountability, and participatory development at the grassroots level. However, despite these robust structures, municipalities often grapple with significant setbacks that hinder their capacity to attract, develop, and retain talent. Effective talent management is certainly crucial for enhancing the capacity of the local sphere of government to respond to the needs of their communities. As indicated in Chapter 2, Section 2.3, it consists of a range of practices, including recruitment, training, performance management, and succession planning. Yet, municipalities frequently encounter hurdles such as limited financial resources, inadequate training programs, high staff turnover, and a lack of a strategic focus on human capital development. These predicaments not only impede the effectiveness of local governance but also affect the overall quality of public service delivery to citizens and residents of the country.

Next, this chapter will delve into the intricate relationship between the legislative context and the operational realities faced by municipalities in South Africa. In addition, it will also explore the specific complications that hinder effective talent management practices and project potential strategies for overcoming these barriers. The processes are backed by Chapter 4, which will clarify the research methodology employed in the study. The researcher will conduct empirical interviews

to understand the complexities of talent management practices for capacity development in the NMMDM and identify pathways for improvement. This process will inform the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government, specifically targeting the NMMDM.

3.2 LOCAL SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT: CONTEXT

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, establishes a comprehensive legal framework for local government, stressing its autonomy as a distinct sphere of governance along with national and provincial levels (RSA, 1996:85). Section 151 affirms the rights of municipalities to govern their own affairs, enabling them to address the unique needs of their communities. Furthermore, the Constitution underscores the significance of public participation in local governance, as outlined in Section 195, which mandates transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to public needs (RSA, 1996:99).

Local sphere of government plays a critical role in a developmental state, tasked with addressing socio-economic challenges faced by citizens (Gumede, 2019(a):505). Scholars highlighted the pressing social and economic disparities in South Africa, with high unemployment and poverty rates necessitating effective public service delivery, particularly to marginalised communities (Francis & Webster, 2019:788; Madumo & Koma, 2019:581). The NDP Vision 2030 further mandates municipalities to enhance governance systems to improve the quality of life for all citizens (RSA, 2011:120). However, challenges such as ineffective leadership, poor policy implementation, and corruption hinder the ability of municipalities to execute plans effectively (Matyana & Mthethwa, 2022:132).

Section 153 of the Constitution 1996 mandates that municipalities in South Africa prioritise the basic needs of their communities in their administrative processes (RSA, 1996:84). Sithole (2023:3) emphasised the need for competent administrations to align policies with developmental goals. Despite the responsibility of local governments to provide essential services to approximately 60 million people, many municipalities face severe financial constraints, necessitating inclusive budgetary approaches (RSA, 1996:149-152; STATS SA, 2024:10). Moreover, an effective performance management system is crucial for the successful implementation of municipal integrated development plan (IDP) developmental objectives (Khunoethe, Reddy & Mthuli, 2021:167-169). This systematic approach involves planning, monitoring, and evaluating service delivery, which is essential for ensuring that the local sphere of government meet their operational and developmental responsibilities effectively (Zwane & Matsiliza, 2022:4). Overall, the effectiveness and efficiency of local government services hinge on the capabilities of their employees to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. In addition to the

constitutional mandate, several key pieces of legislation govern local government in the Republic of South Africa:

- **The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 (MSA)**: The Act establishes distinct types of municipalities and outlines the framework for their governance structures. It aims to promote democratic and accountable local government (RSA, 1998:20).
- **The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (MSA)**: The MSA sets out the framework for the planning, implementation, and management of municipal services. It underscores the importance of IDP and community participation in the decision-making process (RSA, 2000:38).
- **The Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA)**: The MFMA regulates municipal financial management, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of public funds. It aims to enhance the financial viability of South African municipalities and improve service delivery (RSA, 2003:2).
- **The Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004 (MPRA)**: The MPRA provides municipalities with the authority to levy property rates, which are essential for generating revenue to fund local services and development initiatives (RSA, 2004:2).

In a nutshell, the local sphere of government in the RSA plays a leading role in fostering development through effective service delivery, economic growth, community engagement, infrastructure development, capacity building, and the management of social and environmental adversities. As a result, the legal and constitutional framework supports democratic governance and accountability, enabling municipalities to operate autonomously while prioritising public participation. However, addressing the capacity development of municipalities is crucial to effectively respond to the varied needs of their communities, thereby ensuring sustainable development and enhancing citizen well-being. The next part explains the characteristics and structure of the local sphere of government in the RSA.

3.2.1 Characteristics and structure of the local government sphere

This section will examine the key characteristics of the local sphere of government in RSA, including its proximity to communities, decentralised authority, and primary focus on service delivery. It will also explore the role of citizen participation in local governance, the diverse functions performed by the local sphere of government, and the significance of its elected democratic representation. Additionally, the section will assess the regulatory authority of local governments, their financial independence, including capacity for innovation, and the framework for intergovernmental relations. Collectively, these characteristics shape the existence, operations, and overall effectiveness of the local sphere of government in delivering public services.

The structure of the local sphere of government in RSA covers different types of municipalities, which define the administrative divisions at the local level. Examine the various categories of municipalities, distinguishing them based on the size, population, and economic characteristics of the regions they serve. Furthermore, evaluate the dimensions of municipalities, concentrating on their topographical, economic, and demographic factors. Finally, this section will present an overview of the number of municipalities in RSA, elucidating the extent and distribution of local governance throughout the entire country.

Table 3.1: Characteristics and structure of the local sphere of government

Characteristics	Key features
Closest proximity	Local government is strategically positioned to address the immediate needs of their communities, allowing for effective responses to local concerns.
Decentralisation	Facilitates decentralisation, empowering the local sphere of government with decision-making autonomy, which is crucial for improving local governance.
Service delivery focus	Provides essential services, including clean water, sanitation, and housing, which are critical for community development
Participation local government	Promotes community involvement in governance to enhance transparency and accountability, thereby strengthening local democracy through citizen engagement in the decision-making processes.
Diverse functions	Engages in diverse functions such as urban planning, economic development, and the provision of social services, all aimed at addressing the unique needs of their respective communities.
Elected representation	Involves elected representatives who are accountable to their constituents, ensuring that local voices are recorded in the political arena.
Regulatory authority	Possesses the power to establish and implement by-laws that tackle community-specific concerns, including land use and public health, essential for ensuring order and safety.
Financial independence	Obtains funding from national and provincial

	authorities while also generating revenue through local taxes and fees, thereby enhancing their financial autonomy.
Capacity for innovation	Retains the autonomy to develop and implement innovative policies and programs tailored to address specific service delivery trials, thereby enhancing effective governance.
Intergovernmental relations	Participates in intergovernmental relations to collaborate with provincial and national authorities, effectively addressing regional difficulties through coordinated efforts.

Source: (Dlamini, 2018:50); (Madumo & Koma, 2019:581); (Reddy, 2019:56); (Zuma, 2019:67); (Mthembu, 2020:45); (Sibanda, 2020:12); (Ndlovu, 2021:34); (Mathe, 2021:89).

Table 3.1 above demonstrates that the local sphere of government in RSA is characterised by its focus on promoting democratic governance, ensuring accountable service delivery, and fostering community participation through diverse municipalities with distinct governance structures and responsibilities. The subsequent section presents the structure of the local government in the RSA.

3.2.2 Structure of local government

The local sphere of government in the RSA constitutes the third sphere of government, alongside national and provincial spheres (Mlambo & Maserumule, 2024:216). The local sphere is responsible for providing essential services and executive authority within the local region Furthermore, this sphere of government is organised into three categories, as shown in Table 3.2, (RSA, 1996:104; Madumo & Koma, 2019:583):

Table 3.2: Three categories of municipalities in the Republic of South Africa

Type of Municipality	Category of Municipality	Dimension of Municipality	Number of Municipalities in RSA
Metropolitan municipality	A category	Urban areas with large populations	8 (eight)
Districts municipality	C category	Rural areas with multiple local municipalities	44 (forty-four)
Local municipality	B category	Smaller urban or rural regions	205 (two hundred and five)

Source: (RSA,1996:104); (Madumo & Koma, 2019:583).

As shown in Table 3.2, above, each category of a municipality serves a specific function within the local governance framework. For instance: -

- The eight (8) metropolitan municipalities are large urban areas that serve as the primary centres of economic activity and governance. These municipalities provide a wide range of services to densely populated areas and have a high degree of autonomy.
- The forty-four (44) district municipalities serve as a collective governance structure for a group of local municipalities within a specific geographical area. Constitutionally, the district municipalities are responsible for coordinating public service delivery and development planning across the local municipalities in their jurisdiction. Furthermore, these districts also provide support and assistance to local municipalities, particularly in areas where capacity may be lacking.
- Finally, there are two hundred and five (205) local municipalities, which are the most localised form of governance and are responsible for delivering public services directly to communities. The local municipalities in the RSA, which operate within the boundaries of district municipalities, are responsible for addressing the specific needs of their residents through public service delivery, infrastructure development, and community engagement.

In the end, while the local sphere of government in the RSA Republic of South Africa embodies the principles of a democratic developmental state, it faces significant barriers that impede its effectiveness. A democratic developmental state is a political system where the government actively promotes economic development and social justice while ensuring democratic governance, inclusivity, and accountability (Ukwandu, 2019:43). In such a state, the government plays a central role in steering the economy towards equitable growth, addressing issues like poverty, inequality, and unemployment, all within a framework that upholds political freedom and human rights (Gumede, 2019(b):4). However, financial constraints, capacity deficits, and historical inequalities hinder its ability to meet community needs effectively, efficiently and economically. To enhance functionality and responsiveness, it is imperative to implement robust talent management practices that focus on attracting, retaining, and developing skilled personnel. Addressing these capacity complications is essential for fostering long-term development, responding to emerging trails, and promoting economic growth within communities. Subsequently, Figure 3.1 represents a geographical map of the RSA's local government sphere. The red dotted lines indicate the main towns; purple denotes district municipality boundaries and white denotes local municipality boundaries:

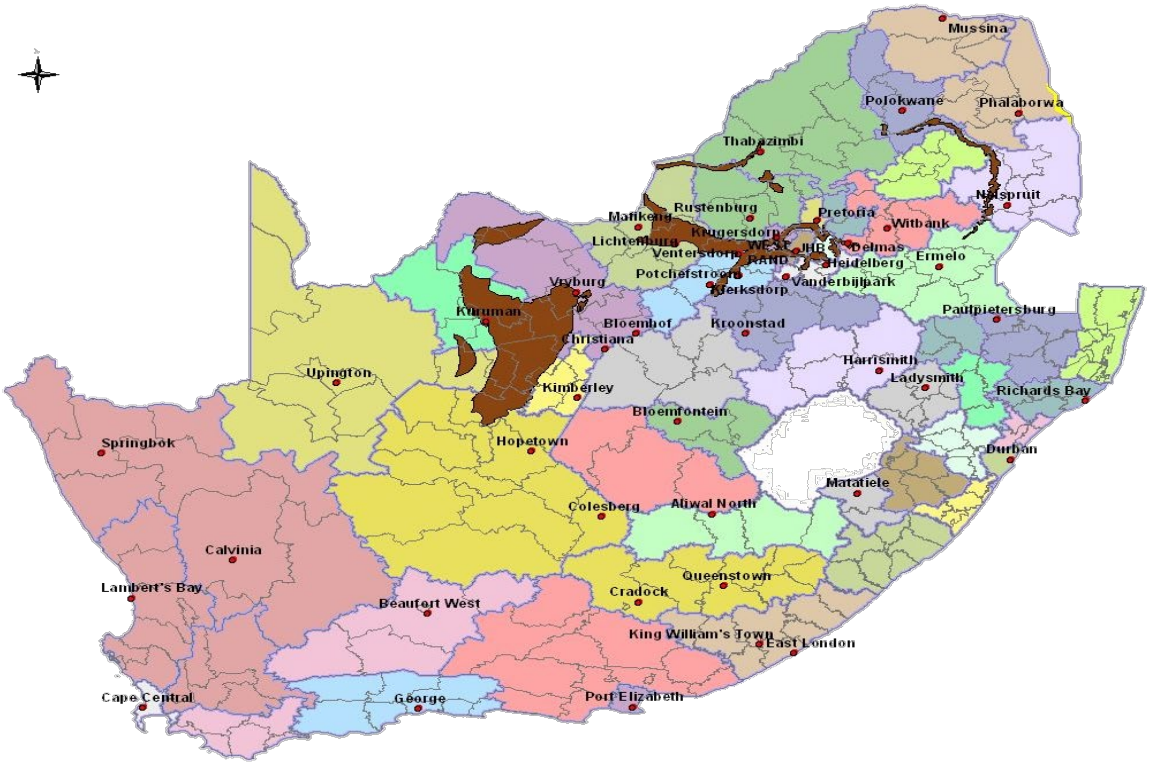

Figure 3.1: Geographical map of the local sphere government in the RSA
Source: (Du Plessis, 2013).

The forthcoming part establishes the circumstances and capacity controversy confronting local government sphere governance in the RSA.

3.3 CIRCUMSTANCES AND CAPACITY CHALLENGES FACING THE LOCAL SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT

Chapter 1, Section 1.3 of the research presented a bleak depiction of the RSA local sphere of government failing to fulfil its constitutional obligations due to insufficient institutional capacity, embracing both organisational and individual competencies. Considering the obstacles confronted by the local government sphere in South Africa in fulfilling its constitutional responsibilities, it is evident that an integrated approach for improving public service delivery is needed. Expanding on this understanding, it is critical to explore the complexities of capacity and capacity development within the local government sphere domain. However, before discussing the capacity reversals facing the local sphere of government, it is essential to clarify the concepts of capacity and development, as they hold considerable significance for this study.

3.3.1 Capacity

Capacity refers to the potential of individuals, organisations or systems to execute tasks, achieve goals, and meet obligations effectively (Davids *et al*., 2022:3). Within local government, capacity encompasses various dimensions, including financial resources, human resources, technological capabilities, infrastructure, and governance structures (Edoun, Rameetse, Pooe, 2023:113). Singh, Ghadei and Roy (2024:227) highlighted that capacity involves the efficient utilisation of both human and material resources to achieve organisational objectives. Essentially, capacity indicates the extent to which an individual or organisation can optimise its capabilities to fulfil its goals. A well-capacitated municipality is better equipped to respond to community needs and challenges, thereby improving public service delivery and enhancing public trust. The following overview explores the diverse facets of capacity within an institution: -

Table 3.3: Aspects of capacity in institutions

Aspect	Description
Technical capacity	• Knowledge, skills, and resources required to perform specific tasks or functions effectively.
Financial capacity	• Ability to secure and manage financial resources effectively, including budgets and accounting systems.
Human capacity	• Collective skills, knowledge, and experience of employees, ensuring a well-trained and motivated workforce.
Institutional capacity	• Overall governance and management structures, including effective decision-making systems and performance oversight.
Leadership capacity	• Competent leaders who can inspire, motivate staff, and strategically guide the organisation towards its goals.
Social capacity	• Strong relationships with stakeholders, encompassing the ability to engage with the community and understand its needs.

Source: (Khambule, 2021(b)); (Davids *et al*., 2022); (Edoun *et al.,* 2023:113).

Understanding these various dimensions of capacity is essential for municipalities to effectively allocate resources, manage projects, and adapt to the evolving demands of their communities. For instance, a strong technical capacity ensures that officials possess the necessary skills to address public service delivery challenges, while financial capacity enables municipalities to fund vital projects. The following section will discuss capacity development, providing a contextual understanding of its importance within the local sphere of government in RSA.

3.3.2 Capacity development

Capacity development enhances the ability of individuals or institutions to perform effectively by acquiring new knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Orgill *et al*., 2021:2; Davids *et al.,* 2022:3). This process can take place across various contexts, including personal, professional, and community development, with the aim of fostering positive change and improving government performance (Mashamaite & Lethoko, 2018:118). Capacity development is not merely a one-off training event; it is a continuous process that requires sustained effort and investment. Effective capacity development leads to empowered employees who can contribute meaningfully to their institutions, benefiting the communities they serve. Harper, Cameron and Edwards (2024:5), Nyamota, Kiambi and Mburugu (2024:138), and Zhang, Ferse, Jennerjahn, Clausen and Lahl (2024:13) identified several critical components of capacity development within organisations. Key components of capacity development include the following:

- Training and development programmes which are essential for equipping employees with new skills and keeping them abreast of latest industry trends.
- Leadership development which focused on nurturing leadership qualities to prepare employees for managerial roles.
- Performance management involves setting clear objectives, providing feedback, and assessing performance to enhance productivity.
- Succession planning is a strategic approach to identify and cultivate future leaders to ensure organisational continuity.
- Employee engagement creates a motivating work environment that values and involves employees.
- Knowledge sharing encourages collaboration and the exchange of skills to foster innovation.
- Continuous improvement promotes a culture of continuous learning and improvement for employees to adapt to changing market dynamics and stay competitive.

These components interconnect to create competent individuals who contribute significantly to institutional success. Capacity and capacity development are critical for municipalities to deliver quality public services and effectively manage resources, which are essential for community

wellbeing (Masiya, Davids & Mangai, 2021:97; Xolani, Mkhize & Mlambo, 2022:136). Among other issues, capacity challenges will address key concerns such as service delivery protests, audit outcomes, financially distressed municipalities, the quality of water and sanitation services, road infrastructure, and dysfunctional sewage systems. The subsequent section will explore the capacity challenges facing the local sphere of government in the RSA.

3.4 CAPACITY CHALLENGES FACING THE LOCAL SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The local sphere of government in the Republic of South Africa plays a vital role in the country's democratic framework, tasked with delivering essential services to its citizens. Despite its significance, this level of government grapples with many challenges that hinder its capacity to perform effectively. The following subsections outline these circumstances and capacity challenges in detail.

3.4.1 Service delivery protests

Public service delivery protests have been a prevalent issue in the Republic of South Africa, often linked to inadequate access to fundamental services such as clean water, sanitation, electricity, and housing (Khambule, 2021(b):507). These protests serve as a means for citizens to voice their dissatisfaction with the government's failure to meet their basic needs and to demand improved service delivery (Sausi *et al.,* 2022:27). Recent data from Mamokhere (2022:50) indicated a decline in protest activity during the COVID-19 lockdown periods of 2020 to 2022. However, the number of protests returned to pre-pandemic levels by 2022, with Gauteng Province experiencing the highest rates (27%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (22%) and the Eastern Cape provinces (16%) (Vhumbunu, 2021:10). This persistent unrest indicates ongoing frustration regarding local service delivery, particularly in densely populated urban areas like Gauteng Province. In Gauteng Province, and many other provinces, community unrest stems from frustrations over inadequate local service delivery, particularly in essential services like water, sanitation, electricity, and waste management. Poor infrastructure and maintenance have led to widespread dissatisfaction, with residents demanding greater accountability and transparency from local government officials. There is also a strong call for improved access to housing, healthcare, and education, reflecting a desire for better living conditions and socio-economic opportunities (Maree & Khanyile, 2024:1-5). Ultimately, this situation highlights the need for the local sphere of government to address systemic inefficiencies and effectively manage resources to restore public trust and meet community needs.

Experts argue that failure to address the underlying causes of these protests such as corruption, mismanagement, and ineffective service delivery could undermine social stability and threaten the

democratic fabric of the country (Breakfast, Bradshaw & Nomarwayi, 2019:110; Rulashe & Ijeoma (2022:2). While public service delivery protests are not unique to the Republic of South Africa, the intensity and frequency of such protests are noteworthy, occasionally escalating to violence, property damage, and loss of life (Breakfast *et al.,* 2019:107; Ngcamu, 2019:5). To mitigate these issues, scholars like Mabope (2018:83), Biewenga, (2021:4) and RSA (2021:7) proposed that municipalities implement capacity development programs, including community education initiatives, business development support, enhanced workforce training, and improved management practices. Such strategies could foster a more responsible local government capable of addressing the needs citizens effectively.

3.4.2 Audit outcomes

The audit outcomes for South African municipalities have been a significant concern, with a high number receiving negative audit opinions due to poor financial management and governance practices (Enwereji & Uwiziyiwana, 2019:143; Khambule, 2021(b):509). The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) provides annual reports detailing the audit results, revealing critical areas of concern, such as a lack of accountability, inadequate financial management, and weak internal controls. In the 2021 - 22 audit cycle, only 15% of the 257 municipalities audited received a clean audit opinion, while 68% received qualified opinions (AGSA, 2023:14).

Despite a slight improvement in overall audit outcomes, many municipalities continue to struggle with financial mismanagement and ineffective governance structures (Mlambo *et al.,* 2022:11; AGSA, 2023:14). The complex challenges faced by municipalities, including systemic corruption and weak accountability, necessitate urgent reforms (Mashamaite & Lethoko, 2018:114; Rukuni, Maramura & Mampa, 2022:244). To enhance audit performance, municipalities should consider implementing a talent management process that includes defining necessary skills and competencies, developing competency-based selection processes, and providing ongoing training and development opportunities. Establishing clear performance metrics and evaluation criteria can also foster a supportive work environment that encourages accountability and effective governance (AGSA, 2023:14; Sithole, 2023:5). However, the NMMDM has faced ongoing challenges in achieving positive audit results, receiving adverse opinions for more than five (5) financial years and qualified audit opinion for three (3) years due to significant financial management deficiencies. Key issues include persistent budget deficits, with a reported R10,624,068 billion overspending in 2023/24 financial years, delayed creditor payments averaging 86 days, high levels of irregular expenditure of R4,779,958 billion and widespread non-compliance with audit procedures (NMMDM, 2024:408-410). The persistent audit challenges faced by the NMMDM are closely linked to capacity constraints. Capacity, in the context of municipal governance, which refers to the non-

availability of skilled personnel, financial resources, institutional structures, and operational systems necessary for effective service delivery and financial management (AGSA, 2023:93-150).

3.4.3 Financial distressed municipalities

The financial distress of the local sphere of government poses a critical challenge, with numerous municipalities failing to provide basic services due to financial mismanagement, insufficient revenue collection, and corruption (Rukuni *et al.,* 2022:242; Mishi, Mbaleki & Mushonga, 2022:3). According to the AGSA's 2019 - 2020 report, 51 municipalities were identified as being in financial distress, raising concerns about their ability to meet residents' basic needs (AGSA, 2021:2; Glasser & Wright, 2020:413). While there has been some improvement — reducing the number of distressed municipalities from 59 in prior years — over 100 municipalities are still grappling with rising debt, declining revenue, and inadequate service delivery (Glasser & Wright, 2020:413; Rukuni *et al.,* 2022:242). Reports indicate that these municipalities collectively owe approximately R45 billion (around $3 billion) to creditors, creating a cycle of service delivery protests and public scrutiny (Glasser & Wright, 2020:413). Government interventions, such as the Municipal Fiscal Powers and Functions Amendment Bill and a R20 billion bailout package, have been introduced to address these issues (RSA, 2020:9). However, experts argue that more comprehensive measures are needed to tackle systemic issues like corruption and mismanagement (Moji, Nhede & Masiya, 2022:4; Selepe, 2022:732).

3.4.4 Quality of water and sanitation

The quality of water and sanitation services significantly impacts public health and wellbeing (Asoba, Fiko, Makiwane & Mefi, 2020:1; Hasan & Alam, 2020:226). A recent report by the Department of Water and Sanitation indicates that while 94.7% of urban households have access to piped water, rural areas remain behind, with only 62.3% accessing clean water (Asoba *et al.,* 2020:8; Fiko, Balkara, Makiwane & Asoba, 2020:1). Furthermore, many municipalities fail to meet water quality standards, with 71% of water treatment plants not complying with chemical regulations (Department of Water and Sanitation, 2023: ix). The disparity in access to clean water can be attributed to inadequate infrastructure, droughts, and poor water quality (Asoba *et al.,* 2020:1). Drinking water quality analyses reveal that 38% of systems show excellent microbiological quality, while 51% fall into poor to bad categories. This situation necessitates a comprehensive approach to water quality management, emphasising the recruitment and training of specialists in the field (Thilagham, Malini., Tirumala, Datta, Bhadauria & Agarwal, 2022:1366).

Sanitation services also present challenges, with around 84% of households having access to improved facilities, but significant gaps remain in rural areas and informal settlements (Statistics

South Africa, 2021:35). Poorly maintained sanitation facilities contribute to health risks and environmental pollution (Zindi & Shava, 2022:4). To address these issues, municipalities should invest in developing a talent management strategy focused on training personnel in water and sanitation management and enhancing community engagement in service planning (Thilagham *et al.,* 2022:1366).

3.4.5 Road infrastructure

The road infrastructure in South African municipalities is essential for economic and social advancement (Makhathini, Mlambo & Mpanza, 2020:99; Matyana & Mthethwa, 2022:130). It plays a pivotal role in connectivity, safety, economic development, and public transportation (Madienyane, 2020: iii; Makhathini *et al.,* 2020: 99). However, many roads, especially in rural areas, are in disrepair due to insufficient funding and maintenance (Glasser, 2020:418). Factors such as inadequate maintenance, funding, and poor planning have exacerbated this issue (Mnandi, 2020:2; Ajam, Burger, Quinot, Botha, Isaacs & Douglas, 2021:6; Fourie & Van der Waldt, 2021:8). The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) reported that only 30% of local municipalities have sufficient funding for road maintenance (SALGA, 2022:48).

Moreover, a lack of skilled employees to plan and maintain local roads systems has led to deteriorating road conditions, resulting in increased accidents (Mnandi, 2020:72-78; Rulashe & Ijeoma, 2022:1). Anthony, Chukwudi, Ejem and Chinebuli (2024:1) highlighted that poor road quality leads to economic losses and higher travel costs. Legoabe and Worku (2019:182) argued that retaining and attracting civil engineers to municipalities is critical to ensuring a robust, safe, and cost-effective municipal road infrastructure system that can support the community's needs and promote the infrastructure growth and development.

3.4.6 Dysfunctional sewerage systems

The local sphere of government faces significant challenges in maintaining sewerage systems due to limited financial resources and technical expertise (Carden & Fell, 2021:110). Issues such as an aging sewerage infrastructure, urbanization, and changing environmental regulations exacerbate the problem (Herbig, 2019:6; Iloms, Ololade, Ogola & Selvarajan, 2020:2). Dysfunctional sewerage systems pose serious health risks, leading to water contamination and disease outbreaks (Soto, Barakat, Drolet, Gauvin & Huot, 2020:433). Foster, Paladh & Knox (2022:26) emphasised that the lack of investment and poor maintenance practices have contributed to the deterioration of sewer infrastructure. Effective asset management strategies and increased public awareness are essential for improving sewerage management (Foster, Paladh & Knox, 2022:35). Additionally, attracting and retaining skilled professionals in areas like civil engineering and wastewater

treatment is critical for enhancing sewerage system management (Legoabe & Worku, 2019:182). These challenges within the local sphere of government highlight the urgent need for strategic interventions in talent management, community engagement, and capacity development to improve service delivery, governance, and overall public trust. Addressing these issues holistically will promote better outcomes for residents and strengthen the role of the municipalities fostering socio-economic development.

3.5 CURRENT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES WITHIN THE LOCAL SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT

This section builds upon Section 3.4, above which outlines the general capacity delivery challenges faced by the local sphere of government in the RSA.

3.5.1 Training and skills development

Municipalities have increasingly focused on training programs aimed at enhancing the skills of municipal officials and councillors. The South African Local Government Association (SALGA), National and Provincial Treasuries and many other government entities have been instrumental in providing workshops, training, and capacity-building programmes to the local sphere of government. These programmes often focus on leadership, financial management, and service delivery, and audit support (SALGA, 2021:15, National Treasury, 2022:i).

3.5.2 Partnerships and collaboration

There is a growing trend towards partnerships between local sphere of government and various stakeholders, including civil society organisations, private sector entities, and academic institutions (Tauté, 2020:3). These collaborations aim to leverage resources and expertise to improve local governance. For instance, the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) collaborates with municipalities to enhance their capacity to deliver infrastructure projects (MISA, 2022:22). While municipal partnerships have shown slight positive results in addressing capacity constraints, the challenges of limited Public Private Partnership (PPP) uptake, sustainability of capacity-building efforts, and coordination issues continue to hinder their overall effectiveness (SALGA, 2020:29).

3.5.3 Performance management systems

The implementation of performance management systems (PMS) has become a critical practice for the local sphere of government in the RSA. These systems are designed to monitor and evaluate the performance of municipal officials and the effectiveness of service delivery (Ndasana

& Umejesi, 2022:2). However, the IDP and PMS in the local sphere of government in RSA are closely linked, as both serve as essential tools for ensuring effective governance, service delivery, and accountability. The IDP provides the strategic framework that outlines a municipality's development priorities, objectives, and resource allocation over a five-year period, aligning municipal activities with community needs (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2020:10). In contrast, the PMS functions as a monitoring and evaluation tool that assesses the performance of municipal officials and departments in achieving the targets set in the IDP (Ndasana & Umejesi, 2022:2).

3.5.4 Community engagement and participation

Community participation in the local government is another essential aspect of capacity development. Many municipalities are increasingly adopting participatory approaches to decision-making, ensuring that citizens have a voice in the planning and implementation of local projects through IDP (Petunia & Selepe, 2020:3). This practice not only builds trust but also empowers communities to take an active role in governance (Mafunisa, 2021:45). However, research indicates that public participation is often symbolic rather than substantive. Evidently, municipalities in RSA frequently conduct consultations as a tick-box exercise, rather than genuinely incorporating community inputs into decision-making (Buccus, Hicks & Piper, 2021:215).

3.5.5 Use of technology

The integration of technology in local government practices has been on the rise, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The local sphere of government in the RSA are engaging digital platforms such as Microsoft teams; Zoom to facilitate communication, service delivery, and community engagement (Phetha & Ndlovu, 2021:78). This has been shifting towards e-governance which has the potential to enhance efficiency and accessibility in local government services (Mohale, 2024:1). Despite the implementation of various capacity development practices within the RSA local government, major concerns persist about issues that impede meaningful service delivery outcomes. The ensuing part examine current challenges hindering the implementation of talent management in the local sphere of government RSA.

3.6 CURRENT CHALLENGES HINDERING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE LOCAL SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT

The following subsections examine the challenges affecting the implementation of talent management strategies for capacity development local government in the RSA.

3.6.1 Budget constraints

Financial resources are crucial for implementing plans in municipalities (Mutandwa, 2020:186). Without adequate funding, they struggle to provide essential public services, invest in infrastructure, and promote economic development. Common financial challenges include inadequate revenue collection, high debt levels, limited financial management capacity, and corruption (Mbulawa, 2019:8; Mamokhere, 2022:7). These constraints significantly impact the execution of talent management strategies aimed at enhancing capacity (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021:233). Effective talent management programs require access to technologies and financial resources, which are often restricted due to budget limitations, potentially hindering program efficacy (Mmatabane *et al.,* 2023:2). Additionally, financial scarcity makes it difficult to attract and retain skilled employees (Mukwawaya, Proches, & Green 2022:104). Furthermore, a lack of financial resources leads to diminished employee engagement, as individuals perceive a lack of recognition and support (Thusi & Chauke, 2023:120). The consequences include high turnover rates and reduce institutional knowledge, ultimately compromising service quality. Research shows that institutions with robust talent management strategies are better positioned to leverage their human capital effectively, yet budget constraints often force them to underinvest in these critical areas.

3.6.2 High staff turnover and skills scarcity

Many South African municipalities struggle to attract skilled employees, leading to high vacancy rates, which disrupts provision of services and loss of institutional memory. A study by Van der Westhuizen and Reddy (2022:78) highlighted that "the frequent turnover of skilled personnel leads to a loss of institutional knowledge and hampers the implementation of long-term capacity development strategies." This instability makes it challenging to sustain training initiatives and build a competent workforce capable of delivering quality services. South Africa's workforce skills and capabilities are disappointing, ranking 46th out of 141 countries in the Innovation capability index, 90th in the Skills Pillar, and 63rd in the Labour Market Efficiency pillar (World Economic Forum, 2019:520).

A 2022 report by Davids *et al.,* (2022:19) and Thusi and Selepe (2023:690) found that municipalities are struggling with high vacancy rates, with some reporting rates as high as 60%. Local government entities describe this situation as a "human resource crisis," which is affecting the delivery of basic services to citizens (SALGA, 2021:3). Municipalities need to actively engage in talent scouting and partnerships with educational institutions to build a pipeline of skilled workers, particularly in critical areas such as engineering and information technology.

3.6.3 Political interference and instability

Political dynamics within the local sphere of government in South Africa often hinder effective governance and impede capacity development. The influence of political parties can lead to the appointment of officials based on loyalty rather than merit, resulting in inefficiencies and a lack of accountability. According to Mthembu (2021:40), **political interference** in the administrative functions of the local sphere of government reduces the professionalism of municipal officials and undermines public trust in local governance. Cadre deployment, characterised by political endorsement, negatively affects the recruitment of skilled individuals in the local sphere of government (Mofolo & Adonis, 2021:2). Davids *et al.,* (2022:4) found that political interference further exacerbates pressure on HR managers to prioritise candidates based on political ties, manipulating performance assessments, limiting resources for non-favourable talent development, and imposing recruitment restrictions. **Political instability** due to leadership changes in local government negatively impact governance, policy implementation, and retention strategies (Majola, 2022:272; Mlambo *et al*., 2022:11). This uncertainty creates an environment where municipal administrations struggle to attract and retain high performers. Furthermore, leadership changes disrupt existing training and development programs, resulting in the alteration of job roles and responsibilities. Typically, skilled employees may leave the organisation due to the new administration's vision or direction, and lastly, this environment can stifle innovation and effective implementation of capacity-building programs.

3.6.4 Inadequate monitoring and evaluation

Despite the introduction of performance management systems, numerous municipalities encounter difficulties in effectively monitoring and evaluating their capacity development initiatives. A report by the AGSA (2023:19) indicates that the absence of comprehensive evaluation frameworks often results in difficulties in measuring the impact of capacity-building initiatives on service delivery outcomes. Mohangi and Nyika (2023:81) argued that without proper evaluation mechanisms, municipalities cannot identify areas for improvement or measure the success of their initiatives. Unclear performance metrics are a threat to managers in the local government sphere who must evaluate employee performance, giving rise to subjective evaluations that may not accurately reflect an employee's contributions or potential (Mohangi & Nyika, 2023:81). Accompanied by obscure performance standards, a lack of monitoring and supervision impedes managers from identifying areas where employees need support and improvement (Moji *et al.,* 2022:5). Therefore, bias is likely to increase, particularly when performance-based incentives like bonuses and promotions frequently depend on evaluation ratings (Lee & Van der Waldt, 2020:183).

3.6.5 Lack of coordination and integration

Similarly, one significant challenge for lack of capacity development is the lack of coordination and integration in talent management practices, which serve as HRM practices for capacity development (Mbatha, 2020:18; Masale *et al.,* 2021). Mabope (2018:4) and Ndou *et al.,* (2021:569) asserted that the fragmentation and isolation of talent management practices in the local sphere of government leads to a lack of coherence and direction. To support the overall integrated talent management framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government, it is critical to elevate the role and status of HRM to line managers. On the other hand, Vermeulen (2015:483) and Biewenga (2021: iv) supported that the non-existence of career anchors to promote career management, career development, career planning, and career pathing contributes to the misalignment between HRM practices and the overall organisational strategies. Thus, in the absence of proper coordination, various departments or functions may duplicate efforts and resources, resulting in unnecessary costs and inefficiencies (Manjoo, Rajlal & Utete, 2023:1152). Most importantly, misalignment between employee training needs and job requirements exacerbates low staff morale, disengagement, and a lack of interest in training programs or career paths provided by the employer.

3.6.6 Inefficiencies within Human Resource Management Units

LGSETA (2024:7) identified a critical challenge in local government HRM: insufficient management and leadership skills to effectively implement human resource strategies, particularly among line managers. Mjulwa (2023:13) and LGSETA (2024:70) noted that HRM practitioners struggle with talent management due to inadequate management support. Mmatabane *et al.,* (2023:4) accentuated the importance of aligning candidate's backgrounds and qualities with organisational culture to enhance talent management in municipalities. The study highlighted the necessity for a collaborative effort between employers and employees to improve performance and align career objectives with institutional goals. However, Van Wyk, Chrysler-Fox and Van Niekerk (2019:1) pointed out that employee dissatisfaction with management often leads to breaches of the psychological contract, exacerbated by management's failure to implement succession planning.

Yu, Yang, Zhao, Liu, Wang, D'Agostino, and Russo (2022:1) attributed HRM inefficiencies in municipalities to low motivation, limited advancement opportunities, and a lack of innovation. To address these inefficiencies and successfully implement talent management strategies in the Republic of South Africa, recommended actions include conducting a skills audit, developing a talent management strategy, leveraging technology, and fostering employee development opportunities.

3.6.7 Insufficient training opportunities

Limited training opportunities hamper employee growth and retention (Legoabe & Worku, 2019:181). Poor-quality training programs fail to enhance the necessary skills (Ndasana & Umejesi, 2022:2). Conducting needs assessments and developing tailored training programs can address this issue. Municipalities should prioritise ongoing professional development to increase employee engagement and improve public service delivery.

Summative, an integrated talent management framework is essential for enhancing capacity and developing a skilled workforce within the local government sphere. It is crucial to emphasise the significance of statutory and regulatory frameworks that govern capacity development in this context. The following part discusses the statutory and regulatory framework for capacity development in the local sphere government in RSA.

3.7 STATUTORY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCAL SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT

As discussed in Section 3.2.1 of the study, the local sphere of government serves a crucial role in bridging the gap between public needs and national priorities, ensuring that citizens voices are represented within the broader governance framework. As a result, the public sector's legislative and regulatory frameworks on capacity development provide essential guidelines for municipalities, particularly as outlined in the Constitution of South Africa, 1996, in Sections 40 and 41 (RSA, 1996:21). Sections 40 and 41 of the Constitution of RSA, 1996 highlight the distinct, interdependent and interrelated of the local sphere of government while highlighting their relationships with national and provincial authorities. As a results, the local sphere of government in the RSA, is empowered to develop policies, procedures and by-laws that are tailored to their specific needs. By concentrating on NMMDM, the study aimed to investigate how local government can effectively utilise its legislative powers to improve service delivery, engage citizens, and align local initiatives with national objectives. Understanding the dynamics of local governance in this context is vital for identifying best practices and areas for enhancement, ultimately leading to more responsive and accountable governance. This section will explore the existing legislative frameworks that govern capacity development in the local sphere of government of RSA.

3.7.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

Section 195(1)(a) of the Constitution of Republic of South Africa, 1996 mandates a strict code of professional ethics, highlighting the importance of the democratic values outlined in Chapter 7, particularly regarding the local sphere of government (RSA, 1996:103). This principle suggests that

professionalising state organs, such as local government, can enhance the development of a democratic state, as noted in Chapter 1, Section 1.2. The effectiveness of government in addressing political and socio-economic challenges of its citizens is crucial for maintaining democracy (Nkhabu, 2021:78). A skilled and capable workforce is essential for shaping policy and responding to the evolving needs of communities (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021:2). Achieving this requires a commitment to high standards of professionalism and ethics while also considering community needs. Chapter 2, Section 2.6.3 further intensifies that committed employees are more likely to meet organisational goals, thereby enhancing productivity and performance.

Moreover, Section 154(1) of the Constitution of Republic of South Africa, 1996 mandates that national and provincial government departments to assist municipalities in managing their affairs and responsibilities (RSA, 1996:104). Despite these efforts, many municipalities continue to experience financial distress and struggle with service delivery. Factors such as inadequate revenue collection, mismanagement, and capacity constraints persist, suggesting that the support from national and provincial governments has not fully addressed the underlying issues (Nzama, Moloi & Marx, 2023:4; McKenzie & Marx, 2024:198). Additionally, Section 195(1)(h) stipulates the necessity for government institutions to cultivate a competent public service workforce through effective human resource management and career development (RSA, 1996:133). While this section does not explicitly mention talent management, it is imperative for public sector entities, including municipalities, to incorporate talent management into their human resource practices (Mabope, 2018:83; Lee, 2020:172).

3.7.2 National Development Plan: Vision for 2030 (2011)

The NDP of 2011 outlines the essential characteristics of public administration and the role of public sector employees in achieving democratic developmental goals (RSA, 2011: 408; Haricharan, 2023:3). It emphasises the need for national and the local spheres of government to address historical imbalances stemming from racial segregation and biased policies (Kaywood, 2021:43). The National Planning Commission (NPC) has identified uneven service delivery and a lack of skills and capacity as significant challenges (Schoeman & Chakwizira, 2023:6). Consequently, the NDP urges the national government to professionalise public institutions, including local government sphere municipalities, and enhance the capabilities of public officials so that they are aligned with good governance principles.

Establishing a competent local government administration is crucial for creating systems that support the goals of a developmental state (Ramodula & Govender, 2023:45). The professionalisation of public services must encompass human resource management (HRM) practices, as noted by Pham, Jabbour, Vo-Thanh, Huynh and Santos (2023:3). Recognising

employees as vital assets for achieving governmental objectives (Gopinath, Karthikeyan & Ramamoorthy, 2021:2415) highlighted the necessity for effective HRM strategies to attract and retain talent. Both Chapter 13 of the NDP (2011) and Section 195 (1) of the Constitution of Republic of South Africa, 1996 require the public sector to develop strategies that enhance government employee skills and capacity. The aim is to ensure that skilled officials can provide quality public services while adapting to a complex environment. However, existing HRM practices in the public sector are insufficient, necessitating a shift toward integrated talent management and personalised capacity development initiatives to address the challenges outlined in Chapter 1, Section 1.3, of the study.

3.7.3 The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998

The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 aims to enhance the skills of the South African workforce, as outlined in Section 2 (RSA, 1998:1). The main objectives of the Act include the following:

- improving workers' quality of life.
- increasing employment opportunities and mobility.
- boosting workplace productivity.
- enhancing public service delivery; and
- fostering investment in education and training.

Generally, the Act encourages employers and employees to utilise the workplace for active learning, expand skill sets, and provide opportunities for new entrants to gain experience. It also aims to support previously disadvantaged individuals through training and education, maintain high learning standards, and assist employers in finding suitable candidates (RSA, 1998:1). Furthermore, the Act's relevance extends to the training and development of public service and public sector employees, as discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.2, and Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4 of the study. It stresses the importance of training in talent management and its influence on the integrated talent management implementation framework for the local sphere of government, specifically NMMDM.

3.7.4 The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998

The Employment Equity Act of 1998, rooted in the Constitution of 1996 (Sections 1(b) and 9(2)-(5)), seeks to address historical injustices and ensure equitable conditions for all public service employees (RSA, 1996:1243; RSA, 1998:1247). The main goals of the Act include the elimination of discrimination in employment to enhance career opportunities and the implementation of affirmative action. The Act also includes measures to rectify past disadvantages faced by

designated groups prior to 1994, thereby promoting equitable representation across various occupational categories (RSA, 1996:1243; RSA, 1998:1247). Furthermore, a comprehensive talent management strategy, as outlined in Chapter 1, Section 1.2, and Chapter 2, Section 2.6.5., is essential for eradicating discriminatory practices related to race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation through effective recruitment and selection processes. Thus, the provisions of the Employment Equity Act play a pivotal role in shaping the integrated talent management practices that focus on diversity and inclusion within the local sphere of government.

3.7.5 The Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993 (OHSA) serves as a vital legislative framework in the RSA and aims at safeguarding employee health and safety. It delineates the responsibilities of both employers and employees, establishes health and safety standards, and provides mechanisms for enforcement (RSA 1993:3). A key aspect of the OHSA is its urgency on capacity development, which mandates employers to create a safe working environment and deliver adequate training on health and safety practices. Such training is essential for enhancing the understanding of responsibilities among all stakeholders.

Moreover, fostering a culture of safety within organisations is imperative, extending beyond mere compliance with the OHSA. Implementing workshops and ongoing training can promote open communication regarding safety concerns and reinforce adherence to safety protocols. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of health and safety practices are crucial, necessitating capacity development in training personnel to ensure compliance with safety standards and to assess the effectiveness of health and safety programs. Additionally, collaboration among stakeholders, including governmental bodies, employers, and trade unions, is vital for effective capacity development. This dual focus ensures compliance with the Act, improves employee health and safety, and creates a safer and more sustainable working environment.

3.7.6 The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (as amended)

The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 serves as a fundamental legislative framework in South Africa, aimed at fostering fair labour practices, protecting worker rights, and ensuring harmonious employer-employee relations. It outlines legal parameters for collective bargaining, dispute resolution, and the formation of trade unions. To effectively implement these provisions, it is essential to educate stakeholders about their rights and responsibilities, particularly in areas such as collective bargaining and trade union formation. Therefore, training and development programs should be designed to equip both employers and employees with the knowledge necessary to navigate labour relations effectively (RSA 1995:21-22).

Furthermore, the Act accents the significance of dispute resolution mechanisms, including mediation and arbitration, which promote a collaborative approach to resolving conflicts and reducing labour disputes. Also, trade unions are critical in advocating for rights and interests of workers, highlighting the need for capacity development initiatives that enhance employee negotiation skills, the understanding of labour laws, and the leadership dynamics. Additionally, the Act champions inclusivity and non-discrimination in the workplace, indicating the need for capacity development programs that foster diversity and create inclusive work environments.

3.7.7 Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000

The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000 is a vital legislative framework in South Africa, designed to eradicate unfair discrimination and to foster equality across various sectors (RSA, 2000:13). It explicitly prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and age. To effectively implement this Act, capacity development initiatives must prioritise enhancing the understanding of its provisions among employers, employees, and stakeholders. This includes developing training programs that inform individuals about their rights and responsibilities under the Act.

As indicated earlier in Section 3.7.4 of the study, the local sphere of government should take proactive steps to eliminate discrimination and promote equality by equipping themselves with essential tools and strategies. This may involve training on diversity management, inclusive recruitment practices, and creating equitable workplace policies that reflect the Act's principles. Furthermore, raising awareness and advocating against discrimination are critical components of these initiatives, highlighting the positive impacts of diversity and inclusion. Capacity development programs can also strengthen the mechanisms established by the Act for individuals seeking redress in cases of unfair discrimination. These programs should educate participants on the procedures for lodging complaints, the role of equality courts, and the importance of documenting instances of discrimination. In summary, the Act serves as a foundational instrument for capacity development within local government, improving compliance and promoting a more inclusive and equitable society.

3.7.8 Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003

The Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA) was established to improve the financial management of municipalities and local government entities, promoting transparency, accountability, and a clear authority chain in fiscal matters (RSA, 2003:13). It sets forth treasury norms and standards, particularly in Section 2(a) – (g), to align municipal financial transactions with its goals (RSA, 2003:37). The Act draws attention to the necessity of competent

municipal officials and advocates for their engagement and development to adapt to changing circumstances of local government economy.

Jaoua (2020:64) highlighted that employee motivation and engagement are essential for unlocking human potential and driving economic development within local government. Strategic HRM practices are vital for fostering respect, integrity, and organisational performance, which in turn enhances employee commitment and participation in decision-making (Shakil, Hassan & Qureshi, 2019:79). Chapter five of the MFMA mandates provincial and national government departments to enhance the financial management capacity of municipalities, thereby reinforcing the principles of cooperative governance and intergovernmental support (RSA, 2003:57). This collaboration is intended to support municipalities in service delivery and administration, aligning with the principles of a democratic and developmental state (Khambule, 2021(b):508). Despite these frameworks, municipalities in South Africa often struggle to fulfil their roles effectively, indicating a significant gap in the implementation of the provisions of the ACT (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021:2).

3.7.9 Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998

By the means specified in the Act, the mandate of district municipalities involves fostering long-term viability and equitable economic and social development within their areas through various means, such as the following:

- coordinated development planning;
- advocating for infrastructure improvements;
- enhancing capacity of local municipalities within its jurisdiction; and
- ensuring fair resource distribution (RSA, 1998:57).

The effectiveness of local government operations is contingent upon having skilled employees capable of meeting developmental mandates and community needs. However, Edoun *et al*., (2023:112-113) highlighted significant weaknesses that hinder collaborative socioeconomic efforts, such as skill shortages, lack of trust, silo mentality, inadequate planning, insufficient stakeholder motivation, and deficiencies in policies and legal frameworks. This analysis underscores the urgent need for district municipalities in the RSA to identify and address these capacity challenges within local municipalities, thereby facilitating the implementation of effective capacity development interventions. Reddy and Sikhakane (2022:515) argued that capacity-building programs should focus on technical expertise, financial management, and leadership training to improve municipal effectiveness.

3.7.10 Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (*as amended*)

The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (MSA) is pivotal in addressing the needs of the poor and disadvantaged, reinforcing local government's duty to ensure universal access to basic services (RSA, 2000:33). This Act is in harmony with the developmental goals of the 1996 Constitution, which seek to foster social and economic development (RSA, 1996:5). Municipalities are required to develop IDP's and implement performance management systems (PMS) to improve public decision-making and operational efficiency (RSA, 2000:48). Section 41 of the MSA highlights the importance of skill development and capacity building as essential components of a municipality's PMS to effectively serve IDP's.

Furthermore, the MSA mandates efficient service delivery through decentralized administrative units, as outlined in Section 51(g-m) (RSA, 2000:63). Continuous skill and capacity development are crucial to meet the evolving demands of communities, reinforcing the need for an accountable, inclusive, and participatory approach to local governance. Sections 56 and 57 specify the responsibilities of subordinate managers, while Sections 66 to 71 focus on HRM, covering recruitment, training, and capacity building. Section 72 empowers the national minister to regulate PMS development and employee remuneration, ensuring effective HRM within the local government. Additionally, the MSA requires municipal managers to approve staff establishments and job descriptions within a legislative framework, alongside regular assessments of workforce performance. Overall, the MSA incorporates critical HRM elements, such as capacity building, employee training, and the implementation of the Skill Development Levy Act (SDL), thereby promoting effective local governance and service delivery. The next section presents the regulatory framework for capacity development in the local sphere government in the Republic of South Africa.

3.8 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCAL OF SPHERE GOVERNMENT

This section will examine the regulatory framework that facilitates capacity development at the local level, highlighting its crucial role in fostering accountability, transparency, and efficiency in governance. This section will explore key regulatory frameworks, including the White Paper on Local Government (1998), Local Government: Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels (2007, as amended), Local Government: Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers directly accountable to Municipal Managers (2006, as amended), and the Local Government: Municipal Staff Regulations of 2021, along with a brief overview of other relevant legislation and regulations pertaining to capacity development in the public sector. These frameworks ensure that local governments adhere to national standards while empowering

municipalities to effectively address local challenges, thereby enhancing service delivery and community well-being. Ultimately, a comprehensive understanding of the regulatory landscape is essential for identifying opportunities and potential pitfalls in strengthening the capacity of local governments to better serve their constituents.

3.8.1 White Paper on Local Government of 1998

The White Paper on Local Government serves as a pivotal policy document that articulates the principles of developmental local governance and establishes a framework for local government administration (RSA, 1998:80). The white paper signals the importance of knowledge acquisition, continuous learning, and accessible learning opportunities as essential elements for effective local governance. In turn, the local government authorities are encouraged to enhance their administrative capacities to effectively address growth challenges, as traditional functions may struggle without the ability to plan and collaborate beyond municipal boundaries (RSA, 1998:80).

Furthermore, the document stresses the need for administrative reorganisation to empower the local sphere of government in navigating social and economic dynamics, as detailed in Section F (RSA, 1998:160). To enhance employee capacity, municipalities committed to their developmental roles must focus on talent management and HRM. This includes evaluating employee skills and competencies, particularly for frontline workers who interact directly with the community (RSA, 1998:160). By empowering these employees through effective HRM practices and retraining initiatives, municipalities can foster cooperative relationships with their communities, thereby improving service delivery. However, an examination of the implementation of legislative and regulatory frameworks for capacity development within the local sphere of government uncovers many weaknesses (Masale *et al.,* 2021:2). These weaknesses include lack of skills and competency compliance, poor performance management, financial mismanagement and corruption, and ineffective training and capacity development.

3.8.2 Local Government: Municipal Regulations on Minimum Competency Levels 2007 (*as amended*)

Mphahlele and Zandamela (2021:157) identified a lack of skills and management ability as major causes of poor public service performance in municipalities. In response, the National Treasury implemented the Competency Regulations in 2007, amended in 2018 (RSA, 2007; RSA, 2018). These regulations set minimum competency levels for accounting officers, financial managers, and supply chain officials, differentiating requirements for high-and-low-capacity municipalities. By stressing results over processes, the regulations specify essential managerial skills and

educational qualifications, such as requiring chief financial officers to be chartered accountants (RSA, 2018:231).

Appointments that violate the competency framework may be deemed invalid, with the Member of Executive Committee (MEC) for local government mandated to seek a declaratory order within 14 days of such a determination. The regulations allow for the temporary appointment of individuals who do not meet the qualifications, provided they achieve the required standards within 18 months, after which their employment may be terminated (RSA, 2018:237). Despite these regulations, as of January 2020, only 53% of municipal officials met competency standards (News24, 2021). The inability to attract skilled personnel significantly impacts the local government sphere performance, resulting in mismanagement and poor public service delivery (Chapter 1, Section 1.3). Mbatha (2020:18) and Masale *et al.,* (2021:2) argued that municipalities should enable their officials to meet competency requirements, but many are reluctant to release high performers for training. Despite the benefits of effective talent management practices, the local government sphere in the RSA struggles with a poor track record (Mbatha, 2020:18; Masale *et al.,* 2021:2).

3.8.3 Local Government: Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers directly accountable to Municipal Managers, 2006 (*as amended*)

The Local Government: Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers, established in 2006, are essential for enhancing performance standards and capacity development within the local sphere of government (RSA, 2006:3). These regulations require the establishment of performance contracts for municipal managers and senior managers, detailing specific objectives, measurable standards, and timelines to ensure accountability and clarity in their roles. Furthermore, the regulations mandate the development of a performance management system that aims to monitor and evaluate managerial performance while incorporating training, mentorship, and coaching to enhance employee skills and competencies (RSA, 2006:23). As noted in the literature review, local government leaders are responsible for nurturing talent through regular feedback and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of employees (cited in Chapter 2, Section 2.4). For the sake of clarity, Chia *et al.,* (2023:1) highlighted that succession planning becomes a critical component of talent management, focusing on identifying key positions and implementing capacity-development initiatives to ensure a qualified talent pool for future vacancies.

3.8.4 Local Government: Municipal Staff Regulations of 2021

The Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs published the Municipal Staff Regulation, 2021 in the gazette on 20 September 2021. This regulation primarily establishes uniform standards for municipal managers and other senior managers, which are then cascaded to

staff at lower levels of management (RSA, 2021:7). In addition to this, the Municipal Staff Regulations, 2021 stipulate the following:

- The establishment of universal norms and standards for the organisational design.
- Building institutional capacity for municipalities by establishing uniform appointment criteria and procedures for municipal staff below senior management ranks.
- Providing a competency framework that lays down the basis for sector-wide skills audit and skills development programs.
- Cascading a performance management system down to staff below management; municipal staff establishment, job description, and job evaluation.
- Recruitment, selection, appointment, and appointment procedures; and municipal staff recruitment, selection, and appointment procedures.
- Promotion and demotion of staff (RSA, 2021:7).

Employee competence profiling, regular performance feedback, rewards, career pathing, talent management, and succession planning must form the foundation of these strategies (Mabope, 2018:83; Biewenga, 2021:4).

3.9 LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Several legislative and regulatory frameworks contribute to capacity development in the public sector, including at the local sphere of government in RSA. While not all these legislative and regulatory frameworks are directly applicable to municipalities, in most cases provides critical guidelines for enhancing human resource capacity, skills development, and public administration efficiency.

3.9.1 Public Administration Act 11 of 2014

This Act provides a framework for professionalising public administration across all spheres of government. It focusses on capacity-building initiatives, ethical leadership, and the mobility of skilled personnel between government departments to strengthen institutional capabilities (RSA, 2014).

3.9.2 Public Service Act 103 of 1994 (as amended)

The Act governs the appointment, promotion, and conditions of service within the public service. It plays a role in capacity development by regulating human resource management, ensuring merit-

based recruitment, and promoting continuous professional development for public officials (RSA, 1994).

3.9.3 South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995

This Act establishes the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which standardises skill development, training, and qualifications within the public service. It ensures that employees acquire competency-based education and training, thereby enhancing their capacity to deliver efficient public services (RSA, 1995).

3.9.4 Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA) 3 of 2000

PAJA ensures that decision-making within the public sector is lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair. It indirectly contributes to capacity development by requiring public officials to be adequately trained in administrative justice and procedural fairness to ensure accountability in governance (RSA, 2000).

3.9.5 Public Service Commission (PSC) Report on Recruitment, Retention, and Career Pathing of Senior Management (2017)

This report highlights challenges and recommendations for improving the retention and utilisation of skilled professionals in the public service. It underscores the importance of capacity-building initiatives, succession planning, and leadership development to maintain an effective senior management career pathing, career management and career monitoring (PSC, 2017).

While these legislative frameworks are not all directly linked to local government, they provide fundamental principles and best practices that municipalities can adopt to strengthen capacity development. Furthermore, collectively contribute to a skilled, accountable, and professional public sector, enhancing service delivery and governance at all levels.

3.10 CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this chapter has been to provide a comprehensive review of the relevant literature on the legislative and regulatory framework for talent management and capacity development in the local sphere of government in the RSA, as well as to establish the associated implementation challenges. One of the key findings of this research is that the local sphere of government in the RSA operates within a decentralised system, wherein municipalities hold significant powers and responsibilities for delivering essential services to their respective

communities. However, the literature consistently highlights the challenges faced by these local spheres of government in providing basic services such as clean water, decent sanitation, electricity, proper roads, particularly in informal settlements and rural areas.

The conclusions drawn from this analysis underscore the critical importance of enhancing the capacity of local government sphere leadership and officials to effectively manage resources, implement public policies, and engage with communities. Such efforts are vital for improving public service delivery, governance systems, and accountability. Building upon the initial findings, the study further uncovered the intricate relationship between capacity development and talent management, expanding an understanding of these phenomena. The literature suggests that capacity development and talent management are closely intertwined concepts essential for organisational growth and success. A key aspect of this relationship is the alignment of capacity development initiatives with talent management strategies to ensure that employees possess the skills and competencies needed to support organisational goals and objectives.

The complexities surrounding the implementation of talent management practices for capacity development in the local sphere of government highlight the necessity for an integrated framework that addresses legislative and implementation obstacles. Tackling these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that considers issues holistically such as funding constraints, skills shortages, bureaucratic obstacles, lack of coordination, leadership support, accountability, and resistance to change. By overcoming these barriers, municipalities can enhance their capacity development efforts and improve the effectiveness of their talent management practices.

Chapter 3 highlighted the crucial role of the legislative and regulatory framework in shaping capacity development strategies within the local sphere of government. The literature suggests that aligning legal requirements with effective regulatory frameworks can enhance human resource management processes, build workforce capabilities, and drive organisational performance. Regardless of opportunities, it is evident that the legislative and regulatory frameworks for capacity development in the local sphere of government exhibit significant deficiencies, including a lack of resources, non-alignment with community needs, implementation complexities, skills shortages, coherence issues, and inadequate monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. The research methodology for the study is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The goal of this study, which specifically targets the NMMDM, is to establish an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development within the local government context. The choice of methodology that was adopted in this study is critical, as it directly influences the validity and reliability of the research findings. As a result, the study employed various qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of integrated talent management practices and capacity challenges faced by the NMMDM, owing in part to its qualitative nature.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a structured approach used in a research study to ensure the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data are systematic, reliable, and valid (Khanday & Khanam, 2019:367). Kumar (2019:154) stated that the primary function of a research design is to justify the *what* and *how* questions of the research. According to Luft, Jeong, Idsardi and Gardner (2022:7) the strength of a discovery hinges on its establishment process. Thus, research design means a framework for the execution of a study. Further, research designs can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory (Kumar, 2019:15). As a result, this study adopted both descriptive and explanatory research designs. According to Siedlecki (2020:9), researchers often use a descriptive research design to describe a phenomenon through narrative-type interpretation, categorisation, and relationship measurements. This approach seeks to describe the social phenomenon, relationship between variables, and social events within a research field (Nengsih, Handrianto, Pernantah, Kenedi & Tannoubi, 2022:312) and is a strategy to answer the how question of the research (Rahayu & Ellyanawati, 2023:5).

Through the adoption of a descriptive research design, the study describes the phenomenon of talent management through the lens of talent management theories and integrated talent management frameworks. Additionally, the study delved into the context and capacity challenges facing the NMMDM, along with its statutory and regulatory framework, which aims to enhance capacity development within the local sphere of government. An explanatory research design entails examining the connections between two or more variables (Kumar, 2019:15) and synthesising both the why and how questions (Sarwono, 2022:8). In addition, this study employed an explanatory research design to clarify the relationship between talent management theories and integrated talent management frameworks, as well as the implementation of talent management

practices within the local government context. Drawing from the exercise, the study delved deeper into the potential application of both talent management theories and integrated frameworks in enhancing local government capacity through the development of theoretical constructs and an implementation framework.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

A case study approach was employed to facilitate an in-depth understanding of the talent management practices within the NMMDM. Sibbald, Paciocco, Fournie, Van Asseldonk, and Scurr (2021:292) described a case study as a thorough examination of a phenomenon, employing in-depth data collection methods from multiple valuable sources, such as interviews, documents, and observations. Khan *et al*., (2023:19) underscored contextualising case studies within temporal, geographical, and organisational boundaries, which enable detailed and descriptive analysis that integrate both subjective and objective data. The case study focused on the NMMDM, situated in Mafikeng, North West Province. While NMMDM encompasses five local municipalities, this research specifically concentrated on the district itself, excluding the Category C municipalities that share jurisdiction. This targeted approach enabled a more comprehensive analysis, and specifically investigated the talent management practices for capacity development within NMMDM while also drawing on broader theoretical frameworks related to integrated talent management.

Moreover, this study established a comprehensive understanding of theories and integrated talent management frameworks through a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research, as defined by Theys and Schultz (2020:6), focuses on interpreting social phenomena by discovering beliefs, knowledge, and experiences about talent management practices. This interpretative approach incorporated inductive analysis, facilitating the organic formation of ideas based on the data. Renjith *et al*., (2021:1) highlighted that qualitative data collection methods typically include personal interviews, ethnography, observations, grounded theory, document analysis, and literature reviews, contrasting with quantitative methods reliant on numerical data. As part of the qualitative research approach, the study used a literature review, document analysis (including NMMDM HRM policies and procedures), and semi-structured personal interviews to collect data. Thus, this approach was adopted to validate the results and to ensure proper triangulation.

4.4 LITERATURE REVIEW AND DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The literature review is a critical element of this study, offering an extensive analysis of existing theories and frameworks related to talent management. According to Ebidor and Ikhide (2024:212), a literature review is a scientific process that aims to analyse and evaluate the existing body of knowledge on a specific topic as well as shortcomings that are present in the field of the study

(Kumar, 2019:58). As a result, synthesising diverse scholarly sources, literature review establishes a theoretical foundation that shapes the research objectives and identifies key concepts, trends, and gaps in the literature, particularly regarding integrated talent management frameworks in the local sphere of government in RSA. Additionally, a literature review assists a researcher to choose between the best research methods, research design, and instruments for data collection (Ebidor & Ikhide, 2021:212). Moreover, this review employed both national and international integrated talent management best practices to illustrate effective talent management practices relevant for capacity development in the local sphere of government and critically evaluated existing practices to inform the development of a tailored implementation framework in the NMMDM.

This study's document analysis, which complemented the literature review, systematically examined the statutory and regulatory frameworks governing capacity development in the local sphere of government. Dalglish, Khalid and McMahon (2020:1) and Alasgarova and Peken (2024:8-9) defined a document analysis as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic. For this study, document analysis encompassed public policy documents, strategic plans, and annual reports, which offered valuable insights into the legal context of talent management practices within the NMMDM. Haupka *et al*., (2024:3) alluded that public records are the official, current records of an organisation's activities, accomplishments, and failures. Furthermore, multiple research databases were consulted to ascertain the availability of material for the purpose of this research. The databases that were engaged include NEXUS, Sabinet, EBSCOhost Online Research Database, EconBiz, Index to South African Periodicals, as well as other relevant and useful information related to the topic from Internet publications, databases of theses and dissertations, eBooks, and government websites.

Through document analysis, the study identified challenges and opportunities within current practices, assessing their effectiveness in relation to the proposed integrated implementation framework in the NMMDM. Moreover, integrating a literature review and document analysis has enhanced the study's rigour, ensuring that the findings are both theoretically grounded and relevant. Lastly, this dual methodology also empowered the researcher to address the specific challenges faced by NMMDM in implementing effective talent management practices and finally make valuable contributions and recommendations to the field of HRM as a discipline within a public sector - public service domain. In the end, the relevance and suitability of the theoretical construct gathered in both Chapters 2 and 3 were evaluated through the empirical investigation in Chapter 3 of the study.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The primary objective of this study has been to examine the challenges that impede the implementation of talent management practices for capacity development within the local government sphere in the RSA, specifically in the NMMDM region. As a result, the empirical study conducted an in-depth investigation into the factors influencing the fragmented approach to talent management practices within the local sphere of government, specifically focusing on the NMMDM as a case study. Kumar (2014:171) suggests that a variety of data collection methods, including both primary and secondary data, can be employed within one study. The subsequent sections will further explain the use of personal interviews supported by open-ended questionnaires as the main instruments for data gathering in this research.

4.5.1 Personal interviews

Personal interviews are a qualitative data collection method that involves direct, face-to-face interaction between the researcher and participants. This method is particularly valuable in exploring complex topics such as talent management, as it allows for in-depth discussions and the collection of valuable, detailed information (Knott, Rao, Summers & Teeger, 2022:1). According to Kumar (2019:220), an interview is a method of data collection between two or more people through face-to-face interaction. Ordinarily, interviews are used to elicit information, beliefs or opinions of a particular case form another person. The advantage of interviews is that a researcher can choose a format, wording, content, and order of questions when interviewing a respondent. In this study, personal interviews were conducted with key stakeholders within the NMMDM to gain insights into their experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to talent management practices.

Ruslin, Mashuri, Rasak, Alhabsyi, and Syam (2022:23) explained that there are three types of interviews available for investigation, namely: unstructured interviews, structured interviews, and semi-structured interviews. This study used semi-structured interviews to elicit empirical information and data, beliefs or opinions regarding the problem identified in the case study. Semi-structured interviews were the primary method of data collection. This method allowed for flexibility in sourcing information from participants while ensuring that key topics related to talent management and capacity development were covered. The interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of stakeholders, including the following participants:

- Municipal Manager: The overall accounting officer responsible for the municipality's operations and strategic direction.
- Senior Managers: Individuals overseeing various departments and responsible for implementing policies and managing resources.

- Manager: Human Resource (HR): The person responsible for human resource functions, including recruitment, training, and employee relations.
- HRM and Skills Development Senior Officials: Officials involved in the strategic management of human resources within the municipality.

The above-mentioned participants were selected based on their roles and responsibilities within the municipality, as they are directly involved in the strategic management and operational aspects of human resources and service delivery. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was used, as it allows the researcher to intentionally select individuals with specific knowledge or experience relevant to the study's objectives. This technique ensures that the sample is composed of participants who can provide valuable insights into the municipality's HRM practices and challenges. As result, the personal interviews were guided by an interview protocol that includes open-ended questionnaires designed to elicit detailed responses regarding current practices, challenges, and perceptions of talent management within the municipality. This approach aligns with the qualitative research objectives of understanding the practical experiences of participants (Abuhamda, Ismail & Bsharat, 2021:74).

4.5.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are widely used as data collection instruments across various research disciplines, offering a structured approach to gathering information from respondents. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions designed to collect data from respondents systematically (Bryman, 2021:112). Questionnaires are commonly used in both qualitative and quantitative research, allowing researchers to obtain information on opinions, attitudes, behaviours, and experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2022:67). This data collection method can be designed in different formats, including structured, semi-structured, and open-ended, each serving distinct research objectives. Structured questionnaires consist of closed-ended questions with predetermined response options. These questionnaires are frequently employed in quantitative research owing to their basic presentation as well as capacity for generating statistically analysable data (De Vaus, 2019:89). However, a major limitation is their restricted ability to capture detailed, subjective perspectives (Kumar, 2021:76).

Semi-structured questionnaires combine the closed and open-ended questions, providing researchers with the flexibility to explore emerging themes while maintaining a degree of structure (Smith, 2022:35). This format is particularly useful in mixed-methods research, as it allows for both quantitative and qualitative data collection (Denscombe, 2021:92). The inclusion of open-ended questions facilitates deeper insights but can pose challenges in terms of data analysis due to the variability in responses (Patton, 2020:134). Conversely, open-ended questionnaires consist entirely

of questions that allow respondents to provide answers in their own words (Rutledge & Hogg, 2020:2). This approach is predominantly used in qualitative research, where the focus is on capturing rich, descriptive data (Silverman, 2021:159). Open-ended questionnaires are valuable for understanding complex social phenomena, yet they require more time to administer and analyse compared to structured formats (Tracy, 2020:220).

This study employed open-ended questionnaires to conduct personal interviews, allowing participants to express their perspectives in their own words. This approach facilitated the collection of rich, detailed data, enabling a deeper understanding of their experiences and viewpoints. The flexibility of open-ended questions provided opportunities for follow-up enquiries during the interviews, ensuring that participants could elaborate on key themes and thus enhance the depth and nuance of the findings (Booker, Austin & Balasubramanian, 2021:700). To enhance the credibility of the study and mitigate potential biases, several methodological safeguards were implemented. First, the use of open-ended questionnaires in personal interviews allowed participants to freely express their thoughts without being constrained by predefined response options, reducing the risk of response bias. Second, neutrality was maintained during interviews by ensuring that questions were phrased objectively, avoiding leading or suggestive wording that could influence participants responses. Lastly, anonymity and confidentiality were assured, encouraging participants to provide honest and uninhibited responses, further minimising social desirability bias. Ultimately, employed method facilitated a comprehensive and exploration of talent management practices, ensuring that the findings reflected the realities within the municipality.

In this study, open-ended questionnaires were distributed to key stakeholders within the municipality, including the Municipal Manager, Senior Managers, the Manager of Human Resources, and HRM Senior Officials. This targeted approach ensured that insights were gathered from individuals directly involved in talent management and capacity development processes. By engaging with these stakeholders through personal interviews, the study was able to capture detailed perspectives on existing talent management practices, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. The flexibility of the open-ended questionnaire format allowed for in-depth discussions, enabling participants to elaborate on critical issues beyond predefined response options. As a result, this approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of talent management strategies within the municipality. Thus, triangulation of data sources in this study enhanced the credibility and validity of the research findings, ensuring that the study makes a meaningful contribution to the field of talent management in the local sphere of government.

4.5.3 Population and sampling

The population for this study consisted of key stakeholders involved in talent management within the NMMDM. Ahmad *et al.,* (2023:20) referred to population as a group of units from which the sample of the study is drawn. Beyond that, Willie (2024:76) defined population as a group of people who meet a set of criteria for a specific research study. As indicated earlier, the study focus group included the Municipal Manager, Senior Managers, Manager: HR, and other relevant municipal officials who played a critical role in the development and implementation of talent management strategies within the NMMDM. Focusing on these individuals, the study aims to gather insights from those who have direct experience and knowledge of the current practices and challenges in talent management within the municipality.

The purposive, non-probability sampling technique was used to select the sample from the population. Purposive sampling is a technique that allows for the purposeful selection of specific people or events to provide information that is critical to the study and cannot be obtained through other means (Nyimbili & Nyimbili, 2024:90). Notably, purposive sampling (also called judgemental sampling) is based on the researcher's assessment of who will provide the most useful information for the research questions (Campbell, Greenwood, Prior, Shearer, Walkem, Young, Bywaters & Walker, 2020:654). Therefore, purposive sampling was based on the researcher's subjective judgement on who is most suitable po participate and share information for the purpose of the study. Taking the above into account, certain senior officials in the NMMDM were found to have expertise in strategic talent management and capacity development. These participants were specifically selected for the sample due to their extensive knowledge, experience, and expertise in talent management and capacity development, as stated earlier. Table 4.1 below provides information on the total population and sample size for the study:

Table 4.1: Population and sampling

Population	**Total**	**Sample**	**Total**
Municipal Manager	1	Municipal Manager	1
Senior managers	5	Senior managers	4
Senior Manager: Corporate Resource Services	1	Senior Manager: Corporate Resource Services	1
Senior officials in the HRM Director	8	Senior officials in the HRM Directorate	4
Total: (*n*=)	15		10

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

4.5.4 Informed consent

Conducting empirical investigations in the social sciences require extensive data gathering, analysis, and interpretation, which can be quite time-consuming (Mbatha, 2020:37). Given the complexity and affluence of qualitative research, smaller sample sizes are often utilised (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022:8). Thakur (2021:3) highlighted that social science research necessitates human interaction, thereby mandating adherence to ethical standards to safeguard human rights and uphold ethical integrity. The key ethical considerations include the prevention of harm to participants, ensuring privacy and confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent (Tulyakul & Meepring, 2020:78). The informed consent process is crucial, as it equips potential participants with the necessary information to make an informed choice regarding their involvement in the study (Klykken, 2022:797). The proposed steps for this process included the following:

- providing a clear explanation of the study;
- allowing participants to ask questions;
- disclosing potential risks and benefits;
- ensuring privacy protection;
- affirming voluntary participation;
- facilitating the signing of the consent form; and
- participants will receive regular research updates (Omutoko, Chingarande, Botes, Moyana, Singh, Jaoko, Sevene, Mtande, Edwin, Matandika & Burgess, 2024:3).

However, Xu *et al.,* (2020:3) cautioned that confidentiality may affect a participant's decision to continue with the research. Therefore, confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity were paramount, with participants being assured that their identities will remain undisclosed, and that data was solely used for the study while maintaining the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (RSA, 2013:25). The study provided codes for participants in lieu of their names to protect their identities, thereby demonstrating a commitment to ethical standards and enabling the researcher to focus on data analysis rather than individual identities.

Moreover, the researcher consistently considered any unexpected events that may arise during the study, regardless of the absence of any foreseeable harm. On the other side, Bos (2020:252) advocated for transparent consultations with gatekeepers. This led the researcher in the successful obtaining of necessary approvals from the Accounting Officer of the NMMDM (i.e., the permission to conduct research) and Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC) (i.e., the ethical certificate to conduct research) prior to initiating face-to-face interviews.

Concerning participant reimbursement, it is essential that remuneration does not encourage respondent involvement in the study but rather covers reasonable expenses (Nyangulu, Mungwira, Nampota, Nyirenda, Tsirizani, Mwinjiwa & Divala, 2019:2). For this study, while no travel or lodging expenses were reimbursed, food provisions such as water and fruits were made available during the interviews, as specified in the consent form. This approach ensured ethical compliance while respecting the rights and well-being of participants throughout the empirical data-collection process.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis comprises of the processes of selecting, categorising, refining, and discarding data to ensure accuracy and facilitate its transformation into a more interpretable format (Taherdoost, 2021:32). The researcher employed thematic analysis to interpret data collected from participants through personal interviews and literature reviews. This enabled the generation of relevant themes as recommended by Van Kessel (2021:21). This approach adheres to ethical standards by documenting the analysis techniques, thereby enabling readers to assess the credibility of the research (Kiger & Varpio, 2020:850). The study followed a six-phase thematic guide, which included the following:

- adaptation with data;
- initial coding;
- theme searching;
- theme reviewing;
- theme defining; and
- report writing.

The data lifecycle closely links research ethics and data management, especially in empirical investigations (Okorie, Udeh, Adaga, DaraOjimba & Oriekhoe, 2024:2). Yazdi, Politze and Müller (2024:38) noted that the data lifecycle begins with active data storage, secure transfer, access control, retention, and archiving, which may include anonymity of data or applying access controls. To mitigate the risk of data loss, the researcher used Google Drive for data storage, supplemented by regular backups on both online platforms (e.g., Google Drive and OneDrive) and offline devices (e.g., USB drives and external hard drives). Access control was strictly maintained, with only the researcher and study leader having full access to the data. Confidential information was encrypted to protect against unauthorised access and accidental loss. Following this process, data will be retained for a minimum of five years and disseminated according to the North-West University's (NWU) standard operating procedures. The findings will be shared with the NMMDM, study

participants, and scholarly audiences, with presentations made at academic conferences and publications in peer-reviewed journals.

4.7 DATA MONITORING

Data monitoring is an essential component of the research process, safeguarding the integrity, trustworthiness, and validity of the data gathered during the investigation (Johnson, Adkins & Chauvin, 2020:142). In the context of this research on integrated talent management practices within the NMMDM, effective data monitoring involved systematic oversight of data collection, management, and the analysis processes. This section delineates the implemented strategies for effective data monitoring.

4.7.1 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency or reproducibility of results, indicating how well a measure produces stable outcomes under similar conditions (Driver & Maslakçi, 2020:2695). Various methods, such as evaluate-retest reliability, can be employed to assess reliability. Mbatha (2020:40) emphasised the importance of establishing and reporting reliability to enhance the validity and credibility of research outcomes. In this study, the researcher implemented appropriate sampling methods, conducted multiple measurements, and documented all research stages to bolster reliability.

4.7.2 Validity

Validity, on the other hand, pertains to the extent to which a study accurately measures the concepts it intends to assess (Hayashi *et al.,* 2019:98; Driver & Maslakçi, 2020:2695). Researchers aim for various types of validity, including internal, external, construct, and statistical conclusion validity. The researcher in this study meticulously defined research questions, selected an appropriate population and sample size, and utilised reliable data collection instruments and statistical tests. Additionally, the alignment of the study design with research questions and the use of multiple data sources for triangulation further enhanced validity. To maximise transparency, the researcher also critically evaluated and reported limitations and potential biases.

4.7.3 Trustworthiness

Lastly, trustworthiness encompasses the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmation of research findings (Ahmed, 2024:2). To ensure credibility, the researcher adopted a rigorous and coherent methodology, employing triangulation and systematic data collection and analysis. The

researcher provided a detailed description of the research process and context for transferability, enabling reviewers to evaluate the applicability of findings in different settings. The researcher has maintained thorough documentation of all processes undertaken during the research, which upholds dependability and confirmability while ensuring objectivity and neutrality, ultimately strengthening the recommendations and conclusions drawn from the study.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Mirza *et al.,* (2023:443) emphasised the critical role of ethical considerations in research, highlighting the necessity to consistently uphold the integrity of research processes. This study addressed various ethical concerns, including plagiarism, falsification, and fabrication. The researcher ensured adherence to ethical standards by paraphrasing and properly acknowledging the work of other authors throughout the dissertation, thereby avoiding plagiarism. It is important to note that this research builds upon preliminary studies conducted at the Honours level, which lacked a comprehensive theoretical framework for the implementation of integrated talent management practices within the local government RSA.

Conflicts of interest, defined as situations that could compromise the objectivity and integrity of the research, were also considered (Mirza *et al*., 2023:443). As a result, the researcher did not identify any potential conflicts, as the research supervisor, who is independent from the NMMDM, supervised the process to mitigate any such issues. The research adhered to the NWU policies, which provide guidance on managing ethical concerns throughout the research phases. Moreover, credible scholarly theories underpinned the literature review, without any fabrication of information. Most significantly, the researcher-maintained integrity by not manipulating data to achieve predetermined outcomes, thus avoiding falsification. As noted by DeMatteis, Young, Dahlhamer, Langley, Murphy, Olson and Sharma (2020:27-32), data analysis methods can effectively identify research irregularities. To prevent fabrication and falsification, the researcher employed a sampling method that sought reliable participants willing to engage voluntarily. Furthermore, there was no falsification of any data or results. Hence, the subsequent ethical considerations process was also observed:

- approval to conduct the study was secured from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at NWU.
- authorisation from the NMMDM Municipal Manager to employ the municipality as a case study was granted.
- each participant gave written consent for participation, agreed to audio recording during the interviews, maintained anonymity through confidentiality in both the interviews and the questionnaire, and received dignified treatment.

The researcher employed thematic data analysis to meticulously document the decision-making process concerning participant responses, adhering to ethical standards established by NWU to ensure credibility through participant agreement with the findings. Collaboration between the researcher and project leader facilitated the analysis and categorisation of data, enhancing reliability through comprehensive documentation, data triangulation, and audit trails. Objectivity, or conformability, was a priority for the researcher, who aimed to maintain an unbiased and impartial stance in the findings (Persson & Svensson, 2020:16). The final report ensured confidentiality and anonymity, refraining from disclosing any personal information. Participants were informed about the study's objectives, provided consent, and were allowed to withdraw at any time without coercion or compensation. The study encompassed all data, including potentially unfavourable findings, contributing to the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM. The results will be used exclusively for research purposes and will not be disclosed to any other party unless a formal request has been made and approved by the NWU.

4.9 LINKAGE BETWEEN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, QUESTIONS, AND METHODOLOGY

The link between research objectives, questions, and methodology is essential for achieving clarity, alignment, validity, reliability, and meaningful interpretation of findings. A well-structured research design reinforces this connection, thereby enhancing the overall quality and impact of the study. This systematic approach not only ensures coherence and focus but also bolsters the credibility of the findings, rendering them more relevant and applicable to both practitioners and scholars (Miles & Scott, 2017:2). Below, find Table 4.2 that presents a linkage between research objectives (RO), questions (RQ), methodology and dedicated chapters.

Table 4.2: Linkage between research objectives, questions, methodology, and chapters

RO	RQ	Adopted methodology	Dedicated Chapter
R0: 1.3.2.1	**RQ: 1.4.2.1**	• **Literature review**: A comprehensive literature review was conducted to gather existing theories and practices related to talent management. This included national and international review on integrated talent management frameworks.	**Chapter 2**
R0: 1.3.2.2	**RQ: 1.4.2.2**	• **Document analysis**: Relevant policy documents, official records and frameworks were analysed to	**Chapter 3**

		understand how they aligned with capacity development in local government in the RSA.	
R0: 1.3.2.3	**RQ: 1.4.2.3**	• **Research approach and design**: The study outlines and justifies the research methodology employed, which included the research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical approaches.	**Chapter 4**
R0: 1.3.2.4	**RQ: 1.4.2.4**	• **Qualitative approach:** Semi-structured questionnaires and personal interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in the NMMDM.	**Chapter 5**
R0: 1.3.2.5	**RQ: 1.4.2.5**	• **Framework development:** An integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development for NMMDM was developed based on the findings from the theoretical framework and empirical findings.	**Chapter 6**
R0: 1.3.2.6	**RQ: 1.4.2.6**	• **Recommendations development:** Based on the results and findings from the qualitative interviews and the developed framework, actionable recommendations were formulated.	**Chapter 7**

Source: (Johnston, Barrett & Stenfors, 2020:380); (Rinaldy, Pahira & Lativah, 2023:312); (Karunarathna, Bandara, Jayawardana, De Alvis, Gunasena, Hapuarachchi, Ekanayake, Rajapaksha, Gunawardana, Aluthge & Gunathilake, 2024).

Table 4.2 above depicts the relationship between each research question and objective, along with the relevant research methods and chapter. This roadmap provided a structured approach to the study.

4.10 CONCLUSION

Chapter 4 presented the research methodology employed in this study, which is primarily qualitative in nature, supplemented by personal interviews and a semi-structured questionnaire. This qualitative research approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of talent management practices within NMMDM. The key issues addressed in this chapter include the alignment of research objectives with appropriate data collection methods and ensuring that the chosen methodologies effectively capture the complexities of the research questions. The use of a semi-structured questionnaire facilitated the collection of valuable, detailed data while maintaining a focus on specific themes relevant to the study. Additionally, personal interviews provided an opportunity for deeper engagement with participants, allowing for the exploration of nuanced perspectives that quantitative data alone may not discover. Overall, this chapter outlines a methodology that ensures the reliability and validity of the findings, contributing to a robust understanding of the challenges and opportunities in implementing effective talent management practices in the RSA local government sphere context. The methodological framework established the foundation for the next presentation, analysis and interpretation of findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of Chapter 5 is to investigate the current talent management practices and challenges related to capacity development within the NMMDM. The study in Chapter 4, Section 4.5, adopted a qualitative research methodology, supported by both exploratory and descriptive research design approaches. This methodology is best suited for understanding the complex nuances of talent management within the context of local government, specifically NMMDM. To obtain a comprehensive understanding, the study adopted a semi-structured questionnaire and personal interviews with NMMDM senior managers and senior officials in HRM. The use of an open-ended questionnaire was crucial to this study, as it allowed participants to express their thoughts and experiences in their own words, thereby providing richer and more nuanced data. By encouraging participants to elaborate on their experiences, this approach uncovered underlying issues and challenges that closed-ended questions may not capture.

Chapter 1, Section 1.6, highlighted NMMDM as one of the four district municipalities within the North West Province in RSA, that shares jurisdiction with five subordinate local municipalities, as depicted in Figure 1.1 of the study. However, the study focused only on specific talent management practices at NMMDM and did not generalise its findings to other municipalities, despite the possibility of similar challenges. Moreover, in Chapter 2, sections 2.6 and 2.10, the study reviewed existing talent management theories and national and international integrated talent management frameworks as best practices, laying the foundation for this chapter.

Chapter 3 identified unique capacity challenges facing the local sphere of government in RSA, along with the statutory and regulatory frameworks that govern capacity development in the local government context. The chapter identifies a number of challenges, including the municipal leadership's lack of skills and capacity to implement talent management programs, budgetary constraints, political interference in municipal administration, a lack of integration and misalignment between talent management and HRM practices and overall institutional strategies, as well as compliance issues with legislative and regulatory frameworks. Adhering to these frameworks is crucial for improving public service delivery and enhancing the performance of municipality officials. The findings in this chapter provide valuable insights that will inform the establishment of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government in RSA, particularly NMMDM. The next section presents a data analysis framework for the study.

5.2 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

In this study, a thematic analysis framework was employed to analyse the qualitative data collected with a questionnaire and personally noted semi-structured interviews. As indicated in Chapter 1, Section 1.7.4.3 and Chapter 4, Section 4.6 of the study, thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative research method that focuses on identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within collected data. This approach is particularly effective for exploring the experiences, perceptions and insights of participants, making it well-suited for the objectives of this research. Below is a detailed description of each step involved in the thematic analysis framework employed in this study:

1. The first step involved immersing oneself in the collected data by reading and re-reading the transcripts of the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. This process allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the content and context of the responses of the participants. During this phase, initial thoughts and reflections were noted to inform subsequent analyses.
2. Following familiarisation, the collected data was systematically coded. This entailed identifying significant statements, phrases, or segments of text that captured important ideas relevant to the research questions. The coding process was both inductive and deductive, allowing for the emergence of new codes while also considering pre-existing concepts from the literature. Each code was assigned a label that succinctly described the content that it represented.
3. Once initial coding was completed, the next step was to group related codes into broader themes. This consisted of examining the codes for patterns and relationships, identifying how participants connected to one another. Themes were developed by clustering codes that shared commonalities, thereby capturing the essence of the experiences and perspectives on talent management practices and challenges of the participants.
4. After initial themes were identified, these themes were reviewed and refined to ensure that themes accurately represent the collected data. This encompassed revisiting the original transcripts to verify that the themes were grounded in the responses of the participants. Themes were assessed for coherence, distinctiveness, and relevance to the research questions. Any overlapping or redundant themes were merged or eliminated to enhance clarity.
5. The final step in the thematic analysis process consisted of defining and naming each theme in the study. This included articulating the essence of each theme and how it contributes to the overall understanding of the research topic. Clear definitions were established to guide the presentation of findings in subsequent sections of the chapter.

The thematic analysis framework employed in this study provided a structured and systematic approach to analysing the qualitative data. By focusing on the identification and interpretation of themes, the analytical framework enabled a deeper understanding of the current talent

management practices and challenges for capacity development in the NMMDM. The insights gained from this analysis were instrumental in informing the planned future integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development within the local government context. The following Table 5.1 offers information on the actual empirical data analysis and interpretation. It also illustrates the nature and extent of alignment between an employed thematic analysis framework with study research objective (RO:1.4.2.4) and research question (RQ:1.5.2.4) in Chapter 1 of the dissertation:

Table 5.1: Alignment of thematic analysis framework with research objectives and questions

Element	Description	Alignment
RO:1.4.2.4	To empirically investigate the current talent management practices and challenges for capacity development in the NMMDM.	Thematic analysis allows for a detailed exploration of talent management practices and challenges, directly addressing the objective.
RQ:1.5.2.4	What are the current practices and challenges of talent management for capacity development in the NMMDM as identified through empirical investigation?	Thematic analysis identifies and analyses patterns related to the specific talent management practices and challenges outlined in the research questions.
Data collection methods	Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions.	These methods facilitate the collection of rich qualitative data, enabling thematic analysis to effectively interpret participant insights about talent management for capacity development.
Analysis	A qualitative method for identifying and analysing patterns within the collected data.	Thematic analysis aligns research objectives and questions by capturing the comments and quotations of participants' experiences related to talent management practices in NMMDM.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

5.3 EMPERICAL DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Empirical data analysis is essential for effective research, allowing researchers to gain more insights in both qualitative and quantitative data (Alem, 2020:2). As mentioned earlier (Chapter 4, Section 4.6), this study employed a qualitative research methodology. As a result, the researcher

interviewed ten (10) participants, including a Municipal Manager, Senior Managers, the Director of Corporate Services, and Senior officials from the HRM directorate, to capture diverse perspectives about talent management practices for capacity development within NMMDM. However, to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality and protect the identities of the participants, the researcher implemented a robust anonymity system during the study. Each participant received a unique code, as outlined in the informed consent form, that generically refers to the NMMDM official as "Participant" in all documentation and reporting (Chapter 4, Section 4.5.4). This approach effectively prevents the disclosure of individual names and specific roles within the municipality, thereby ensuring personal privacy.

The development of a data-collection questionnaire with 16 open-ended questions was designed to elicit detailed responses from each participant, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of their insights and experiences within NMMDM. The questionnaire was/is organised in three segments, sections A, B and C:

Section A : The consent form for data-collection participants
Section B : Biographical information
Section C : The questionnaire on the current state of talent management practices

All participants involved in the study completed **Section A** of the questionnaire – they gave their consent. Secondly, all data-collection participants also completed **Section B** of the questionnaire, which included enquiries about their demographic information. The primary objective of gathering biographical information was to validate the credentials of the participants and their years of experience within the NMMDM. Section 5.3.1 below presents findings derived from Section B (demographic information) through the data-collection questionnaire.

5.3.1 Section B: Biographical information

The study emphasised in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3, that the selection criteria of participants were based on their individual extensive experience, educational background, and specific roles within the municipal HRM domain. Overall, the biographical information not only confirms the suitability of the data-collection participants but also ensures the reliability and validity of the findings. It also grounds the findings in a real municipal setting and highlights the study's pursuit of informed perspectives about talent management practices from active NMMDM officials:

Table 5.2: Length of service in your current position

Length of service	Frequency	Percentage
01 to 05 years	4	40%
06 to 10 years	1	10%
11 to 15 years	2	20%
16 to 20 years	1	10%
21 to 30 years	2	20%
More than 31 years	0	0%
Total	**10**	**100%**

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

The data collected reveals that forty percent (40%) of respondents have 1 to 5 years of service in the Municipality, while individuals with over 31 years of experience are notably absent. Such a distribution provided valuable context for interpreting the insights shared by the participants in relation to their varying levels of experience within their roles. The predominance of less experienced officials suggests a workforce in the early stages of their careers, which may necessitate targeted training and mentorship programs to facilitate their professional growth.

Additionally, the lack of long-serving officials points to a potential deficit in institutional knowledge, which could adversely affect decision-making and public policy implementation in the Municipality. This situation highlights the importance of succession planning and knowledge transfer initiatives to preserve valuable insights from experienced personnel. In the end, the findings regarding service duration not only inform the interpretation of participant feedback but also underscore the urgent need for effective talent management strategies that promote capacity development, improve employee retention, and enhance the municipality's public service delivery to its community(s).

Table 5.3: Years of work experience in the local government overall

Years of work experience	Frequency	Percentage
01 to 05 years	1	10%
06 to 10 years	2	20%
11 to 15 years	3	30%
16 to 20 years	1	10%
21 to 30 years	3	3%
More than 31 years	0	0%
Total	**10**	**100%**

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

The analysis of the work experience distribution among the 10 participants revealed a diverse range of expertise within the group, highlighting both entry-level and seasoned professionals. Specifically, the data indicates that 10% of the participants possess 01 to 05 years of experience, representing individuals who are typically new to the workforce, such as recent graduates or entry-level employees. This entry-level segment is crucial for introducing fresh perspectives within the municipality. In contrast, the 06 to 10 years' experience category includes 20% of the participants, indicating a transition to mid-level positions where individuals begin to specialise and assume greater responsibilities.

The 11-to-15-year category stands out with the highest representation, comprising 30% of the data-collection sample. Participants in this range are likely to hold senior roles and contribute significantly to the municipality through their substantial expertise. Further analysis revealed that the 16 to 20 years' experience category includes only one participant, suggesting a potential gap in this range, while the 21 to 30 years category also accounts for 30% of the participants. These seasoned professionals are likely to occupy senior management- or expert positions, bringing extensive knowledge and skills to their roles. Notably, the absence of participants with over 31 years of experience may reflect a demographic trend or a shift in workforce composition, indicating that such lengthy careers are becoming less common. Overall, the collected data highlights a strong presence of mid-to senior-level experience within the sample, suggesting a stable workforce that blends fresh perspectives from newer officials with the added wisdom of seasoned professionals, fostering an environment of mentorship and collaboration. Table 5.4 below presents an analysis of the participants educational and academic qualifications.

Table 5.4: Educational / academic qualification level

Academic qualification level	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 12	0	0%
Post matric studies/Diploma	3	30%
University degree	1	10%
Post-graduate degree	6	60%
Total	**10**	**100%**

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

The data indicates a significant presence of participants with post-graduate degrees, comprising 60% of the sample, while no participants hold only a Grade 12 qualification. This highlights a highly educated group, with an additional 30% possessing post-matric studies or diplomas and 10% holding university degrees. These academic qualifications are crucial for understanding talent management practices in local government capacity development, as the predominance of post-

graduate degrees suggests participants have high expertise and specialised knowledge, enhancing public policy formulation and implementation effectiveness. Their advanced education levels may also influence their analytical approach during the data-collection interviews, advocating for evidence-based professional development strategies. In summary, the participants' academic qualifications highlight the importance of aligning talent management practices with the advanced skills and knowledge of the municipality's workforce, ensuring that capacity development efforts effectively enhance local government officials' capabilities.

5.3.2 Section C: Personal interviews responses

The data-collection questionnaires in **Section C** focused on the current practices and challenges of talent management for capacity development within the NMMDM. Municipality officials were selected based on their expertise and involvement in strategic planning and policymaking related to these practices. Chapter 4, Section 4, outlined the collection of quantitative data through personal interviews and a semi-structured questionnaire, which are designed to elicit detailed observations into the complexities of talent management. The subsequent section provides an analysis of the personally noted interviews and responses to the semi-structured questionnaire posed to the participants.

Question 1: Does the municipality have a talent management policy in place?

The role of HRM in governance is increasingly recognised as a pivotal factor in enhancing organisational effectiveness and public service delivery. However, a significant majority of participants, over ninety percent, remarked that the municipality lacks a formal talent management policy. As noted by **Participant 3**, *"I'm worried about how our political leaders don't seem to care about reviewing the human resource management policies*". The non-existence of HRM policies over the past decade poses significant challenges for a municipality, particularly in RSA. In Chapter 1, Section 1.6, and Table 2.2, the strategic importance of aligning talent management with institutional goals is highlighted, defining it as a systematic approach to attracting, developing, and retaining skilled employees. The text emphasises that failing to regularly review public HRM policies can undermine this approach, leading to limited employee development and ineffective workforce planning. Additionally, it is cautioned that neglecting public HRM policies can significantly impact municipal operations. Thus, employee development is crucial for creating a capable workforce that can effectively address the complexities of public service delivery.

As highlighted by Govender and Bussin (2020:1) and Matlala *et al., (*2023:250), institutions that invest in employee development are more likely to achieve superior performance outcomes. Conversely, neglect leads to stagnation, where employees are not equipped with the necessary

skills to adapt to evolving public service demands. Ineffective workforce planning, owing to the outdated HRM policies, exacerbates these challenges. Research indicates that misalignment between workforce capabilities and institutional needs can result in inefficiencies and resource wastage (see Chapter 1, Section 1.3). In the local sphere of government in RSA, especially in NMMDM where responsiveness and adaptability are crucial, this misalignment can hinder the effective delivery of public services. To address these issues, it is essential for a municipality to adopt an integrated talent management framework that aligns with its IDP and corporate strategy. Such frameworks are supported by legislative and regulatory mandates for capacity development in local governance in RSA (as indicated in Chapter 3, Section 3.2).

An integrated approach ensures that talent management is not treated in isolation but is instead part of a holistic strategy that includes employee development initiatives. Therefore, the implementation of an integrated talent management policy in the municipality will lead to several positive outcomes, including the following: (1) enhancement of public service delivery by aligning employee skill development with organisational needs as established in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2, (2) fostering of a culture of accountability and performance, encouraging employee engagement and contribution when development pathways are visible (Patience & Nel, 2022:3; Wirba, 2023:4), and (3) creation of a feedback mechanism for continuous improvement and adaptation to changing public needs (Chapter 2, Table 2.10), which is crucial for municipalities in RSA facing dynamic challenges. At the end, neglecting public HRM policies can have detrimental effects on officials' development, workforce planning, and overall performance in municipal governance. Adopting integrated talent management frameworks aligned with legislative and regulatory frameworks is essential for an effective, efficient and cost-effective workforce.

Question 2: What strategies does the municipality have in place to retain and engage high potential employees identified through succession planning?

The observations made by data-collection participants highlighted a critical challenge within the municipality regarding employee development strategy: **Participant 8** remarked, "*As I see it, we don't have personalised development programs or mentorship opportunities for high-potential employees. Our training plans are just done randomly without focusing on a specific talent we need. Can I simply say that succession planning will never exist in this municipality".* This gap not only undermines the effectiveness of talent management but also poses significant risks to the municipality's operational effectiveness and overall official satisfaction. Personalised development programs are essential for fostering employee growth and retention, particularly among high-potential individuals (Amushila & Bussin, 2021:4). Ordinarily, tailored development initiatives enhance employee engagement and performance, as it allows individuals to build skills relevant to their roles and career aspirations (Chapter 3, Section 3.6.7; Section 3.7.2). In contrast, the random

nature of current training plans in NMMDM, as noted by many participants, leads to misalignment between employee capabilities and institutional needs, resulting in wasted resources and missed opportunities for growth.

Moreover, without a focus on specific talents, the municipality risks significant talent loss. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2 and Chapter 3, Section 3.61 of the study noted that institutions that fail to invest in employee development often experience higher turnover rates, leading to increased hiring costs and an inability to fill critical roles. However, the situation in NMMDM is concerning where retention of scarce skills is crucial. Furthermore, **Participant 8's** assertion that *"succession planning will never exist in this municipality"* underscores a dire consequence of neglecting official development. Succession planning is vital for ensuring leadership continuity and institutional stability. The study also uncovered that institutions lacking structured succession plans face leadership vacuums, which can lead to operational disruptions and a decline in public service quality (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.6, & Chapter 3, Section 3.1). Moreover, the absence of effective succession planning can hinder diversity initiatives. Therefore, the lack of targeted development programs in NMMDM may result in a homogeneous leadership pipeline, limiting the municipality's ability to reflect the diversity of the community(s) it serves. As the study noted earlier in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.5, this situation in NMMDM not only affects public decision-making processes but also impacts public perception and trust in local government in RSA. Moreover, the findings indicate that gaps in official development led to low morale, disengagement, and decreased job satisfaction among staff, which negatively impacts individual performance and creates a toxic workplace culture (Uys, 2021:265; Mumba & Outieshat, 2023:20-22). On the other hand, the study found that inadequate development strategies also hinder knowledge transfer, risking the loss of valuable insights when high-potential officials leave (Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4 & Section 2.5.6). Therefore, addressing official development deficiencies is crucial for preventing talent loss, leadership vacuums, and low morale. By adopting strategic approaches to official development, municipalities can cultivate a skilled and engaged workforce, ultimately benefiting the community(s).

Question 3: How talent management as a Human Resource Management practice is aligned to the overall organisational strategy?

The sentiments expressed by eighty percent of participants indicate that there is misalignment between HRM practices, and the strategic objectives as adopted in the IDP of the Municipality. As outlined in Chapter 3, Section 2.10.1.2 of the study, when HRM activities are synchronised with institutional goals, it leads to improved performance, official engagement, and overall effectiveness. Conversely, misalignment in NMMDM can create inefficiencies, hinder progress, and result in a failure to meet key performance indicators. To reiterate, when training programs are not designed to support the strategic direction of the municipality, it may be difficult to address the

skills and competencies required for achieving desired outcomes (Biewenga, 2021: iv; Amushila & Bussin, 2021:1; Gasela, 2022:2). As a result, assertions made by data-collection participants demonstrate that current training practices do not consistently support broader goals of IDP-implementation and necessitate an integrated approach. Arasanmi and Krishna (2019:174) and Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1 uncovered that effective recruitment strategies must focus on attracting talent that not only possesses the necessary skills but also aligns with the municipality's vision and mission. Therefore, noting the circumstances in NMMDM, the HRM Unit should act as a strategic partner that aligns talent acquisition with institutional needs. However, without this connection, the municipality risks hiring individuals who do not contribute to its goals.

Another point worth noting is performance management which is affected by misalignment of talent management practices in NMMDM. Aguinis (2021:15) and Amajuoyi *et al.,* (2024:259) commented that effective performance management systems should be designed to assess and guide employee contributions toward organisational objectives. Nonetheless, when talent management as HRM practice in performance management does not reflect the strategic goals of the NMMDM, it can lead to confusion, disengagement, and low morale among its officials. In that view, a well-aligned performance management system that recognises talent management not only facilitates clear communication of expectations but also fosters accountability and motivation among officials (Makapela & Mtshelwane, 2021:14). Overall, the absence of such integration with municipality official development efforts may yield limited benefits, resulting in a workforce that is ill-prepared for meeting the municipality's evolving challenges. Going forward, it is of critical importance for NMMDM to prioritise the integration of HRM activities such as recruitment, training, and performance management with broader municipal goals, which in turn can enhance its operational capacity and better achieve desired outcomes.

Question 4: How does the municipality measure the effectiveness of talent management practices in the municipality?

The effectiveness of talent management practices within the local government sphere of the RSA remains a critical area of inquiry, particularly in the context of South Africa's legislative and regulatory frameworks for capacity development. In this study’s empirical data-collection phase eighty percent of participants reported that the NMMDM lacks a systematic approach to measuring the effectiveness of its talent management practices, which complicates the assessment of current activities and identification of improvement areas. Remarkably, **Participant 4** said “*I am embarrassed to say that we do not measure how well our talent management practices work. We use old methods, and there's not enough good data to see if we're really helping our employees. It's disappointing that we're not using the right tools for evaluation, so we miss important chances to improve”.* As indicated by **Participant 4,** the NMMDM's failure to measure the effectiveness of

its talent management practices reflects a persistent issue in many local government settings (Lee, 2020: v; Masale, Barkhuizen & Schutte, 2021:3; Mudzusi, Munzhedzi & Mahole, 2024:4). Existing literature supports this claim, demonstrating that institutions often utilise old-fashioned evaluation methods that do not capture the complexities of modern workforce dynamics (Adam, 2020:74; Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1). Such limitations hinder the ability of municipalities to make informed public decisions regarding employee development and retention strategies, ultimately undermining their capacity to fulfil legislative mandates aimed at enhancing public service delivery.

The implications of inadequate talent management evaluation extend beyond official development and retention strategies; but significantly impact NMMDM performance. As stated previously, institutions that leverage data analytics to evaluate talent management practices tend to achieve superior outcomes, including higher employee engagement and improved public service delivery (noted in Table 2.2 & 2.10; Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1.2, & Section 2.10.2.3; Amajuoyi *et al.,* 2024:259). In contrast, the lack of effective measurement cannot ascertain whether NMMDM's talent management strategies are aligned with their broader institutional goals, thereby compromising their ability to develop a capable workforce, as noted by **Participant 4**. This disconnect not only hampers individual municipality official growth but also detracts from the overall mission of NMMDM to serve the community(s) effectively. Additionally, the call for modern evaluation tools is echoed in various frameworks for integrated talent management. For instance, Akter *et al.,* (2022:9) and Chethana and Noronha (2022:614) posited that effective talent management should be data-driven, utilising contemporary analytics to inform public decision-making. This approach is particularly pertinent within the RSA local government sphere context, where regulatory frameworks such as the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (2000) and the Skills Development Act (1998) mandate the development of a skilled and competent workforce (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.7.3 & Section 3.7.10). Equally, it is imperative to NMMDM to enhance capacity development with the use of modern evaluation tools and data-driven approaches that align with both legislative mandates and the evolving needs of its workforce. Essentially, this shift will foster a skilled and competent public sector official that is able to effectively address the challenges facing communities in NMMDM's geographic area of responsibility.

Question 5: In what manner has the municipality been organised and structured to reward outstanding employee performance?

As highlighted by the unanimous agreement among the data-collection phase's participants, the absence of structured incentive programs within the municipality presents a significant challenge to sustaining official motivation. The current state of incentive programs, as described by participants, illustrates a reliance on limited financial rewards that do not adequately meet the motivational needs of the municipality officials. To revisit, Ndasana and Umejesi (2022:3) and Rulashe and

Ijeoma (2022:2) indicated that financial incentives can play a role in motivation. However, it often ensues with inadequate fostering of long-term employee engagement and satisfaction. Therefore, the reliance on singular rewards, such as the 13th cheque, does not account for the multifaceted nature of official motivation, which includes aspects such as recognition, career development, and work-life balance. Worse still, the absence of comprehensive incentive strategies within the municipality can lead to disengagement and dissatisfaction among officials, which can manifest in decreased performance and increased absenteeism. Recalling earlier discussions, Van Wyk *et al.,* (2019:1) pointed out that employee dissatisfaction with management often leads to breaches of the psychological contract, exacerbated by management's failure to implement succession planning. Therefore, NMMDM must recognise the importance of implementing diverse and effective incentive programs to enhance official motivation, and by extension, public service delivery to the community(s).

Furthermore, Human Relations Theory, supported by literature, suggests that non-monetary incentives, such as professional development opportunities, flexible work arrangements, and employee recognition programs, can significantly enhance motivation and job satisfaction (Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4 & 2.6.4). These programs not only meet the intrinsic motivational needs of employees but also align with the goals of capacity development outlined in the Republic of South Africa's legislative framework, such as the Constitution of RSA, 1996, Section 195 (1)(h)), which outlines the values and principles of effective HRM and career development as democratic imperatives in the public sector (RSA, 1996:99). Integrated talent management frameworks, such as the BeamPines integrated talent management model, further supports the need for comprehensive incentive programs. These theories posit that while hygiene factors (such as salary) can prevent dissatisfaction, true motivation stems from factors such as recognition and opportunities for growth (BeamPines, 2019:1-5). Certainly, through diverse incentive offerings, NMMDM can be in a better position to motivate its municipal officials, thereby fostering a culture of engagement and loyalty.

Question 6: What strategies and practices do the municipality currently implement to ensure a smooth and effective onboarding process for new employees?

Eighty percent of the participants in the data-collection part of the Study described the current onboarding process within the NMMDM as basic and inconsistent and that there is a lack of resources to facilitate proper onboarding practices within the municipality. **Participant 9** expressed "*We acknowledge the importance of onboarding; however, resource constraints prevent us from developing comprehensive onboarding programs for newly appointed employees"*. As previously established in Chapter 2. Section 2.3.3, the study indicated that an onboarding process is a critical phase in an employee's work cycle that significantly influences job satisfaction, engagement, and

overall organisational success in new hires. Conversely, inadequate onboarding processes in NMMDM can result in negative outcomes for both the officials and employers, such as diminished collaboration, lower job satisfaction, and higher turnover rates (Nel-Sanders & Malomane, 2022:1; Oberholzer, Schultz & Lessing, 2024:2). These findings highlight the critical need for public sector and -service institutions like NMMDM to safeguard and invest in comprehensive onboarding programs that support new hires from the outset.

Furthermore, the acknowledgment of resource constraints as a barrier to effective onboarding is a common theme in many public institutions, particularly within the public sector. According to Shufutinsky and Cox (2019:4) limited financial resources can hinder the development of structured onboarding initiatives, which may include formal training, mentorship programs, and integration activities. In that view, lack of resource allocation in the NMMDM not only undermines the onboarding experience for new employees but also adversely affects overall municipal performance. Recalling earlier findings, Psychological Contract Theory; Human Relations Theory; Organisational Commitment Theory; and Generational Theory posited that the process of integrating new employees into an organisation involves both formal and informal mechanisms that help them understand their roles and the organisational culture (Chapter 2, Section 2.6.1; 2.6.3; 2.6.4 & 2.6.5). Clearly, new employees at NMMDM do not receive adequate support during their appointment, which may cause them to struggle in adjusting to their roles, leading to feelings of isolation and disengagement. Given this, NMMDM should enhance their onboarding processes for newly appointed officials to ensure that individuals are well-versed in public policies and procedures, enabling them to effectively tackle public service delivery challenges, including financial constraints.

Question 7: How does the municipality currently promote employee engagement?

The feedback from participants signals a unanimous consensus on the minimal efforts made by the municipality to foster official engagement, with **Participant 10** stating that, *“As far as I know, the municipality does not have any employee engagement programs in place. In fact, it seems like there’s a general lack of awareness about the importance of such initiatives among our management and our leadership…. and again, our engagement activities are only limited to Local Labour Forums (LLF) and routine updates on pension and medical aid adjustment. I've never heard of any other employee engagement activities beyond that”.* The statements presented by **Participant 10** reveal a serious deficiency in official engagement initiatives within the municipality. As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4 of the study, employee engagement is a critical component of talent management, as engaged employees are more productive and innovative in, and committed to the organisation. Integrated talent management frameworks discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1.1; 2.10.1.3; 2.10.2.2 and 2.10.2.3 also support this view, indicating that

organisations with high levels of employee engagement experience better performance outcomes, including higher profitability, productivity, and customer satisfaction. Consequently, non-existence of official engagement in a municipality can lead to low motivation, decreased productivity, high turnover, and poor morale. This disengagement hampers collaboration and innovation, negatively impacting public service delivery quality. Additionally, neglecting official engagement makes it difficult to attract and retain talent, leaving the workforce ill-equipped to meet the community(s) needs.

Contrary to these findings, the study emphasised leadership traits and skills within the institution as crucial for fostering employee engagement by actively cultivating an inclusive and motivating work environment (Kell, 2019:2; Lee, 2020:22; Biewenga, 2021:31; Dawson *et al*., 2021:16434) Despite the importance of these traits and skills to facilitate employee engagement, sentiments echoed by **Participant 10**, indicate a disconnect from best practices. The South African legislative framework requires municipalities to implement robust official development programs (as highlighted in Chapter 3, Section 3.7). The absence of such initiatives in the municipality suggests non-compliance and lack of oversight to align employee aspirations with organisational goals. This non-compliance could impede the municipality's ability to deliver efficient public services and develop its officials. Hence, a more integrated and proactive approach to talent management is crucial for the NMMDM, including comprehensive development and recognition programs to ensure municipality official engagement goes beyond basic updates.

Question 8: Does the municipality have career anchors dedicated to promoting career management programs for municipal employees?

The observations made by many participants during the Study's empirical data-collection phase point to a significant shortfall in NMMDM's career management initiatives. **Participant 8** held forth, *"In my opinion, the municipality does not have any career management programs in place, and I am not sure if everybody knows about career anchors. What I know is that we issue our training needs forms every year for employees to fill out through our skills development unit".* The findings by **Participant 8** can be augmented with the literature in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.8, which advocated that career management should include career planning, development opportunities, mentoring, and succession planning. Therefore, sole reliance on training needs forms as a source of career management is insufficient and outdated. Vermeulen (2015:483) and Biewenga (2021: iv) further underscored the importance of understanding individual career anchors such as technical/functional competence, managerial competence, security/stability, and entrepreneurial creativity that guide employee career decisions. Ordinarily, effectiveness of public service delivery is closely tied to the competence and motivation of the workforce (see Chapter 3, Section 3.8.4). In this manner, without structured career management programs, NMMDM officials may experience

stagnant growth and limited development opportunities. Ultimately, this could lead to frustration and decreased job satisfaction, resulting in higher turnover rates.

Notably, the misalignment between employee career aspirations and organisational objectives, stemming from a lack of awareness of career anchors, can lead to disengagement and decreased productivity among municipal employees. As discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.8.2, the effectiveness of public service delivery is significantly influenced by workforce competence and motivation. Thus, inadequate career management can diminish both competence and motivation negatively, impacting public service delivery quality and efficiency (Mbatha, 2020:18 & Masale *et al.*, 2021:2). To address these challenges, NMMDM should implement a proactive career management strategy that raises awareness of career anchors, integrate them into talent management policies, offer continuous development opportunities, and align officials' aspirations with institutional goals. At the end, this approach is expected to foster the development and satisfaction of officials, reduce turnover rates, and ultimately improve public service delivery quality and the municipality's performance (Chapter 2, Section 2.10.3).

Question 9: What specific resources are lacking or inadequate in supporting the effective implementation of talent management strategies within the municipality?

As expounded in Table 3.3, and Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5, the study reported that the modern environment of HRM has transformed drastically with the emergence of innovative technological solutions. Nonetheless, findings in the empirical data-collection phase of this study revealed that eighty percent of the participants assert that the deficiency in HR, financial, and technological resources severely restricts NMMDM's capacity to implement integrated talent management strategies. These findings have been confirmed by **Participant 3**, who stated *"Currently, the municipality doesn't have talent management systems to track employee performance, recruitment, and development. We are relying on an old HRM system that is manual. So, I think there is an urgent need to bring in technology in HRM to help stop political interference, especially in the appointment of senior managers".* The above-mentioned remarks reveal significant shortcomings in the current HRM practices within the District Municipality. The reliance on an outdated manual HRM system impedes efficient tracking of employee performance, recruitment, and development. This traditional approach not only hampers operational efficiency but also opens the door to political interference in the appointment of senior managers. Mofolo and Adonis (2021:2), and Davids *et al.,* (2022:4) warned that such interference can undermine the principles of meritocracy and transparency, ultimately affecting the municipality's public service delivery and public trust. Nevertheless, the study discussed how integrated talent management frameworks can support the strategic alignment of HR practices with organisational objectives (refer Table 2.10). Thus, the incorporation of HRM technology is a natural extension of these frameworks, providing

the necessary tools to implement and sustain effective talent management strategies as introduced in Table 2.11 of the study.

In addition, theories of talent management underline the strategic importance of identifying, developing, and retaining key employees to ensure organisational success. In the context of the local sphere of government in RSA, these theories are particularly pertinent given the regulatory mandates for capacity development and equitable recruitment processes (Chapter 3, Section 3.7) as well as the importance of transparent and equitable HR practices. Therefore, the integration of modern talent management systems can address NMMDM challenges relating to talent management practices by automating and streamlining HR processes. Chapter 3, Section 3.6.3 of the study mandates fair recruitment and selection processes to ensure that appointments are based on merit rather than political affiliations. So far, it can be concluded that advanced HRM technology facilitates accurate and real-time tracking of employee performance, thereby supporting data-driven public decision-making in recruitment and promotions. Significantly, the incorporation of technology in talent management practices reduces the likelihood for perceptual biases and political influence, promoting a more transparent and accountable human resources environment (Chapter 3, Section 3.7.7 of the study).

Question 10: To what extent are political leadership and management involved in the development and implementation of organisational support strategies to embrace a culture of learning and development?

As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3 of the study, line managers play a pivotal role in the implementation of public HRM policies and practices. Also, literature argued that line managers are often the first point of contact for employees and are responsible for various HR functions such as performance management, employee development, and conflict resolution. Subsequently, effective HRM by line managers can lead to higher employee engagement, better career pathing, and improved organisational outcomes (see Table 2.3). However, in the case of NMMDM, it was found that the existing training programs and workshops primarily focus on specialised practices rather than HR functions. **Participant 1** expressed *“Our managers are not trained to perform HRM functions. Even the training suggested by municipality and government departments does not address human resources functions. Normally, municipal officials receive training and workshops focused on our specialised practices, not on HR. For political involvement, I would say our political leadership prioritises short-term political objectives over long-term municipal strategy”.*

This lack of HR training has led to inconsistent implementation of public HRM policies, limited municipality officials’ development opportunities, reduced engagement, and poor conflict resolution in the NMMDM. Enwereji and Emmanuel (2022:420) maintained that these challenges highlight the urgent need for comprehensive HR training for line managers to enhance their capabilities and

ensure effective talent management. This can be facilitated through a combination of workshops, mentoring programs, and access to HR resources (Efendi, 2021:537). Additionally, key components of capacity development as emphasised in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2 of the study, can be implemented. In practice, these components interconnect to develop competent individuals who make significant contributions to overall institutional success.

Profoundly, Al Aina and Atan (2020:1) and Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* (2022:5) mentioned that creating a culture of learning through a combination of formal and informal opportunities is crucial for maximising return on investment in the employees. However, it was revealed that political accountability in NMMDM, to ensure that HR practices are fair, transparent, and aligned with institutional goals, was compromised. Considerably, sixty percent of the data-collection participants expressed the opinion that the municipality's political leadership prioritises short-term political objectives over long-term municipal strategy. Chapter 3, Section 3.6.3 affirmed that political gains can create uncertainty and instability, complicating the implementation of comprehensive talent management initiatives by HR professionals. Additionally, Rožman, Tominc and Štrukelj (2023:373) pointed out that effective talent management requires a strategic approach aligned with the organisation’s vision, which short-term political manoeuvres can disrupt leading to employee disengagement. Worse, a short-term focus can impede the development of a strong organisational culture, crucial for retaining top talent (Majola, 2022:272; Mlambo *et al*., 2022:11). Ashikali *et al*., (2020:1), Dai and Fang (2023:1), and Lee (2023:384) asserted that a positive culture, rooted in shared values and long-term commitment, is necessary for attracting and retaining skilled employees. When political leaders prioritise short-term objectives, NMMDM undermines institutional culture as a result, leading to higher municipality official turnover and decreased morale. Increasingly, more proactive HR training can equip line managers with the skills and knowledge to resist undue political influence and uphold the principles of fairness and transparency in HR practices within the municipality.

Question 11: How do human resource management practitioners and senior management perceive the status of unevenness in terms of capacity and skills within the municipality?

Eighty percent of participants in the study noted significant skills shortages in key areas such as accounting, engineering, wastewater management, and information technology, which have led to the municipality's inability to meet community demands and have eroded public trust and satisfaction. This finding was confirmed by **Participant 6** who remarked *"The high vacancy rates we are experiencing are impacting our ability to maintain essential service levels as a water service authority. For many years now, we struggle to meet the demands of our communities due to shortage of water management staff".* The high vacancy rates contribute to staff burnout, decreased morale, and reduced productivity, further complicating service delivery issues (Singh, 2019:426; Mazlan & Jambulingam, 2023:80). Organisational Commitment Theory, as discussed in

Chapter 2, Section 2.6.3, suggests that these vacancy rates reflect deficiencies in recruitment and retention strategies. Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1.2 advocates for the adoption of integrated talent management frameworks that align human resource practices with institutional objectives, ensuring that the right talent is positioned effectively to meet public service delivery needs. Simply put, this situation underscores the necessity of qualified personnel, as emphasised by NDP (2011) and Human Relations Theory which assert that employee skills and knowledge are crucial assets for organisations (Sulieman, 2019:12; Omolawal, 2021:2; Chapter 3, Section 3.7.2).

Going forward, NMMDM needs to implement a robust recruitment strategy that not only attracts qualified candidates but also streamlines the hiring process. The strategy should include employer branding to make the municipality a desirable workplace, leverage technology and social media to widen the candidate pool and simplify the recruitment process to minimise time-to-hire. Most importantly, unique competitive packages that meet market standards for attracting highly skilled talent and implementing official engagement initiatives must be designed. These packages can create a positive work environment, while offering flexible work arrangements and benefits that support work-life balance. Finally, recognising and rewarding employee contributions to boost morale and job satisfaction, must also be implemented.

Question 12: What specific strategies or mechanisms are in place to facilitate the integration of talent management strategies within the municipality?

A siloed approach to talent management was highlighted by eighty percent of the data-collection phase participants of the study. Chapter 3, Section 3.6.5 of the study echoed that lack of coordination and integration to talent management in municipal settings can significantly hinder institutional effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and overall performance. Moreover, this approach often results in inefficiencies and resource wastage due to duplicated efforts across different departments (Manjoo, Rajlal & Utete, 2023:1152). As mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 1.3, inconsistencies because of fragmented practices in the public sector negatively impact job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Worse still, Lee (2020: v) and Masale, Barkhuizen and Schutte, (2021:3) argued that poor interdepartmental communication further exacerbates siloed talent management, restricting collaboration and innovation. Municipality officials may face limited career development opportunities within their departmental confines, leading to reduced growth and advancement potential.

Worse still, the lack of integration in talent management strategies can lead to fragmented leadership development efforts, resulting in a lack of unified vision and strategy (Mumba & Outieshat, 2023:20-22). According to Biewenga (2021:38), transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by creating a strong, unified organisational vision. Therefore, the prevailing situation at NMMDM, where talent management practices are isolated, becomes challenging to

cultivate leaders who can effectively communicate and embody this vision, leading to inconsistencies in strategic direction and institutional goals. All things considered, this misalignment promotes disjointed implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives within the NMMDM that lead to disparities in representation and inclusivity. Significantly, siloed workforce data in MMMDM complicates strategic workforce planning, making it difficult to comprehensively assess and meet institutional talent needs. Transitioning to an integrated talent management practice can address deficiencies by fostering a supportive work environment, enhancing resource efficiency, improving communication, increasing development opportunities, and strengthening strategic planning, ultimately leading to a more effective public sector institution.

Question 13: How does the municipality measure the impact of employee workplace experience on talent attraction, retention, and development?

One hundred percent of the participants affirmed that the municipality lacks systematic tools to assess official workplace experiences related to talent attraction, retention, and development. **Participant 5** *said, "I must admit that the municipality lacks formal evaluation tools to quantify the influence of employee workplace experience on talent attraction, retention, and development initiatives. We don't have a talent ~~a~~ rewards strategy. When skilled employees resign from the municipality, we cannot even make a counter offer due to non-existence of retention policy"*. These statements highlighted critical challenges in the municipality's talent management strategy. This practice is in contradiction with Table 2.10 and Chapter 2, Section 2.10.2.4, which highlight evaluating existing talent management practices to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Evidently, NMMDM is unable to quantify the influence of official workplace experiences on talent attraction, retention, and development, which hampers the municipality's experiences of HRM practices. Furthermore, this gap impedes on NMMDM to make informed talent decisions and strategic planning. Chapter 2, Section 2.10.2 also highlighted that through employing data-driven public decision-making and predictive analytics, institutions can effectively identify top performers, evaluate potential risks, and make informed strategic public decisions that boost official engagement and productivity. As a result, NMMDM should consider establishing and implementing an evaluation and monitoring strategy focused on tools for talent attraction, retention, and development. Such measures can enhance employee satisfaction and reduce turnover, ultimately leading to a more stable and effective workforce (Faqihi & Miah, 2023:14).

Question 14: How does the municipality ensure that technology is used in a way that promotes fairness, equity, and inclusion in the talent management process?

All research participants indicated that NMMDM depends on outdated HRM practices to facilitate talent management in its activities. Therefore, the reliance on outdated HRM practices in and by

the NMMDM presents significant challenges that negatively impact operational efficiency and strategic effectiveness. One major issue is the inefficiency and increased administrative burden stemming from manual HR processes, which can delay essential functions such as recruitment and performance evaluations, ultimately affecting productivity and public service delivery. As established in Tables 2.10 and 2.11, embracing technology in HRM practices can significantly enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and strategic alignment in talent management. This can be done through automation of routine HR tasks, streamlining recruitment processes, and enabling data-driven public decision-making to support strategic workforce planning. However, non-existence of modernised practises can hinder the institution's ability to attract and retain top talent. The absence of contemporary HR practices can expose a municipality's position in the labour market, as officials increasingly favour institutions that offer superior growth opportunities. Skewed HR practices, often stemming from manual processes, can lead to inconsistencies and biases, undermining fairness in talent management. Research indicates that a lack of standardised, technology-driven processes increases the risk of discrimination and biased evaluations, which pose both legal and ethical challenges for municipalities (Chapter 3, Section 3.7.7; 3.8.2).

Furthermore, ineffective strategic workforce planning is exacerbated by limited access to real-time data and analytics, which modern HR technologies can provide. These technologies facilitate the alignment of employee capabilities with organisational goals and enable adaptation to evolving workforce needs (Akter *et al*., 2022:9; Chethana & Noronha, 2022:614). In contrast, reliance on traditional practices may hinder the ability to anticipate future workforce demands, resulting in a misalignment between strategic objectives and human resources. This misalignment particularly affects employee engagement among Millennials and Generation Z, who expect technology integration in the workplace (Chapter 2, Section 2.6.5). Moreover, the absence of digital tools can lead to decreased engagement and satisfaction, as employees may perceive the organisation as out of touch with modern workplace trends. Ultimately, the failure to adopt advanced HR technologies restricts the municipality's competitiveness and agility in a rapidly changing digital environment (Chu, 2024:33; Hoogeveen, 2024: i). As highlighted in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3 and Chapter 3, Sections 3.6.2 and 3.6.6, without technological innovation, public institutions risk diminished effectiveness and an inability to deliver public services efficiently. Therefore, it is for these reasons that NMMDM prioritises the integration of advanced HR technologies to enhance operational effectiveness and meet contemporary workforce expectations.

Question 15: How does the municipality promote diversity, equity, and inclusion through its talent management programs?

According to Kumar and Kumar (2022:78) and Ekejiuba *et al.,* (2023:454), diverse teams are known to bring varied perspectives, leading to better problem-solving and decision-making.

Furthermore, Chapter 2, Section 2.5.7 and Table 2.11 underscore the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as a strategic priority to enhance organisational performance and innovation. However, the lack of structured initiatives to promote DEI in municipal talent management programs presents significant shortcomings. **Participant 2** remarked *"The municipality doesn't have structured programs to actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in its talent management. To be practical, we only have one Indian employee, one white employee, and a few employees of mixed race …. I mean coloureds in the municipality".* This deficiency can lead to a homogeneous workforce that fails to reflect the diverse community(s) it serves, potentially undermining public trust and institutional effectiveness as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1. On the other hand, the absence of DEI initiatives can also contravene legislative and regulatory frameworks designed to promote equitable employment practices. For instance, laws such as the Employment Equity Act, in many jurisdictions, mandates the promotion of equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment, requiring institutions to implement affirmative action measures to redress past discrimination (Chapter 3, Section 3.7.4).

Furthermore, the lack of diversity in the workforce can hinder capacity development. Research conducted by Mjulwa (2023:67) and Chapter 3, Section 3.6.2 draw attention to organisations that fail to cultivate an inclusive environment may struggle to attract and retain diverse talent, limiting their ability to build a skilled and adaptable workforce. Regrettably, this approach can result in a talent pipeline that is not only less innovative but also less responsive to the needs of a diverse population (Umesi, 2022:246; Dai & Fang, 2023:3). As such, NMMDM should consider developing a comprehensive DEI strategy within their talent management programs, which must include setting clear diversity goals, implementing bias training, and creating mentorship programs that support underrepresented groups. Through these actions, NMMDM can develop a stronger official culture, boost employee engagement, and guarantee compliance with relevant legislation.

Question 16: Do you have any further comments or suggestions on how talent management practices and human resource management policies and strategies can be improved in the municipality?

Overall, there was a consensus among all the data-collection participants on the following issues:

- the need for NMMDM to develop talent management policy;
- alignment of HR practices with NMMDM's objectives to ensure that all talent management initiatives are aligned;
- establishing of employee engagement programmes and prioritisation of training and development initiatives;
- establishing of formal diversity, equity and innovation initiatives that will assist the municipality attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, ultimately leading to improved public service delivery;

- investing in training and development, to ensure that the municipality enhances official skills and foster a culture of continuous learning;
- leveraging of technology to improve HR processes and expand data-driven public decision-making; and
- adhering to legislative frameworks to ensure that talent management practices are effective in the NMMDM.

5.4 SUMMARY OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: THEMATIC ANALYSIS INSIGHTS

This section presents a summary of the data analysis and findings, employing a thematic analysis framework. Through thematic analysis, the collected data was examined and interpreted, leading to the identification of key themes. These themes were supported by participant quotes, directly linking to the problem statement discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.3. The next table provides a summary of empirical findings: thematic analysis insights.

Table: 5.5: Summary of empirical findings: thematic analysis insights

Theme	Supporting quote	Implications
Q1. Neglect of HRM in governance.	**Participant 3** echoed “I'm worried about how our political leaders don't seem to care about reviewing the human resource management policies. These policies have been not reviewed for over a period of ten years”.	The neglect of talent management policy as HRM practice policy has resulted in limited employee development, ineffective workforce planning, and subpar performance. To address these issues, the municipality should develop an integrated talent management policy that aligns the IDP, corporate strategy, and employee development initiatives. This approach aims to enhance public service delivery and foster a more effective workforce.
Q2. Employee development gaps.	**Participant 8** remarked, "As I see it, we don’t have personalised development programs or mentorship opportunities for high-potential	The findings reveal a major gap in the municipality's employee development strategy, leading to issues such

	employees. Our training plans are just done randomly without focusing on a specific talent we need. Can I simply say that succession planning will never exist in this municipality".	as talent loss, higher hiring costs, leadership vacuums, limited diversity, low employee morale, poor knowledge transfer, and negative employer branding. This indicates a need for systemic strategies to recognise and nurture talent.
Q3. Misalignment between HRM and strategic goals.	**Participant 2** stated "There is a misalignment between HR and municipal strategic objectives, meaning that our HR practices, such as recruitment, training, and performance management, do not consistently support the broader goals of the municipality".	Disconnect between HRM activities, such as recruitment, training, and performance management and the overarching strategic goals of the NMMDM, highlighting the need for better integration to enhance organisational effectiveness and achieve desired outcomes.
Q4. Talent management evaluation and data decision marking.	**Participant 4** expressed "I am embarrassed to say that we do not measure how well our talent management practices work. We use old methods, and there's not enough good data to see if we're really helping our employees. It's disappointing that we're not using the right tools for evaluation, so we miss important chances to improve".	Highlights shortcomings in measuring talent management success, relying on outdated methods and insufficient data. Further, underscores the need for modern evaluation tools to improve employee support and organisational performance.
Q5. Comprehensive incentive programs.	Participants unanimously agreed that there are no structured incentive programs in place, with the municipality relying primarily on limited financial incentives, such as the annual 13th cheque.	Reflects the inadequacy of limited rewards programs in sustaining employee motivation and suggests a need for more diverse and effective incentive strategies.
Q6. Resource constraints.	**Participant 9** said "We acknowledge the importance of onboarding; however, resource constraints	Inadequate onboarding programs negatively affect employees and employers by

	prevent us from developing comprehensive onboarding programs for newly appointed employees".	reducing job satisfaction, collaboration, engagement, and increasing turnover intentions. This highlights the necessity for greater financial investment and support to create effective onboarding programs that facilitate better integration and success for new hires within NMMDM.
Q7. Employee engagement and awareness.	**Participant 10** held forth "Our engagement activities here in the municipality are only limited to Local Labour Forums (LLF) and routine updates on pension and medical aid adjustment. I've never heard of any other employee engagement activities beyond that".	Lack of employee engagement results in poor performance, higher turnover, a toxic work environment, absenteeism, and resistance to policy changes. This highlights the need for diverse engagement initiatives that promote an inclusive and dynamic workplace culture, improving employee involvement and satisfaction.
Q8. Lack of career anchors awareness.	**Participant 8** stated, "In my opinion, the municipality does not have any career management programs in place, and I am not sure if everybody knows about career anchors. What I know is that we issue our training needs forms every year for employees to fill out through our skills development unit".	The lack of formal career management among line managers, coupled with a limited understanding of key concepts such as career anchors and career path, underscores the reliance on outdated practices. This highlights the urgent need for more proactive and modern approaches to career management that effectively guide and support employee growth and advancement.
Q9. HRM technological systems.	**Participant 3** commented "Currently, the municipality doesn't have talent	The need for technological solutions in HRM to improve

	management systems to track employee performance, recruitment, and development. We are relying on an old HRM system that is manual. So, I think there is an urgent need to bring in technology in HRM to help stop political interference, especially in the appointment of senior managers".	recruitment and selection processes, minimise political interference in the decision making of vacant positions, and enhance organisational integrity and efficiency.
Q10. Political accountability and HR training.	**Participant 1** remarked "Our managers are not trained to perform HRM functions. Even the training suggested by municipality and government departments does not address human resources functions. Normally, municipal officials receive training and workshops focused on our specialised practices, not on HR. For political involvement, I would say our political leadership prioritises short-term political objectives over long-term municipal strategy".	Insufficient training for managers in HRM functions can result in inefficient HR operations, negatively impacting recruitment, performance management, and employee development. Misaligned training programs fail to provide necessary skills, while a focus on short-term objectives can obstruct sustainable development and strategic planning.
Q11. High vacancy rates.	**Participant 6** stated "The high vacancy rates we are experiencing are impacting our ability to maintain essential service levels as a water service authority. For many years now, we struggle to meet the demands of our communities due to shortage of water management staff".	The high vacancies rate in the municipality impacts its ability to meet community needs and maintain essential services, highlighting the urgency for effective recruitment and retention strategies to ensure reliable public service delivery.
Q12. Siloed approach	**Participant 7** specified "I believe there is a lot of misalignments in our HRM practices across all municipal departments. For instance, in our municipality, departments operate independently without sharing talent resources or knowledge. When the HRM unit receives a resignation, we	Siloed talent management approach leads to poor collaboration, inconsistent development opportunities, and reduced employee engagement. To improve this, NMMDM should promote cross-department

	struggle to identify the specific skills and strengths of the leaving employee because we have not profiled our staff based on their individual abilities and capacities".	collaboration, create a unified talent management strategy, and implement integrated HR technology for better decision-making.
Q13. Evaluation tools and retention strategies	**Participant 5** detailed "I must admit that the municipality lacks formal evaluation tools to quantify the influence of employee workplace experience on talent attraction, retention, and development initiatives. We don't have a talent ~~a~~ rewards strategy. When skilled employees resign from the municipality, we cannot even make a counter offer due to non-existence of retention policy".	The lack of a rewards program and retention and succession planning policy in the municipality hinders NMMDM's ability to effectively manage skilled employee resignations, emphasising the necessity for an integrated talent management approach that incorporates evaluation and retention strategies.
Q14. Outdated HRM practices.	All research participants indicated that the municipality is relying on outdated HRM practices that does not support the modern talent management processes.	The NMMDM is facing significant challenges due to outdated HRM practices resulting in inconsistencies and biases, heightened administrative burdens, and difficulties in attracting and retaining talent. The situation necessitates the comprehensive review and modernisation of NMMDM HRM practices.
Q15. Underrepresented groups.	**Participant 2** pronounced "The municipality lacks structured initiatives to actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion through its talent management programmes. Let me be practical, we only have one Indian employee, one white and maybe a few coloured employees in the institution".	The results highlight notable differences in employee representation, prompting NMMDM to develop a thorough DEI strategy for their talent management programs. This strategy should involve establishing clear diversity goals, providing antibias training, and developing

		mentorship programs aimed at supporting underrepresented groups.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter discovered multifaceted challenges confronting talent management practices within the NMMDM, suggesting a critical need for an integrated implementation framework for capacity development. The thematic analysis of qualitative data collected from key municipality officials has underscored several key challenges, including the inadequate capacity of municipal leadership to comprehend and execute effective talent management programs, a significant skills mismatch, and the detrimental effects of political interference. Furthermore, the findings highlight a troubling organisational culture that is marred by politicisation, which not only hampers the efficacy of talent management initiatives but also exacerbates issues related to diversity and equity. The absence of managerial competency in executing essential HRM functions, coupled with a lack of career development pathways, further complicates the landscape of capacity development in the NMMDM. These findings collectively point to a fragmented approach to talent management, characterised by misalignment with overarching institutional strategies and an inability to attract and retain critical skills. Thus, the findings of this chapter serve as a clear call for the urgent establishment of an integrated talent management framework that aligns with the strategic objectives of the municipality. The next chapter presents an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM.

CHAPTER SIX

INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE NMMDM

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 of the study presented empirical findings through thematic data analysis, confirming that talent management practices in the NMMDM are indeed fragmented and signalizing the need for an integrated approach to enhance capacity development. The purpose of this chapter is to present an integrated talent management implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development in the NMMDM. This framework outlines the significance of talent management in fostering a skilled workforce, addressing the specific needs of NMMDM, and providing a structured approach to effectively implement strategies that support talent attraction, development, and retention. Primarily, this framework will prioritise employee engagement, workforce planning, modernisation of HR practices, retention strategies, and training and development.

By establishing this framework, a successful implementation of the framework within NMMDM will require a strategic approach that affirms clear objectives, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement. Therefore, the study will identify key stakeholders and foster collaborative partnerships to ensure ongoing communication and feedback, which are crucial for effective implementation. Furthermore, the study will highlight specific metrics and indicators to evaluate the implementation progress and measure the impact and efficacy of the framework. For this framework, continuous improvement processes will be established, allowing the study to adapt based on stakeholder input and periodic reviews. This comprehensive strategy will not only enhance the framework's effectiveness but also promote its sustainability in the long term.

Chapter 1 outlined the research problem, while Chapter 2 reviewed relevant literature and best practices in talent management frameworks. Chapter 3 investigated the challenges faced by the local sphere of government and the legislative context affecting capacity development in RSA. Chapter 4 employed the qualitative research methodology, applying semi-structured interviews to gather insights from NMMDM key stakeholders. The subsequent part outlines the technique employed in this chapter for framework development.

6.2 Empirical Evidence: Synthesis Approach

The study employed a methodology that synthesised findings from theoretical and conceptual frameworks, compared with empirical evidence, to inform the design of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM. According to

Schick-Makaroff, MacDonald, Plummer, Burgess and Neander (2016:173), and Linneberg and Korsgaard (2019:4), synthesis refers to combining all findings, data, and theoretical perspectives obtained from each chapter to create an organised and comprehensive framework. The following is the organised process followed to identify key aspects that facilitate the establishment of an integrated framework for NMMDM:

1. The study will combine theoretical guidelines, perspectives, and best practices from Chapter 2 with empirical findings from Chapter 5 of the study, forming a foundation through the integration of theoretical and empirical data. This step was essential for identifying practical applications and areas for improvement within existing talent management practices in NMMDM.
2. Next, the framework will reflect on contextual relevance, aligning with the specific regulatory environment and challenges discussed in Chapter 3 of the study, thereby ensuring its applicability to the NMMDM talent management environment.
3. Toward the conclusion of the process, the draft framework will undergo a validation and refinement phase, adhering to the methodological rigour outlined in Chapter 4 of the study.
4. Finally, the culmination of these efforts will be the presentation of a comprehensive integrated talent management implementation framework for NMMDM, which directly addresses the research problem identified in Chapter 1, Section 1.3, and Chapter 5, Section 5.5, of the study.

By effectively synthesising findings and insights from each chapter, the study aimed to produce a robust framework that was not only theoretically sound but also tailored to enhance capacity development in the NMMDM, contributing to the advancement of talent management practices in the local sphere of government context. The following part offers synthesis of theoretical and conceptual framework findings against empirical data gathered in Chapter 5, Section 5.3., of the study.

6.3 SYNTHESIS OF THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FINDINGS WITH EMPIRICAL DATA

Section 6.2 of the study outlined the approach for synthesising key findings from theoretical and conceptual frameworks, compared with empirical evidence to inform the layout of an integrated talent management implementation framework for the NMMDM. As a result, the next section will clarify the implications derived from empirical findings, highlighting their logical relevance to the unique challenges that NMMDM's talent management practices face. The process will commence with a summary of the talent management challenges encountered by NMMDM, followed by an examination of talent management perspectives, theories, and the implementation of both national and international integrated talent management frameworks. Furthermore, it will consider the contextual relevance by aligning the proposed integrated framework with the specific legislative and regulatory environment.

6.3.1 Summary of NMMMD talent management challenges

In Chapter 5, Section 5.5, the study conducted an empirical investigation and gathered data from key stakeholders involved in talent management within the NMMDM. In the end, the study identified the numerous challenges regarding talent management, confirming the absence of an integrated talent management implementation framework in the NMMDM, leading to a fragmented approach. In the next presentation (Figure 6.2), the study illustrates the talent management challenges faced by the NMMDM through a wheel figure, which effectively highlights the interconnectedness of these issues and provides a comprehensive overview of the factors impacting talent management practices:

Figure 6.1: Talent management challenges faced by the NMMDM
Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

As a reminder, the study employed a qualitative approach to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of talent management. A questionnaire was designed with open-ended questions to gather detailed insights from key stakeholders in the NMMDM who are involved in developing and implementing talent management strategies. Moreover, thematic analysis was employed to interpret data gathered from participants through interviews and secondary sources. This approach followed ethical standards for transparency and credibility, employing six-phase steps for data analysis. The analysis of empirical data from sixteen completed copies of the data-collection questionnaire revealed themes that confirmed the presence of fragmented talent management practices within the NMMDM. The later section introduces an analysis of the empirical findings, specifically addressing the talent management challenges faced by NMMDM, which contradict established talent management perspectives.

6.3.2 Analysis of talent management perspectives with empirical findings

The analysis of the talent management perspectives discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.4.2, of the study led the researcher to identify more effective, evidence-based, and contextually relevant talent management practices that enhance the capacity of NMMDM (see Table 3.3.1). Table 6.1 below presents the analysis of talent management perspectives, empirical themes, and talent management implications in the NMMDM. The study assessed talent management perspectives against the empirical findings in a systematic manner. Furthermore, each theme was examined for its implications for the NMMDM talent management practice for capacity development.

Table 6.1: Analysis of talent management perspectives with empirical findings

Talent management perspectives	Empirical questionnaires (Q) and themes	Implications and area of focus
Strategic significance to HRM	Q1. Neglect of HRM in governance	The emphasis on proactively identifying and developing talent highlights the consequences of neglecting HRM, which can lead to ineffective governance in the NMMDM.
Ongoing process and corporate strategy	Q3. Misalignment between HRM and strategic goals	Establishing robust systems for acquiring and developing employees is essential to align HRM with the overall strategic goals of NMMDM.
Employees with high potential	Q11. High vacancy rates	Focusing on high-potential individuals can address high vacancy rates in NMMDM by ensuring that capable leaders are in place to

		drive performance and change.
Integrated approach	Q12. Siloed approach	Aligning NMMDM's various HR functions with line managers and departments can foster a collaborative environment, countering the siloed approach that can hinder service delivery and employee effectiveness.
Organisational success	Q5. Lack of comprehensive incentive programs	Effective talent management strategies in NMMDM that prioritise retention of skills employees can include comprehensive incentive programs to motivate employees in the face of competition from the private sector.
Employee lifecycle	Q2. Lack of employee development programmes.	Addressing professional development within the employee lifecycle is crucial to closing the employee development gap and ensuring career progression.
Data analytics	Q4. Lack of talent management evaluation and data decision-making	Employing data analytics can enhance the evaluation of NMMDM talent management practices and support informed decision-making regarding workforce development.
Strategic approach	Q6. Resource constraints	A strategic approach can aid NMMDM to effectively allocate limited resources to attract and retain skilled personnel, improving overall service delivery.
Employee engagement	Q7. Lack of employee engagement and awareness	Focusing on aspects of the employee lifecycle fosters engagement and awareness, creating a more motivated workforce.
Career anchors, career path and mentoring	Q8. Lack of career management anchors and awareness	Addressing career advancement opportunities can help employees understand their career path through their career anchors and mentoring and align their goals with NMMDM goals and objectives.
HRM technological systems	Q9. Lack of HRM technological systems	Integrating HR functions with modern technological systems enhances efficiency and supports data-driven talent management.
Political accountability	Q10. Lack of political	Emphasising accountability in governance

and HR training	accountability and HR training	necessitates robust HR training programs to equip NMMDM political leaders and municipal officials/employees for their roles and responsibilities.
Retention strategies	Q13. Lack of evaluation tools and retention strategies	Employing effective evaluation tools is essential for developing retention strategies that keep skilled employees engaged.
Modern HRM practices	Q14. Outdated HRM practices	The need for alignment in HR functions indicates that NMMDM may still operate with outdated HRM practices that require modernisation.
Diversity and inclusion	Q15. Underrepresented groups	Strategic talent management must emphasise diversity and inclusion to ensure that underrepresented groups are effectively integrated into the workforce.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

As established in Table 6.1 above, the integration of talent management perspectives, empirical themes, and talent management implications in the NMMDM serves as a blueprint for developing the integrated talent management framework. Therefore, understanding the diverse talent management perspectives aids in identifying gaps, opportunities, and best practices that can be incorporated into the development of the framework. Following the assessment of this integration, it is expected that the applicability of the analysed integrated talent management frameworks in Chapter 2, Section 2.8, of the study offered insight into the best practices for talent management in the NMMDM. The succeeding section aligns the identified themes and their implications with the relevant talent management processes, highlighting areas for improvement and development within the HRM in the municipality.

6.3.3 Analysis of relevant talent management processes with empirical findings

Chapter 2, Section 2.3, previously analysed talent management processes, which typically encompass eight steps for the successful management of talent within an institution. Therefore, Table 6.4 illustrates the relationships between empirical findings and the associated implications for effective talent management strategies. Procedurally, the study analysed empirical thematic findings with pertinent talent management practices to identify implications and opportunities for framework development.

Table 6.2: Analysis of the empirical themes, and implications of the relevant talent management processes

Theme	Implications	Matching talent management process	Area of focus
Neglect of HRM in governance	Limited employee development and ineffective workforce planning.	Talent strategic planning	An integrated talent management policy is needed to enhance public service delivery.
Employee development gaps	Lack of structured development strategies leads to talent loss and poor morale.	Talent development and training	Systemic approaches are needed to recognise and nurture talent.
Misalignment between HRM and strategic goals	Disconnect between HRM activities and municipal goals.	Talent strategic planning	Better integration is required to enhance organisational effectiveness.
Lack of talent management evaluation and data decision making	Shortcomings in measuring talent management success.	Performance management	Modern evaluation tools must be implemented to improve employee support and organisational performance.
Lack of comprehensive incentive programs	Inadequate rewards programmes hinder employee motivation, diversity and innovation.	Talent retention	Effective incentive strategies are necessary.
Resource constraints	Inadequate onboarding programmes due to budget constraints negatively affects job satisfaction and turnover.	Talent onboarding	Greater investment is needed for effective onboarding programs
Lack of employee engagement and awareness	Lack of diverse engagement initiatives leads to	Talent retention	There is a need for initiatives that promote a dynamic workplace culture.

	inferior performance and high turnover.		
Lack of career path, mentoring and career anchors	The absence of career management negatively affects personal growth and professional development, job satisfaction and long-term success.	Career management	Modern career approaches are needed to support employee growth effectively.
Lack of HRM technological systems	Non-existence HRM technological system promotes political interference and compromises organisational integrity and efficiency.	Talent recruitment and selection	Urgent need for technological solutions to improve HR processes and minimise political interference in management decisions.
Lack of political accountability and HR training for managers	Lack of regular policy reviews and inadequate HR training for managers leads to inefficiencies.	Talent development and training	Aligning training with HR functions is essential for sustainable development and strategic planning.
High vacancy rates	Difficulty in maintaining municipal service levels due to staff shortages.	Succession planning	Emphasising the need for effective succession planning strategies.
Siloed approach	A siloed approach reduces collaboration and engagement.	Talent strategic planning	Promoting cross-department collaboration and an integrated HR strategy is vital for better decision-making.
Lack of evaluation tools and retention strategies	Absence of retention policies hampers the ability to attract, develop and retain scare skills.	Talent retention	An integrated approach to talent management, including evaluation and retention strategies, is necessary.
Outdated HRM	Overreliance on	Talent strategic	Comprehensive review and

practices	manual HR system promotes inconsistencies and creates difficulties in managing talent.	planning	modernisation (i.e., HR technology) of HRM practices are needed.
Underrepresented groups	Limited diversity and inclusion initiatives which reduce innovation and cause missed talent pool and low employee morale.	Talent recruitment and selection	A need for a DEI strategy, including clear diversity goals and mentorship programs for underrepresented groups.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Upon reviewing the talent management process with empirical findings, the study found that the NMMDM talent management practices are fragmented and have a significant implication for their overall municipal performance. The lack of integration among key components such as strategic planning, development and training, recruitment and selection, and retention can result in inefficiencies and hinder optimal talent utilisation within the municipality. To address this issue, Chapter 2, Section 2.8.1.1 of the study supports this observation in that coordination, collaboration, alignment, and seamless interaction among talent management activities can assist the municipality in achieving its desired objectives, which include providing basic services to the communities they serve. Table 6.4.4, which explores the prospects of reviewed theories of talent management alongside empirical findings, challenges the talent management practices in NMMDM.

6.3.4 Theories of talent management in contrast with empirical findings

Chapter 2, Section 2.6 of the study examined five talent management theories: Organisational Commitment Theory (OCT), Psychological Contract Theory (PCT), Organisational Support Theory (OST), Generational Theory (GT), and Human Relations Theory (HRT). Therefore, the application of these theories to the local government context, specifically the NMMDM, is posited to enhance understanding of talent management strategies and their impact on individual and organisational performance. Table 6.3 outlines the implications of these theories in relation to empirical findings on talent management practices within NMMDM, detailing themes, relevant theory, implications to NMMDM, and areas of focus that will inform the framework design.

Table 6.3: Implications of theories of talent management with empirical findings

Empirical theme	Linked theory	Implications	Area of focus
Neglect of HRM in governance	**OCT**	When HRM is neglected in governance, organisational commitment may weaken, leading to higher turnover rates.	NMMDM should integrate HRM into governance frameworks to enhance commitment and align employee values with organisational goals.
Employee development gaps	**PCT**	A gap in development opportunities can violate the psychological contract, leading to dissatisfaction and disengagement.	The municipality should establish clear development pathways and training programs that meet employee expectations.
Misalignment between HRM and strategic goals	**OST**	Misalignment can result in NMMDM employees feeling unsupported and undervalued, decreasing their commitment and performance.	Ensure that HRM strategies are closely aligned with NMMDM objectives to foster a supportive environment.
Lack of talent management evaluation and data decision making	**GT**	Without effective evaluation, NMMDM may fail to understand and address the diverse needs of different generations.	Implement data-driven evaluations to tailor talent management practices to generational differences and preferences.
Lack of comprehensive incentive programmes	**OST**	Lack of comprehensive incentives can lead to perceptions of inadequate support, reducing employee motivation and performance.	Develop incentive programmes that recognise and reward employee contributions effectively.
Resource constraints	**HRT**	Limited resources can hinder the development of social relationships and employee well-being.	Identify creative solutions to maximise existing resources and foster social interactions among employees.
Lack of employee engagement and awareness	**GT**	Different generational values can affect engagement levels, leading to a disengaged workforce.	Tailor engagement strategies to address the diverse motivations of various generational cohorts.

Lack of career anchors awareness	**PCT**	Without awareness of career aspirations, NMMDM may fail to meet employee expectations, damaging trust.	Conduct surveys and discussions to understand employee career anchors and align opportunities accordingly.
Lack of HRM technological systems	**OST**	Outdated or inadequate HR technologies can lead to employees feeling unsupported in their roles.	Invest in modern HR technologies that enhance support and streamline HR processes.
Lack of political accountability and HR Training	**HRT**	Lack of accountability can undermine trust and relationships within the NMMDM.	Foster a culture of accountability and provide training that stresses the importance of interpersonal relationships.
High vacancy rates	**OCT**	High vacancy rates can diminish NMMDM commitment and disrupt team dynamics.	Develop targeted recruitment and retention strategies to reduce vacancies and enhance commitment.
Siloed approach	**HRT**	A siloed approach can hinder collaboration, affecting social relationships and overall employee morale.	Promote cross-functional teamwork and communication to break down silos and enhance relationships.
Lack of evaluation tools and retention strategies	**OST**	Ineffective evaluation tools can result in poor retention strategies, as employee needs may be overlooked.	Implement effective evaluation tools that inform and enhance retention strategies based on employee feedback.
Outdated HRM practices	**GT**	Outdated practices may not resonate with newer generations, leading to disengagement.	Regularly review and update HR practices to align with current workforce expectations
Underrepresented groups	**GT**	Underrepresentation can lead to feelings of exclusion and lack of support, adversely affecting engagement and commitment levels among diverse employees.	Develop initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion, ensuring that all groups feel valued and supported within the NMMDM.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

The analysis of Table 6.3 indicates a complex landscape of talent management generational beliefs and perspectives, with OST and GT identified as the most critical, each scoring 40%. This result calls attention to the necessity for strategies that foster a supportive work environment and recognise the diverse values of different generational groups. Furthermore, the findings highlight the significance of promoting an organisational culture that enhances employee support and engagement through personalised communication and recognition. On the other hand, HRT is noted as important at 30%, reflecting the need to improve engagement dynamics and employee well-being to enhance productivity and morale. Conversely, OCT and PCT revealed a score of 20%, indicating a moderate focus on understanding employee motivation and managing expectations, which are essential for retention and commitment in NMMDM. To effectively address these generational diverse needs and perspectives, the integration of theories of talent management into an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM is supported. The ensuing section presents analysis of the integrated talent management frameworks reviewed in Chapter 2, Section 2.8, with empirical findings as established in Chapter 5, Section 5.3 of the study.

6.3.5 Analysis of reviewed integrated talent management frameworks with empirical findings

Chapter 5, Section 5.3, of the study examined the specific talent management challenges and opportunities encountered by NMMDM, advocating for a tailored approach to talent management practices. As a result, the remaining section analyses theoretical insights against NMMDM talent management practices and highlights practical implications, thereby proposing an area of focus for the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM. Table 6.4 below demonstrates the ITM frameworks with core elements alongside semi-structured questionnaires and empirical findings, offering valuable recommendations for the integrated talent management framework within the municipality.

Table 6.4: Analysis of integrated talent management frameworks with empirical findings

Reviewed ITM frameworks	Core elements	Research questionnaires (Q) and empirical findings	Area of focus
KBITMW	• Employee engagement	• Q7. Lack of employee engagement and awareness	1. The need for diverse engagement initiatives is echoed in the lack of engagement activities. 2. Implementing strategies to

			foster emotional and rational commitment can enhance employee involvement and satisfaction. 3. Addressing breaches in employee development aligns with the need for personalised training programs, thus enhancing capacity development.
		• Q2. Lack of employee development programmes.	
CCTTMF	• Technology solutions	• Q9. Lack of HRM technological systems.	1. The need for technological improvements in HRM aligns with this framework. 2. Implementing technology solutions can streamline HR processes and reduce political interference.
	• Competency frameworks	• Q3. Misalignment between HRM and strategic goals	3. Misalignment between HRM and strategic goals can be addressed by establishing competency frameworks that reflect organisational objectives.
LWITMMPS	• Workforce planning	• Q11. High vacancy rates	1. The high vacancy rates necessitate improved workforce planning to ensure essential service delivery.
		• Q15. Underrepresented groups	2. The lack of structured initiatives for diversity can be addressed through comprehensive DEI strategies.
AFDTMHES	• Identifying and nurturing top talent	• Q2. Lack of employee development programmes.	1. Addressing employee development gaps through mentorship and personalised programs can help with nurturing high-potential

			employees.
	• Supportive environment	• Q6. Resource constraints	2. Resource constraints affecting onboarding highlight the need for a supportive environment that facilitates employee integration.
WITMS	• Management support	Q10. Political accountability and HR training.	1. The need for training managers and political leaders in HRM functions aligns with the requirement for strong management support in talent management initiatives.
	• Adequate HR information system	Q9. Lack of HRM technological systems	2. The lack of a modern HR system necessitates the implementation of an adequate HR information system to improve data management.
BITMM	• Talent management capability and process.	• Q14. Outdated HRM practices	1. Outdated HRM practices call for enhanced talent management capabilities and processes that align with modern practices.
	• Supportive workplace culture.	• Q2. Lack of employee development programmes.	2. Creating a culture that promotes engagement can address the issues of turnover and employee dissatisfaction.
FMAITMF	• Talent data-driven decision-making	• Lack of talent management evaluation and data decision-making	1. The need for modern evaluation tools supports the integration of data-driven decision-making processes to enhance talent management.
	• Continuous learning and	• Q2. Lack of employee	2. Emphasising continuous learning can address the gaps in employee

	development	development programmes.	development and assist in retaining talent.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Table 6.4., above, exhibited the challenges and opportunities related to the implementation framework for integrated talent management, which aims to enhance the NMMDM's capacity. Based on an analysis of integrated talent management frameworks and empirical findings, the NMMDM has the potential to attract, develop, and retain talent by incorporating key elements of national and international ITM frameworks, such as employee engagement, modernising HRM practices, and investing in effective workforce planning. The later section outlines how the statutory and regulatory framework for capacity development in RSA supports integrated talent management frameworks.

6.3.6 Adaptation of a statutory and regulatory framework for an integrated talent management framework in local government in RSA

The statutory and regulatory framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government in the Republic of South Africa has significant implications for the implementation of an integrated talent management (ITM) framework. In Chapter 3, Section 3.7, the study reviewed the nature and extent of the statutory and regulatory framework relating to capacity development in the local sphere of government in RSA. Below are some of the key implications of towards the implementation of ITM framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government:

- **Compliance with legislation**: The ITM framework must be aligned with various laws such as mentioned in Chapter 3, sections 3.7.1 to 3.8.4 of the study. By so doing, this ensures that talent management practices promote skills development and equitable employment practices.
- **Focus on competency development**: Regulations like the Local Government: Municipal Regulations of 2007 on minimum competency levels emphasised the need for local government employees to meet specific competency standards (Chapter 3, Section 3.8.2). Ordinarily, the ITM framework should incorporate training and development programs that will assist employees to fully comply with the requirement of the regulations.
- **Promotion of equality**: The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000 necessitates that talent management practices promote diversity and inclusion (Chapter 3, Section 3.7.7). The ITM framework should include measures to ensure fair recruitment, retention, and promotion practices.
- **Performance management**: Local Government: Municipal Performance Regulations for Municipal Managers and Managers directly accountable to Municipal Managers, 2006 (*as amended*) and Municipal Staff Regulations of 2021, highlighted the importance of performance management in local sphere of government (Chapter 3, Section 3.8.3 & 3.8.4). With that in

view, the ITM framework is expected to integrate performance assessment and feedback mechanisms to foster employee development and accountability.

- **Health and safety considerations:** The Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993 underscores the importance of a safe working environment (Chapter 3, Section 3.7.5). Notably, talent management strategies must address employee well-being and safety, which can enhance productivity and retention.
- **Financial management:** The Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 0f 2003 requires sound financial practices (Chapter 3, Section 3.7.8). In this way, the ITM framework is projected to consider budgeting for training and development initiatives, ensuring that financial resources are allocated effectively.
- **Regulatory compliance and reporting:** Local government is required to adhere to various reporting standards (Chapter 3, sections 3.7.1 to 3.8.4). As a result, the ITM framework is anticipated to consider mechanisms for tracking and reporting on talent management outcomes, facilitating accountability and transparency.
- **Capacity building initiatives:** The National Development Plan Vision 2023 (2011) and the White Paper on Local Government of 1998, highlight the need for capacity development within the local government sphere in RSA (Chapter 3, Section 3.7.2 & 3.8.1). These two pieces of regulatory frameworks direct the ITM framework to focus on continuous professional development and upgrading of skills to enhance overall public service delivery.

Near to the end of the analysis, by considering the implications identified in Section 6.4.4, the ITM framework can be effectively designed to support capacity development within the local sphere of government, particularly NMMDM, fostering a more skilled, equitable, and efficient workforce. The next section showcases consolidated inputs from theoretical, conceptual frameworks against empirical findings that inform the design of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM.

6.4 CONSOLIDATED INPUTS FOR DRAFT INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE NMMDM

As a reminder, the general objective of this study, as highlighted in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.1.1, is to establish the essence of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government of the RSA. As a result, in this chapter (Chapter 6) an analysis of the empirical data was conducted, contrasting the outcomes with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that were reviewed in chapters 2 and 3 of the study. Procedurally, this process conducted an analysis of perspectives and talent management processes, as well as theories and integrated talent management frameworks, and their implications for NMMDM as well as for the local level of government in RSA. As a contrast to this process, this section showcases

the consolidated draft inputs generated from a theoretical and conceptual framework synthesis analysis adopted earlier on in this chapter (Section 6.3). Principally, the process aims to source the direct inputs from the analysis and guide an integrated talent management implementation framework, specifically tailored for capacity development to the NMMDM. Table 6.5 below focuses on the consolidated inputs for the draft integrated talent management implementation framework for NMMDM.

Table 6.5: Consolidated inputs for draft integrated talent management implementation framework

Reviewed theoretical and conceptual framework	Draft inputs to the framework
Talent management perspectives	1. Highlighting strategic alignment, integration, employee engagement, and diversity will foster a more effective HRM environment, enhancing NMMDM success and governance (Table 6.1).
Talent management processes	2. Emphasising integrated talent strategic planning, employee development, technological enhancements, and diverse initiatives will foster a more effective HRM environment. This approach is essential for improving public service delivery and overall institutional effectiveness (Table 6.2).
Theories of talent management	3. The integration of theories of talent management with empirical findings identifies critical areas for focus in talent management within NMMDM. Emphasising alignment between HRM and NMMDM goals, enhancing employee development opportunities, fostering engagement, and promoting diversity will create a more effective HRM environment. These initiatives are essential for improving employee commitment, satisfaction, and overall NMMDM performance (Table 6.3).
Integrated talent management frameworks	4. The integration of these theoretical insights with empirical findings can guide the development of a robust framework that addresses employee engagement, technological alignment, diversity, supportive infrastructures, and management capabilities, enhancing NMMDM performance (Table 6.4).
Statutory and regulatory framework	5. The integration of theoretical insights with empirical findings can guide the development of a comprehensive ITM framework in the local sphere of government. As a result, the framework should ensure legal compliance, competency

	development, diversity and inclusion, effective performance management, employee well-being, strategic financial planning, accountability and transparency, and continuous capacity building, ultimately driving NMMDM excellence (Section 6.3.6).

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Based on Table 6.5., draft inputs, the proposed framework for integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM stresses **talent strategic alignment, employee engagement, diversity, and technological enhancements in HRM** to improve organisational effectiveness and performance. Also, the integrated approach points out the importance of aligning HRM practices with organisational goals, fostering employee development and commitment, and ensuring legal compliance and accountability driving organisational excellence in public service delivery.

6.5 FRAGMENTED TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN NMMDM

As indicated in Chapter 2, Section 2.8.1.1 of the study, integrated frameworks are characterised by the harmonious collaboration of various components, systems, or processes that function as a cohesive unit. As stated, in the study, these components include coordination, collaboration, alignment, and seamless interaction within elements aimed at achieving common objectives. Moreover, Table 2.8 revealed that vertical, horizontal, and temporal frameworks primarily present themselves through arrows, lines, columns, and diagrams. Therefore, the study will use arrows, vertical lines, and horizontal lines to illustrate the suggested NMMDM integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity building. The arrows in the sketch below illustrate how a fragmented process impacts the entire talent management system in the NMMDM.

However, prior to the presentation of the proposed talent management implementation framework, it is essential to delineate the current fragmented talent management practices for capacity development in the NMMDM (Figure 6.2). As established in Chapter 1, Section 1.2; 1.3, Table 2.3. and Table 5.5 of the study, the fragmentation of talent management practices in NMMDM is characterised by a significant misalignment between the IDP and the HRM. This disconnect resulted in talent management practices operating in isolation and lacking the necessary integration to support the overarching strategic goals of the municipality. Furthermore, various stakeholders and role players fail to effectively implement oversight and accountability processes, exacerbating the fragmentation and impeding the municipality's ability to optimise its talent management efforts. Addressing these issues is crucial for fostering an integrated approach that aligns talent management with the municipality's strategic objectives.

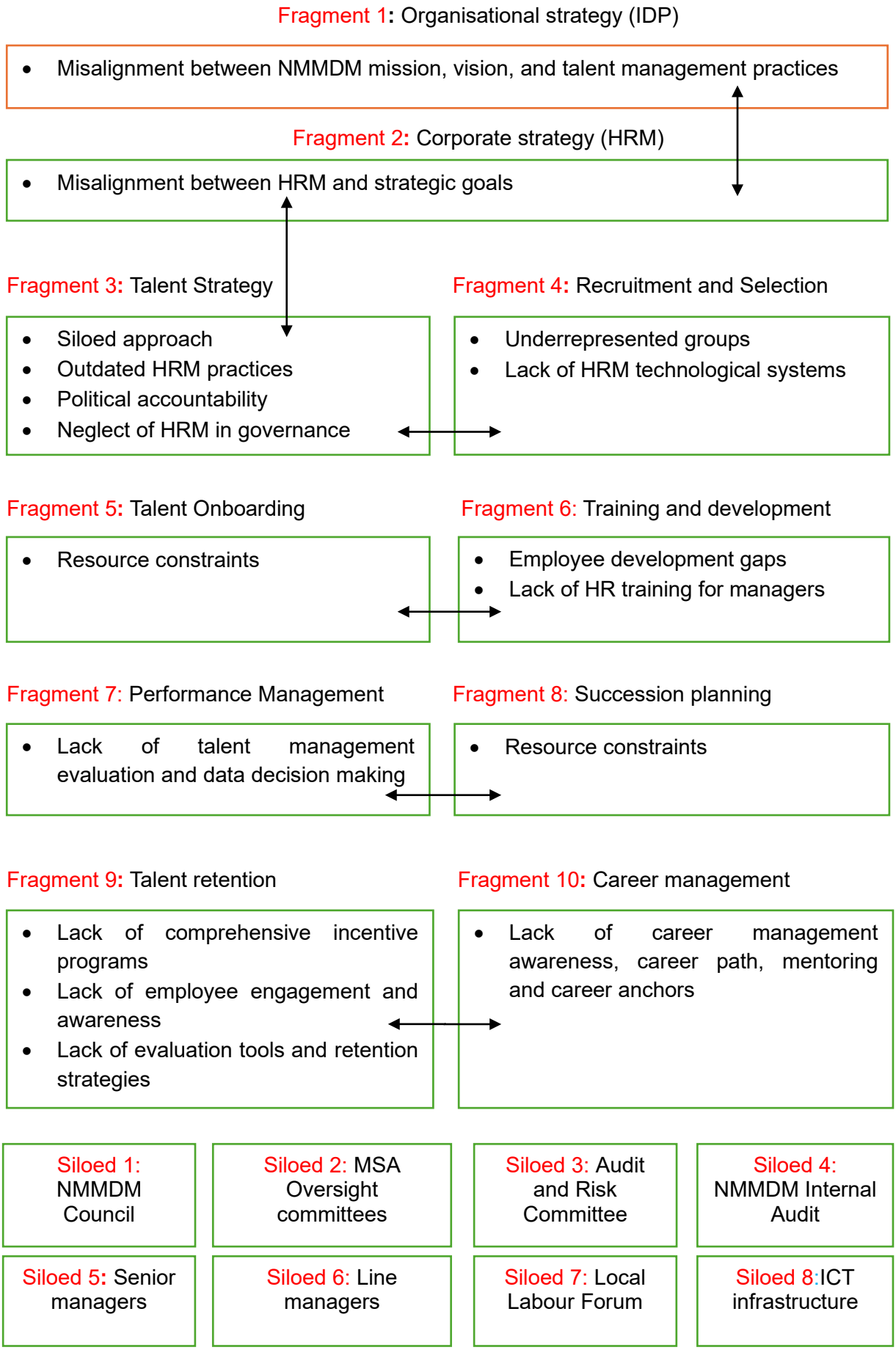

Figure 6.2: Fragmented talent management practices in NMMDM
Source: Researcher's own compilation.

6.6 PROPOSED INTEGRATED IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE NMMDM

Building upon the consolidated inputs submitted in Section 6.4 that were informed by theoretical and conceptual analyses along with empirical findings from Chapter 5, Section 5.3., of the study, the framework outlined in Table 6.5., proposes key elements of NMMDM's integrated talent management implementation framework, including: talent strategic alignment, employee engagement, diversity, and technological advancements in the HRM. These elements, as previously mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 1.6, Chapter 2, sections 2.5.4 and 2.5.7 and Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1 of the study, aim to enhance NMMDM's performance and effectiveness, thereby making it easier to attract, develop, and retain talent.

As discussed earlier (Chapter 2, Section 2.8.1.1), integrated frameworks serve as a strategic blueprint for enhancing organisational effectiveness, developing capacity, improving employee experiences, and driving strategic alignment. Most significantly, they facilitate effective coordination, collaboration, alignment, and seamless interaction with stakeholders and within departments aimed at achieving organisational goals and objectives. For these reasons, Chapter 2, Section 2.6.2, the study stressed that the alignment of organisational strategy with corporate strategy, specifically HRM and talent management processes, is essential for achieving overall business objectives. As a reminder, the study explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.5.3 that the IDP of a municipality serves as a framework for aligning municipal objectives with community needs, thereby fostering accountability and transparency. Therefore, the NMMDM framework refers to the IDP as an organisational strategy.

The proposed integrated talent management implementation framework seeks to improve capacity development within the NMMDM by addressing critical HRM challenges through an integrated talent management framework, showcasing strategic alignment, employee engagement development, retention strategies, and the integration of technology to create a dynamic and efficient workforce. This structure encompasses sixteen components, featuring an IDP aligned with corporate strategy. It integrates HRM technology across twelve talent management activities, all supported by dedicated talent management sponsors and enablers. The blue arrows in the figure indicate the connection from the IDP to the HRM. The dashed lines depict the integration of HRM technology into the overall talent management processes. Additionally, the arrows demonstrate the connections between various talent management processes. The outer layer connects talent management sponsors and enablers, who support the implementation through reviews and oversight of HRM strategies and technological integration. Figure 6.3, below presents the proposed integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM:

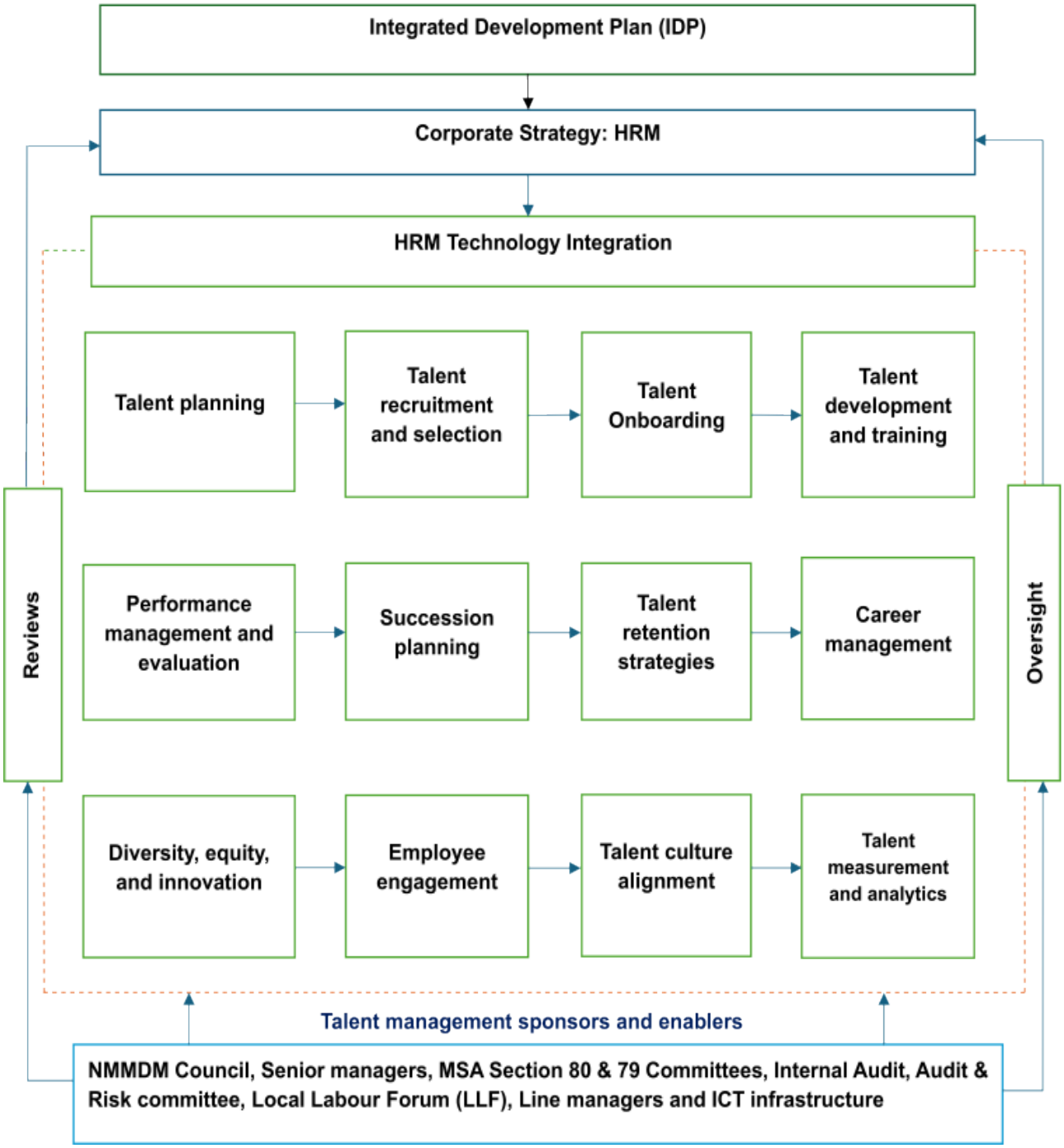

Figure 6.3: Proposed integrated talent management implementation framework in the local sphere of government for capacity development in the NMMDM

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Table 6.6 below provides a detailed explanation of each component contained in the framework which aligns with all fragmented activities identified in Figure 6.2 of the study.

Table 6.6: Detailed explanation of each component contained in the framework

Components	Objectives	Actions
Talent planning	Ensure NMMDM HRM activities align with municipal goals reflected in the IDP.	1. Conduct regular assessments to align HR strategies with organisational objectives. 2. Develop integrated talent management policies that support public service delivery. 3. Foster collaboration between HR and departmental leadership to ensure strategic coherence.
Talent recruitment and selection	Ensure that NMMDM develop a talent strategy	1. Align recruitment processes with the municipality's strategic goals. 2. Ensure recruitment practices promote diversity and reflect the community demographics. 3. Collaborate with local educational institutions for internship and training programs.
Talent Onboarding	Ensure effective integration of new hires into NMMDM environment.	1. Invest in robust onboarding programs to enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover. 2. Pair new hires with experienced employees who can serve as buddies or mentors. 3. Implement an onboarding software platform that streamlines the process, allows for document submission, tracks progress, and provides access to training materials and resources.
Talent development and Training	Build a skilled workforce through structured development strategies.	1. Implement comprehensive training programs tailored to employee needs and organisational goals. 2. Establish mentorship and coaching programs to support career development. 3. Regularly review and update training needs to meet evolving municipal needs.

Performance management and evaluation	Improve measurement of talent management success.	1. Develop modern evaluation tools to assess employee performance and support needs. 2. Implement feedback mechanisms to facilitate continuous improvement in talent management practices. 3. Use data analytics to drive decision-making and enhance NMMDM performance.
Succession planning	Determine key positions within the municipality and potential successors for each role.	1. Evaluate current leadership roles and identify key positions that require succession planning. 2. Establish criteria for identifying potential successors for critical roles. 3. Establish criteria for identifying potential successors for critical roles.
Talent retention strategies	To retain skilled employees and be the employer of choice.	1. Consider additional perks such as wellness programs, mental health support, and financial planning resources. 2. Implement recognition programs that celebrate employee contributions and achievements. This can be through formal awards, shout-outs in meetings, or personalised notes of appreciation.
Career management	Implement structured career pathways	1. Develop clear career progression frameworks that outline potential career paths within the NMMDM. 2. Line managers should work with HR to create and communicate clear career progression paths with their subordinates. 3. Identify career anchors and mentors to encourage employees to assess their values and motivations, strengths and weaknesses that guide their career decisions.
DEI Initiative	Foster a diverse and inclusive workplace.	1. Develop and implement clear DEI strategies with defined goals. 2. Launch programs that support

		underrepresented groups, including mentorship and training. 3. Promote awareness and education around diversity and inclusion within the organisation.
Employee engagement	Create an engaging and motivating work environment.	1. Develop comprehensive incentive and reward programs that recognise employee contributions. 2. Launch engagement initiatives that promote a positive workplace culture. 3. Conduct regular surveys to understand employee satisfaction and areas for improvement.
Talent culture alignment	Align talent culture with NMMDM organisational goals.	1. Identify gaps in the current talent culture and the NMMDM strategic objectives through surveys, interviews, and focus groups among employees at all levels. 2. Identify and empower employees at various levels to act as talent culture champions. 3. Focus on skills that enhance collaboration, communication, and understanding of the business strategy.
Talent measurement and analytics	Establish a robust talent measurement and analytics framework.	1. Provide training for HR practitioners and managers on how to interpret and use talent data for decision making. 2. Schedule quarterly talent review meetings where leaders analyse data on employee performance, engagement, and development needs. 3. Implement suitable HR analytics software that can collect, analyse, and visualise talent data.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Table 6.6 above, demonstrates that the proposed integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM seeks to address talent management challenges faced by the institution as established in Chapter 5, Section 5.3 of the study. As a result, the

framework is tailored to NMMDM's environment and aims to attract, develop and retain capable and engaged workforce officials that effectively meet the demands of the municipality. Thus, the framework is focused on strategic alignment, employee development, retention, and the integration of technology as identified in Table 6.5 of the study. The upcoming Table 6.7, section provides the rationale for integrating sponsors and enablers into the proposed framework.

Table 6.7: Integrated talent management framework sponsors and enablers

TM sponsors and enablers	Role and responsibilities	Supporting source
NMMDM Council	• TM policy review and approval. • Budget approval. • Regulatory framework.	• Table 1.6 • Table 2.1 • Table 3.3 • Chapter 2, Section 2.5.5 • Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1.2 • Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1.3 • Chapter 3, Section 3.7.6
NMMDM Council oversight committees	• Monitoring and evaluation. • Financial oversight. • Policy reviews and recommendations. • Investigations and reporting.	• The Constitution of the RSA, 1996. • The Local Government: MSA 117 of 1998. • The Local Government: MSA 32 of 2000. • The Local Government: MFMA 56 of 2003. • The Local Government: Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPAC) framework, 2011.
Audit & Risk Committee	• Advisory role for performance improvement. • Risk management and compliance. • Financial oversight and external audit.	• Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999. • King IV Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa. • The Local Government: MFMA 56 of 2003.
	• Assurance services and control deficiencies. • Compliance and performance audits.	• Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999. • King IV Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa.

		• The Local Government: MFMA 56 of 2003. • The Local Government: MSA 117 of 1998.
NMMDM senior managers	• Setting the overall strategic direction. • Allocating TM resources. • Shaping the TM organisational culture. • TM policy development. • Establishing key performance indicators	• Table 2.1 • Table 2.3 • Table 2.2 • Chapter 2, Section 2.4 • Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3 • Chapter 3, Section 3.8.4
NMDMDM line managers	• Executing the talent management strategies. • Identifying the skills and competencies. • Providing feedback and manage employee performance. • Fostering a positive work environment and employee engagement.	• Table 2.3 • Chapter 2, Section 2.4 • Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3 • Chapter 2, Section 2.3.8 • Chapter 2, Section 2.5.3 • Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4
NMMDM Local Labour Forum (LLF)	• Employee capacity development advocacy and representation. • Influencing employee wellbeing policies. • Facilitating open dialogue between employees and employer. • Resolving employee's disputes and grievances for a conducive environment.	• Table 6.5 • Table 2.7 • Chapter 2, Section 2.6.2 • Chapter 3, Section 3.7.6 • Chapter 6, Section 6.3.6

Information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure	• Streamlining recruitment processes. • Facilitating training and development. • Enhancing communication and collaboration. • Promoting employee engagement and retention • Supporting strategic decision-making. • Managing employee information.	• Table 2.4 • Table 2.10 • Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3 • Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5 • Chapter 2, Section 2.3.8 • Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1.2 • Chapter 2, Section 2.10.2.2 • Chapter 3, Section 3.5.5 • Chapter 3, Section 3.6.2 • Chapter 3, Section 3.6.6

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Table 6.7 illustrates that the effective implementation of talent management practices in the municipality will heavily depend on the active involvement of various sponsors and enablers, as well as a strong ICT infrastructure. As a result, NMMDM's IDP will strategically align talent management practices with sponsors and enablers, promoting an integrated approach to employee capacity development. Furthermore, sponsors and enablers will be responsible for approving and reviewing the talent management framework, conducting talent audits, and assessing potential risks associated with these practices. Moreover, their advocacy for capacity training and development is essential for upskilling employees and enhancing NMMDM's overall effectiveness. Ordinarily, these enablers will foster a culture of continuous improvement and ethical practice by providing oversight and accountability, thereby ensuring the effective implementation of talent management initiatives and contributing to the municipality's long-term success (Chapter 3, Table 3.3; Section 3.8.2). Thus, the collaborative efforts of sponsors and enablers will not only enhance employee engagement and performance but also strengthen the NMMDM's ability to meet its strategic goals.

6.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter 6 concludes the study by developing an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM. The study highlighted significant challenges in talent management within the NMMDM and in the broader local government context at RSA, revealing gaps and inefficiencies due to a lack of integrated strategies. Key issues identified include employee engagement, diversity, and technology integration, which underscore the fragmented nature of current practices. On the other hand, the study highlighted the need for a

tailored, integrated approach to talent management that aligns with organisational goals and addresses the unique demands of NMMDM. Furthermore, the proposed framework focuses on strategic alignment, employee engagement, diversity, and technological enhancements, aiming to create a cohesive and dynamic talent management strategy. Overall, the study contributes to the discourse on local government talent management by offering a comprehensive framework that enhances capacity development and aligns strategies with organisational objectives, ultimately fostering a culture of continuous development and innovation within the NMMDM. The next chapter of the dissertation offers a logical conclusion and actionable recommendations to the study.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS AND ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Despite constitutional and developmental mandates that highlight the need for robust HRM practices, this study revealed significant gaps in the execution of talent management strategies within the RSA public sector. Therefore, there is a critical need for effective talent management in the public sector, particularly in NMMDM, where fragmented practices have led to poor public service delivery and governance challenges. The aim of the study has been to investigate the existing talent management practices and challenges in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality, with the goal of developing an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development.

During the inspection, the literature highlighted the importance of alignment between HRM practices and organisational strategies, thereby fostering employee development and retention. As a result, the proposed integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM advocates for strategic alignment, employee development, retention, and the use of technology to create a dynamic and effective workforce. The framework also advocates for an integrated approach to talent management as an HRM practice, with the aim of enhancing accountability and developing skilled employees. This, in turn, will contribute to better public service outcomes and adherence to ethical governance standards, as suggested by RSA legislative and regulatory frameworks for capacity development in local government. Against this background, the following section presents a list of key objectives that the study aimed to achieve, opening with the general objective.

7.2 ALIGNMENT OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

This section provides a concise overview of the research objectives and questions that guided this study. The study formulated a set of research objectives and corresponding questions to systematically investigate the effectiveness, challenges, and potential improvements in current talent management practices in NMMDM. This summary will encapsulate the key research objectives (RO) and questions (RQ) that shaped the direction and scope of the research. Overall, this process provided insights into the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government, specifically targeting the NMMDM.

7.2.1 Research objectives

The primary objective of this study, as stated in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.1.1, was to:

- establish the essence of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government within the RSA.

This investigation formulated and operationalised the following research objectives (RO):

- **RO1**: To review national and international theories and integrated frameworks of talent management to establish guidelines for developing an integrated talent management implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development in NMMDM.
- **RO2:** To analyse the context and capacity challenges of local government in the Republic of South Africa by examining statutory and regulatory frameworks, ensuring that the integrated talent management implementation framework aligns with local government goals and supports effective talent management strategies.
- **RO3:** To outline and justify the research methodology employed in the study of integrated talent management practices in the NMMDM, highlighting research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical approaches to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.
- **RO4:** To empirically investigate the current talent management practices and challenges for capacity development in the NMMDM.
- **RO5:** To develop an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in local government specifically tailored for NMMDM, employing a synthesis approach to analyse theoretical reviews, and review contextual analyses, and empirical evidence for alignment and effectiveness.
- **RO6:** Analyse the study findings to formulate actionable recommendations and draw informed conclusions.

As outlined in Table 4.2, the primary research questions were derived from the research objectives addressed in this study.

7.2.2 Research questions

In alignment with the research objectives, the primary research question guiding this study is:

- “What constitutes the essence of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government in the RSA?"

As indicated in Chapter 1, Section 1.5.2 the following research questions (RQ) were established:

- **RQ1:** What are the national and international theories and integrated frameworks of talent management that can guide the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM?
- **RQ2:** What are the context and challenges, as well as the statutory and regulatory framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government?
- **RQ3:** What research methodology will be adopted in the study to ensure the reliability and validity of findings on integrated talent management practices in the NMMDM?
- **RQ4:** What are the current practices and challenges of talent management for capacity development in the NMMDM as identified through empirical investigation?
- **RQ5:** What are the key components of an integrated talent management will inform the development of an implementation framework for capacity development in NMMDM, based on theoretical reviews, contextual analyses, and empirical evidence?
- **RQ6:** What actionable recommendations and informed conclusions can be drawn from the study findings?

The next Table 7.1 presents an alignment of research objectives, questions, methodology, and chapters.

Table 7.1: Alignment of research objectives, questions, methodology, and chapters

Research Objectives	Research Questions	Adopted methodology	Dedicated Chapter
R01	**RQ1**	• **Literature review**: A comprehensive literature review was conducted to gather existing theories and practices related to talent management. This included national and international reviews on integrated talent management frameworks.	**Chapter 2**
R02	**RQ2**	• **Document analysis**: Relevant policy documents, official records and frameworks were analysed to understand how they aligned with capacity development in local government in RSA.	**Chapter 3**
R03	**RQ3**	• **Research approach and design**: The study outlines and justify the research methodology employed, which included the	**Chapter 4**

		research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical approaches.	
R04	**RQ4**	• **Qualitative approach:** Semi-structured questionnaires and personal interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in the NMMDM.	**Chapter 5**
R05	**RQ5**	• **Framework development:** An integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development for NMMDM was developed based on the findings from the theoretical and conceptual frameworks and empirical findings.	**Chapter 6**
R06	**RQ6**	• **Analysis, recommendations and conclusions:** Based on the results and findings from the qualitative interviews and the developed framework, analysis, actionable recommendations and conclusions were formulated.	**Chapter 7**

Source: Researcher's own compilation.

Table 7.1 above showcases the alignment between research objectives, questions, research methodology, and chapters. Overall, this alignment ensured the study's focus and coherence, facilitating the logical formulation of inputs and study findings. Most significantly, it enhanced the validity and reliability of the research, making it easier for the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions and to contribute to the existing body of knowledge**.** Section 7.3 below provides an exhaustive overview of the primary findings from each study chapter and underlines the pertinent issues relating to the problem statement presented in Chapter 1, Section 1.3 of the study.

7.3 SUMMARY OF STUDY KEY FINDINGS

Chapter 1 presented a general introduction and orientation to the study, which outlined the research problems and motivated its significance, along with central theoretical statements that guided the research. Furthermore, the chapter detailed and elaborated on the research methodology employed in the study. As part of the research problem, this chapter delved into the challenges faced by talent management within the local government of RSA, highlighting critical issues that fundamentally impede effective public sector management. One of these challenges is

the misalignment between the HRM practice of talent management and the constitutional imperative of capacity development. As established in Chapter 1, Section 1.2, the constitutional framework, particularly the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, and the NDP (2011), reported capacity development as a cornerstone of public service-sector efficacy. Therefore, both these legislative and regulatory prescripts advocate for an integrated approach to talent management that aligns employee capabilities with organisational objectives. However, Chapter 1 reported that the persistent challenges faced by the local sphere of government in RSA indicate a systemic failure to translate these ideals into practice. For instance, Chapter 1 delineated several barriers, including (1) a pronounced lack of understanding of talent management principles among leadership, which exacerbates difficulties in attracting and retaining skilled personnel. This gap in talent management knowledge reflects a broader issue of lack of managerial competency within the local sphere of government.

Moreover, the influence of a politicised environment further complicates the talent management landscape. Chapter 1 highlights the impact of political interference and a detrimental organisational culture, which not only impede the recruitment of qualified candidates but also undermine the overall morale and effectiveness of public institutions. The compounded effects of economic pressures, particularly those heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic and rising inflation, exacerbate these challenges, leading to a significant decline in service delivery outcomes. The implications of ineffective talent management extend beyond operational inefficiencies. This challenge contributes to (3) a pervasive culture of impunity and poor governance, the undermining of public trust and compliance with regulatory frameworks. As highlighted, the inability to develop a competent and committed workforce directly correlates with (4) mismanagement of resources and (5) inadequate service delivery, which are detrimental to the socio-economic fabric of communities. Considering these findings, Chapter 1 advocated for further development of an integrated talent management framework tailored to the specific needs of the local sphere of government. Such a framework should facilitate the alignment of talent management as HRM practices with overarching organisational strategies (IDP), thereby fostering an environment conducive to capacity development and professionalism.

Against this backdrop, the urgency for reform is paramount, as effective talent management is critical for enhancing public service delivery and promoting sustainable socio-economic development within the RSA local sphere of government. At its end, the Chapter 1 findings presented a compelling case for re-examining and renewing talent management practices in the public sector, particularly in NMMDM. Thus, the primary problem to be investigated in this study is the following: **because of the absence of an integrated talent management implementation framework for the local sphere of government targeting NMMDM, the effective implementation of talent management practices for capacity development is obstructed by**

various challenges, leading to a fragmented approach. To address this problem, the study proposes the development of a talent management implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development within the local sphere of government. Addressing the identified challenges through strategic interventions will not only strengthen governance but also contribute to achieving the developmental mandates essential for the growth and stability of RSA communities, specifically in the NMMDM region. The paragraphs below describe the achievement of each targeted research objective, starting with objective one in Chapter 2 of the study.

- **To review national and international theories and integrated frameworks of talent management to establish guidelines for developing an integrated talent management implementation framework aimed at enhancing capacity development in NMMDM.**

Chapter 2 of the study unveiled significant discoveries concerning talent management, theories, and integrated talent management frameworks that represent best practices for an integrated approach to capacity development within the organisation. As a point of departure, the definition of "**talent"** was debated, with discussions focusing on its origins whether it is innate or can be developed through training and development. As a result, the findings highlighted the need for a balanced approach in talent management that values both top performers and existing employees.

Concerning **traits and attributes of highly skilled individuals**, creativity, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and leadership, are essential for organisations to recruit and develop talent effectively. On the other hand, the study noted that management is a complex concept that involves strategizing and controlling resources to achieve objectives, with line managers playing a critical role in directing and developing employees. However, challenges like insufficient training can hinder their effectiveness. Furthermore, the chapter noted that focus of **talent management** has shifted from high-potential executives to a broader inclusion of all employees, emphasising employee training and strategic alignment with organisational goals. However, recent trends in talent management include the use of digital analytics and a focus on diversity and inclusion, reflecting the changing dynamics of the workplace. Moreover, effective talent management requires **alignment with organisational goals**, a **holistic approach throughout the employee work/lifecycle**, and **adaptation to evolving workplace dynamics through data-driven strategies**.

Additionally, Chapter 2 reviewed the literature on talent management techniques and identified the key findings listed below.

- **Talent strategic planning**: Effective talent management begins with strategic planning that aligns talent needs with organisational goals. However, implementing effective talent planning

requires addressing the balance between workload demands and skilled employee availability, while also recognising it as a strategic initiative rather than merely a compliance task to maximise its benefits.

- **Talent recruitment and selection**: To attract skilled candidates, strong employer branding and diverse recruitment strategies are crucial; however, many public institutions such as the local sphere of government struggle to compete with the private sector due to lower salaries and limited rewards and advancement opportunities, resulting in talent shortages.
- **Talent Onboarding**: Onboarding is crucial for integrating new employees and enhancing job satisfaction and retention. Nevertheless, inconsistencies in onboarding quality exist, often due to limited resources and lack of technological tools. Consequently, effective onboarding processes should prioritise socialisation and clear communication, especially in remote contexts.
- **Talent development and training**: Continuous development was found to be essential for operational effectiveness and employee engagement. As a result, organisations must integrate employee development into HR strategies to foster innovation and adaptability. Therefore, adopting this capacity development approach is critical, particularly in local government contexts.
- **Performance management**: This involves systematic evaluation of employee performance to enhance organisational effectiveness. Nonetheless, the challenges in this regard include defining clear performance indicators and resistance to change. Notably, the study discovered that technology plays a significant role in transforming performance management practices.
- **Succession planning**: Recognised as vital for addressing skill shortages, succession planning involves identifying and developing key employees for future leadership roles. Effective implementation faces challenges such as inadequate training and resistance to change.
- **Talent retention**: Retaining skilled employees is as crucial as attracting new employees in the organisation. In this regard, effective retention strategies must align with HR practices and recognise employee motivations. Despite this, it was observed that competition from the private sector complicates retention efforts especially in the RSA local sphere of government.
- **Career management**: This proactive process supports employee growth and aligns individual aspirations with organisational goals. Yet, organisations should facilitate career management through development opportunities and mentorship, although many local spheres of government face resource constraints and lack of awareness.

Furthermore, Chapter 2 remarked that, successful **talent management requires collaboration among various stakeholders**, including senior leadership, HR professionals, line managers, and recruitment specialists. A cross-functional approach can enhance communication and effectiveness in talent management initiatives. In Chapter 2, Section 2.10.2.2, the study mentioned that investing in talent management sponsorships and enablers is not just a strategic advantage, it is a

commitment to building resilience, engaged, and high-performing workforce. In addition to stakeholder involvement in the success of talent management implementation. Chapter 2 discovered key effective talent management implementation strategies including: **identifying key positions and roles; building a talent pipeline; training and coaching for line managers; employee engagement; competitive compensation and benefits; strong employer branding; diversity and inclusion; and measuring the success of the strategy**. As underlined in Chapter 2, to assess the effectiveness of these talent management strategies, should be assessed through various metrics, including retention rates and employee satisfaction. However, traditional metrics may not fully capture employee morale and job satisfaction.

Additionally, Chapter 2 examined talent management theories and integrated talent management frameworks to underscore importance of understanding employee perceptions, motivation, HRM support systems, and the social dynamics that influence organisational effectiveness and employee engagement. The following are unique elements of theories of talent management examined in the study:

- **Psychological Contract Theory** emphasises that unwritten expectations between employees and employers, along with trust and mutual understanding, are crucial for shaping job satisfaction and commitment in the workplace.
- **Organisational Support Theory** highlights that employees' perceptions of support from their organisation significantly enhance job performance, commitment, and positive behaviours when they feel valued.
- **Organisational Commitment Theory** examines the psychological attachments employees have to their organisation’s affective, continuance, and normative standards which indicate that high levels of commitment can reduce turnover and improve organisational performance.
- **Human Relations Theory** stresses that social relationships and employee well-being are vital for motivation and productivity, advocating a humanistic approach that prioritises meeting employee needs and enhancing satisfaction.
- **Generational Theory** highlights the importance of generational differences in beliefs and perspectives for enhancing employee engagement, while considering how historical and cultural events influence the attitudes and behaviours of different generations in the workplace.

Summary of key findings on integrated talent management frameworks is as follows:

- **Kock & Burke Integrated Talent Management Wheel** focuses on employee engagement, fostering both emotional and rational commitment, creating a positive work environment, and emphasising capacity development.

- **City of Cape Town's Talent Management Framework** centres on the employee value proposition, incorporating technology solutions, competency frameworks, personal development plans, and consideration of the external environment.
- **Lee & Van Der Waldt Integrated Talent Management Model for Public Service** advocates for a comprehensive approach to talent management covering organisational design, workforce planning, talent acquisition, training and development, performance management, employee engagement and wellness, compensation and benefits, diversity and inclusion, and the use of technology and data.
- **A Framework Development for Talent Management in the Higher Education Sector** features identifying and nurturing top talent, fostering professional development, promoting innovation and collaboration, ensuring diversity and inclusion, and creating a supportive environment.
- **Wahyuningtyas Integrated Talent Management System** highlights the importance of talent mindset, management support, and a robust HR information system.
- **BeamPines Integrated Talent Management Model** focuses on enterprise sponsorship and investment, enhancing talent management capabilities and processes, leveraging technology for data analysis and reporting, and fostering a supportive workplace culture.
- **Faqihi & Maih Artificial Intelligence-Driven Talent Management Framework** advocates for data-driven decision-making, predictive analytics, personalised employee experiences, automation of routine HR tasks, and a commitment to continuous learning and development.

The frameworks collectively illustrate diverse approaches to talent management, emphasising the importance of engagement, development, support, and the integration of technology and data in fostering an effective talent management strategy. The ensuing part describes the achievement of targeted research objective of Chapter 3 of the study.

- **To analyse the context and capacity challenges of local government in South Africa by examining statutory and regulatory frameworks, ensuring that the integrated talent management implementation framework aligns with local government goals and supports effective talent management strategies.**

Chapter 3 of the study analysed the context and capacity challenges of local government in the Republic of South Africa by examining statutory and regulatory frameworks, ensuring that the integrated talent management implementation framework aligns with local government goals and supports effective talent management strategies. Through this analysis, the study discovered key characteristics of the local sphere of government including **closest proximity, decentralisation, service delivery focus, participation in/of local government, diverse functions, elected representation, regulatory authority, financial independence, capacity for innovation, and**

Intergovernmental relations. Overall, these findings highlight the crucial role of South African municipalities in effective governance, enhancement of community well-being and community engagement.

Furthermore, the study uncovered that the RSA local sphere of government operates as the third tier alongside national and provincial levels, focusing on essential service provision of basic services and executive authority. It is divided into three categories of municipalities Category A (metropolitan municipalities); Category C (district municipalities), and Category B (local municipalities). From these findings, each category plays a crucial role in ensuring effective governance and community engagement across different regions. Additionally, the Chapter 3 identified six key capacity aspects that are essential for effective local sphere of government overall performance which includes **technical, financial, human, institutional, leadership and social capacity**. Summarily, the study concluded that the local sphere of government requires these interconnected capacity elements to deliver quality services and meet community demands. However, improving each dimension necessitates the inclusion of talent management as an essential ingredient, particularly for HRM, which is crucial for the local sphere of government governance and overall performance.

Furthermore, Chapter 3 highlights substantial capacity constraints that impede effective service delivery. Key challenges found include **service delivery protests; audit outcomes; financial distress; water and sanitation quality; road Infrastructure; dysfunctional sewerage systems**. To mitigate the severe capacity constraints inhibiting effective service delivery in RSA, it is essential to implement an integrated talent management approach that focuses on attracting, developing, and retaining skilled professionals. Moreover, it was discovered that the local sphere of government in RSA faces several challenges which comprises of **budget constraints; high staff turnover and skills scarcity; a lack of skilled employees and high vacancy rates and loss of institutional knowledge; political interference and corruption; inadequate monitoring and evaluation; lack of coordination and integration; inefficiencies within HR management units; insufficient training opportunities and limited and poor-quality training programs.** All fail to enhance employee skills, necessitating tailored training initiatives to improve engagement and service delivery. Chapter 3, sections 3.6.7; 3.7.2; 3.7.4 of the study also stressed the significance of an integrated talent management framework in cultivating a skilled workforce and enhancing capacity within the local sphere of government. It also underscored the necessity for supportive statutory and regulatory frameworks to facilitate this development.

The legislative and regulatory frameworks for capacity development discussed in under Chapter 3, underscore the necessity for local sphere of government to appoint skilled employees and implementing effective HRM practices to achieve this constitutional mandate. Most importantly, the

study stressed that continuous training and development is essential for the local sphere of government in RSA to adapt to the evolving needs of their communities, enabling public sector institutions to address challenges and seize opportunities as and when they arise. Notably, existing frameworks highlight the critical importance of ethical practices, equity, and employee well-being in local governance, fostering trust and transparency in the public service-sector. However, significant gaps remain in the implementation of these frameworks, which adversely impact local government performance. These deficiencies can hinder the ability of local authorities to fulfil their mandates, ultimately affecting the quality of services provided to the public and citizens at large.

Despite the authority to develop policies and by-laws tailored to the specific needs of the local sphere of government, there is an urgent need for legislative and regulatory frameworks that explicitly support talent management as a fundamental aspect of human resource management practices. Such frameworks would enable local government in RSA to effectively attract, develop, and retain skilled personnel, which is essential for ensuring effective governance and high-quality service delivery. The forthcoming findings focus on Chapter 4 research objectives.

- **To outline and justify the research methodology employed in the study of integrated talent management practices in the NMMDM, highlighting research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical approaches to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings.**

Chapter 4 outlined and justified the research methodology employed in the study to identify existing talent management practices in the NMMDM, highlighting research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical approaches to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. Therefore, the study adopted a qualitative research approach, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the theories surrounding talent management. Furthermore, the study incorporated both descriptive and explanatory research designs, allowing for a comprehensive narrative and elucidation of the connections between theories and practices. Through a literature review, the study identified gaps in existing talent management practices in the NMMDM, while document analysis provided context through relevant legislation and a regulatory framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government. The empirical study targeted ten (10) senior officials selected through purposive sampling, ensuring the inclusion of participants with relevant expertise.

Additionally, open-ended questionnaires were secured as a key method for collecting qualitative data on talent management practices within the NMMDM. This approach allowed participants to share their thoughts and experiences in detail, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities involved. Moreover, the questionnaires were designed to encourage elaboration and

personal narratives, enhancing the richness of the data collected. Notably, participants were assured of confidentiality and the voluntary nature of their involvement, which aided and assisted in building trust throughout the study. On the other hand, the flexibility in distribution methods further improved response rates. Ultimately, the insights gained from the questionnaires complemented other data sources, such as interviews and document analysis, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of talent management in the local government context and enhancing the study's credibility. A thematic analysis was adopted to interpret qualitative data, following a six-phase steps approach that guarantees data reliability and research validity. Overall, this methodological framework permitted a robust investigation of talent management practices, aiming to source inputs for the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM. The forthcoming findings focus on Chapter 5 research objectives.

- **To empirically investigate the current talent management practices and challenges for capacity development in the NMMDM.**

The objective of **Chapter 5** objective has been to empirically investigate the current talent management practices and challenges for capacity development in the NMMDM. Procedurally, data was collected from ten (10) NMMDM senior officials, selected through purposive sampling. As it was reported in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3, the selection of these participants was based on two factors: (1) their multi-disciplinary experiences and knowledge, which enable them to provide useful information on human resource management (HRM) practices; and (2) their direct involvement in the strategic planning, public policymaking, and implementation of policies and practices related to talent management and capacity development in the NMMDM, which in turn contribute to the development of a talent management implementation framework for the Municipality.

Additionally, fifteen open-ended questionnaires were circulated to 10 participants to collect qualitative data on talent management practices within the NMMDM. In Chapter 4, Section 4.6 a thematic analysis approach was employed to examine and interpret the information and data collected from participants. This approach involved generating themes from the data obtained through personal interviews, and finally identifying key issues, understanding context, prioritising challenges and informing development of the framework. At later stage, the results were triangulated with theoretical and conceptual framework conducted in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. During the bibliographical investigation, the study uncovered the predominance of early-career professionals, with 40% of respondents having 1-5 years of service and no individuals exceeding 31 years of experience. This demographic trend highlights a significant need for targeted training and mentorship programs to facilitate professional growth and address the

potential institutional knowledge gap that may arise from the lack of long-serving officials. Moreover, the participant group, that included a diverse range of experience levels 10% entry-level, 20% mid-level, and 30% senior-level presents opportunities for mentorship that can bridge this knowledge gap. Furthermore, with 60% of participants holding post-graduate degrees, the workforce is well-equipped to contribute to public policy formulation and implementation. These findings pinpoint the critical importance of effective talent management strategies to enhance capacity development in NMMDM. Figure 7.1 below, presents a summary of existing talent management practices and challenges confronting NMMDM which were sourced from Section C of the questionnaire. Each challenge identified is paired with a semi-structured questionnaire which was presented/ distributed to the study participants:

Figure 7.1: Talent management challenges faced by the NMMDM

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Table 7.1 above highlights significant challenges in talent management within the NMMDM, stressing the need for an integrated capacity development framework. The analysis of qualitative data from municipal officials uncovers issues such as inadequate alignment of talent management practices with IDP, lack of technological advancement, lack of employee engagement, high vacancy rates and the detrimental effects of political interference. A politicised organisational culture undermines talent management and exacerbates diversity and equity issues. Additionally, a lack of managerial competency in HRM and insufficient career development pathways complicate capacity development. These factors point to a fragmented talent management approach that is misaligned with institutional strategies, hindering the attraction and retention of essential skills. The chapter calls for the urgent establishment of a cohesive talent management framework aligned with the IDP and corporate strategy. The following section provides a summary of findings derived from the Chapter 6 research objective.

- **To develop an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local government specifically tailored for NMMDM, employing a synthesis approach to analyse theoretical reviews, contextual analyses, and empirical evidence for alignment and effectiveness.**

In **Chapter 6**, the study employed a methodology that synthesised findings from theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and compared with empirical evidence, to inform the design of an integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the NMMDM. Based on the synthesis approach employed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2 of the study the following inputs informed the development of a talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government, focusing on NMMDM.

Table 7.2: Consolidated inputs for draft integrated talent management implementation framework

Theoretical and conceptual framework findings	Draft inputs to the framework
Talent management perspectives	1. Highlighted strategic alignment, integration, employee engagement, and diversity that will foster a more effective HRM environment, enhancing NMMDM successes and governance.
Talent management processes	2. Highlighted the integrated talent strategic planning, employee development, technological enhancements, and diversity initiatives will foster a more effective HRM environment. This approach was found to be essential for improving public service delivery and overall

	institutional effectiveness.
Theories of talent management	3. The integration of theories of talent management with empirical findings identified critical areas for attention in talent management within NMMDM. Emphasising the alignment between HRM and NMMDM goals, enhancing employee development opportunities, fostering engagement, and promoting diversity which will create a more effective HRM environment. These initiatives were viewed to be essential for improving employee commitment, satisfaction, and overall NMMDM performance.
Integrated talent management framework	4. The integration of these theoretical frameworks with empirical findings can guide the development of a robust framework that aim to address employee engagement, technological alignment, diversity, supportive infrastructures, and management capabilities, enhancing NMMDM performance.
Statutory and regulatory framework	5. The integration of theoretical insights with empirical findings can guide the development of a comprehensive ITM framework in the local sphere of government. As a result, it was established that the framework should ensure legal compliance, competency development, diversity and inclusion, effective performance management, employee well-being, strategic financial planning, accountability and transparency, and continuous capacity building, ultimately driving NMMDM excellence.

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

Based on Table 7.2, the proposed framework for integrated talent management implementation for capacity development in the NMMDM advocates for talent strategic alignment, employee engagement, diversity, and technological enhancements in HRM to improve organisational effectiveness and performance. As discussed in Chapter 2, sections 2.10.1.1 and 2.10.2.1 **aligning talent strategy** with the mission and vision of the organisation is essential for fostering a committed, engaged, and capable workforce that is dedicated to achieving long-term strategic objectives. In a local government context, this alignment not only enhances NMMDM performance but also contributes to a positive organisational culture and reputation.

Moreover, the study established that the integration of **employee engagement** to NMMDM talent management strategies can lead to a more effective and sustainable workforce thereby facilitating employee retention, enhance productivity, attract talent and align employees with organisational goals and values. It was also found that, incorporating **diversity** into NMMDM talent management strategies is essential not only for compliance and reputation but also for driving innovation and achieving long-term success. Lastly, the study established **technological enhancements** could transform NMMDM's HRM into more automated administrative tasks, data-driven processes, improved recruitment and selection processes and enhance employee onboarding. In addition, the framework covers sixteen (16) components, including an IDP (organisational strategy) connected to corporate strategy (HRM) and the integration of HRM technology across twelve (12) integrated talent management processes.

Moreover, the study found that it integrates HRM technology across twelve talent management activities, all supported by dedicated talent management sponsors and enablers. The blue arrows in Figure 6.3 indicated the connection from the IDP to the HRM. The dashed lines depict the integration of HRM technology into the overall talent management processes. Additionally, the framework's arrows connect various talent management processes. The outer layer connects talent management sponsors and enablers to support the implementation through reviews and oversight of HRM strategies and technological integration.

Furthermore, the findings provide critical insights into the implementation of talent management practices within the municipality, highlighting the pivotal roles of sponsors and enablers, as well as the importance of a robust ICT infrastructure. The study identified that the alignment of the NMMDM's IDP with these stakeholders is vital for promoting an integrated approach to employee capacity development. Key findings indicate that sponsors and enablers are instrumental in the approval and review processes of the talent management framework, conducting talent audits, and identifying potential risks. Their backing for capacity training is crucial for upskilling employees, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of the NMMDM. Moreover, these enablers foster a culture of continuous improvement and ethical practices by ensuring oversight and accountability, which are essential for the successful execution of talent management initiatives. This collaborative effort not only enhances employee engagement and performance but also strengthens NMMDM's ability to achieve its goals. Next, is the proposed integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government targeting the NMMDM (Figure 7.2):

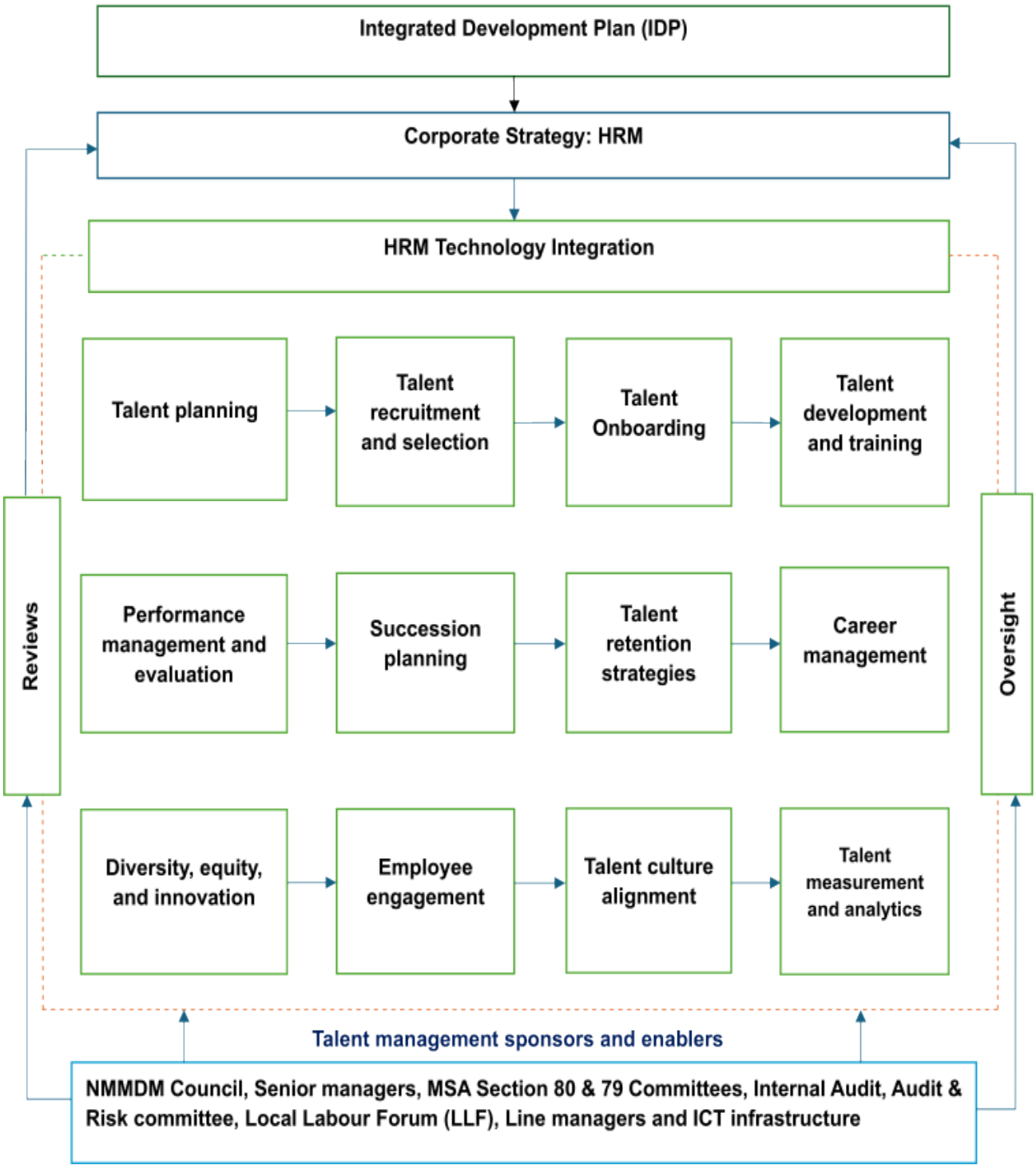

Figure 7.2 Proposed integrated talent management implementation framework in the local sphere of government for capacity development in the NMMDM

Source: (Researcher's own compilation).

- **To analyse the study findings to formulate actionable recommendations and draw informed conclusions.**

Chapter 7 of the study analysed the study findings to formulate actionable recommendations and draw informed conclusions. This analysis was based on the comprehensive process outlined in the beginning of study (Chapter 1), ranging from the review of national and international talent management theories and frameworks (Chapter 2), to the analysis of local government context and capacity challenges in RSA (Chapter 3), the justification of the research methodology (Chapter 4), the empirical investigation of current talent management practices (Chapter 5), and the development of a tailored integrated talent management implementation framework for the NMMDM (Chapter 6), and the following **recommendations** are proposed. These recommendations are designed to enhance capacity development in the NMMDM and are directly informed by the findings gained throughout the research process.

Recommendation 1: Establish a comprehensive talent management policy should be established to clearly define the organisation's strategies for workforce planning, recruitment, development, and retention of employees

The establishment of a comprehensive talent management policy is essential for the NMMDM seeking to define their strategies regarding workforce planning, recruitment, development, and retention. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.6.4, Table 2.9; and Chapter 3, Section 3.7.1, such a policy should cover specific goals and objectives, delineate the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, and underscore the alignment of talent management practices with overarching (IDP) business strategies. Furthermore, this alignment is critical for effectively attracting, developing, and retaining the talent necessary for organisational success and the achievement of long-term objectives (Chapter 1, Section 1.3). Al-Dalahmeh (2020:119) argued that a well-defined talent management policy not only enhances organisational performance and competitiveness but also fosters a positive organisational culture that boosts employee engagement. This, in turn, leads to increased productivity and job satisfaction. Thus, by aligning talent management with business objectives, NMMDM can identify and nurture future leaders, thereby ensuring continuity and sustainable success.

As established in Table 2.10, a robust talent management strategy serves as a magnet for top talent, as prospective employees are more likely to be drawn to organisations that prioritise employee development and career advancement. This added advantage in recruiting and retaining high performers is instrumental in contributing to the long-term success and sustainability of businesses across various sectors. Due to high vacancy rates and employee development gaps highlighted in Table 5.5, continuous investment in workforce skills and knowledge lays a solid

foundation for future growth and innovation, driving sustainable success in an ever-evolving market landscape.

Recommendation 2: Perform a comprehensive analysis of the current workforce to identify skills gaps, future needs, and alignment with corporate strategy.

The comprehensive analysis should encompass a review of existing job roles, responsibilities, and required skills, along with an assessment of employee performance and potential for growth. By understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the current workforce, NMMDM will be in a better position to pinpoint areas for improvement and development. As discovered by Sulieman (2019:12), Omolawal (2021:2), Chapter 2, Section 2.10.2.1, Chapter 3, Section 3.7.2, the alignment of workforce capabilities with corporate strategy is essential to ensure that the right talent is in place to drive business objectives and achieve long-term success. Through this strategic analysis, NMMDM will make informed decisions regarding recruitment, training, and succession planning.

As established in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5 and Chege *et al.,* (2022:68), investing in employee development while aligning their skills with organisational goals will foster a more agile and competitive workforce. This proactive approach to talent management can lead to increased productivity, enhanced employee satisfaction, and overall organisational success. In Table 6.2, the study will reveal a lack of talent management evaluation and data decision-making in NMMDM. Therefore, by continuously evaluating and adapting talent management strategies in response to public sector demands and technological advancements, NMMDM can maintain its authority and relevance within the public sector environment (Chapter 1, Section 1.6).

According to the literature review in Mabope (2018:83) and Biewenga (2021:4) to effectively prioritise talent management, institutions should implement regular performance evaluations and provide opportunities for professional development. In the case of NMMDM, by consistently assessing employee performance and identifying areas for growth, the institution can tailor its talent management strategies to meet the evolving needs of its workforce. Offering training programs, mentorship opportunities, and clear career advancement pathways will not only enhance individual performance but also cultivate a culture of innovation and collaboration since there is a siloed approach highlighted in Table 5.5 of the study. As demonstrated in the proposed framework, investing in talent management sponsorships and enablers will not just be a strategic advantage; it will also demonstrate a commitment to building a resilient, engaged, and high-performing workforce. Likewise, a sponsorships and enablers are integrated in the framework, each role player will have the responsibility to encourage a growth mindset among employees, which will be crucial for boosting job satisfaction and retention rates (Chapter 2, sections 2.10.2.1

and 2.10.2.2). Most significantly, by providing avenues for skill development and career progression, NMMDM will demonstrate its commitment to the long-term success of its employees. Chapter 2, sections 2.5.7 and 2.6.3 claimed that fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment will empower employees to embrace new challenges and expand their skill sets.

Recommendation 3: Establish a structured talent development program that includes training, mentorship, and career progression opportunities.

A structured talent development program is crucial for enhancing employee skills and supporting career growth within organisations. In Chapter 2, Section 2.3.6; Chapter 3, Section 3.7.5, the study claimed that by offering ongoing training and mentorship, companies can improve job satisfaction and retention rates, as employees are motivated by clear career progression pathways. Investing in skill-building initiatives like workshops, seminars, and online courses can ensure a skilled and adaptable workforce, benefiting both individual employees and the institution. Hence, Table 2.5, indicated that when employees feel valued, they demonstrate increased loyalty and productivity, contributing to organisational success.

Creating a culture of continuous learning is essential in the public sector, as it empowers employees to take charge of their career development, leading to higher engagement and job satisfaction (Ndou *et al.,* 2021:569; Siddiqui *et al.,* 2022:510). This positive environment also reduces turnover rates and enhances institutional culture (Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4). Ultimately, prioritising talent development is a strategic investment that can yields positive returns, including improved performance and sustainability for the NMMDM. Thus, as noted in Chapter 2, Section 2.6.1, the reciprocal benefits of investing in employees are encapsulated in the saying, invest in your employees and they will invest in your business. Ultimately, prioritising talent development is a strategic decision that yields significant returns, including improved performance and a stronger bottom line, and most significantly, leads to higher job satisfaction, reduced turnover rates, and an overall enhancement of company culture.

Recommendation 4: Integrate and implement advanced HRM technological tools for talent management processes to enhance recruitment efficiency, promote transparency, and foster a merit-based selection environment.

The integration of HRM technological tools can assist the NMMDM by streamlining recruitment processes, enhancing data management, improving candidate assessment, increasing transparency, providing ongoing employee development, offering better analytics and reporting, and enhancing employee engagement. As outlined in Chapter 3, sections 3.7.7 and 3.7.8, the HRM department can enhance its recruitment processes, reduce bias in candidate selection, and

effectively hire the most qualified individuals based on their skills and experience using HRM technological tools. Additionally, the adoption of HRM technological tools can assist the municipality (HRM department) to be more effective by managing a large volume of applications and identifying top talent expeditiously. As supported by Kaewnaknaew *et al.,* (2022:4) the use of technology in the recruitment process can lead to significant time and cost savings for organisations.

Consequently, by integrating HRM functions into talent management processes through data analytics (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5; Table 2.2), stakeholders involved in HRM policy reviews, oversight, and implementation will be empowered to make more informed decisions, significantly enhancing talent attraction, development, and retention in the NMMDM. Consequently, by integrating HRM functions into talent management processes through data analytics, stakeholders involved in HRM policy reviews, oversight, and implementation will be empowered to make more informed decisions, significantly enhancing talent attraction, development, and retention in the NMMDM. This strategic approach not only fosters a more effective workforce but also positions the municipality for long-term success in achieving its organisational goals, thus eliminating unethical recruitment and selection practices characterised by nepotism and political appointments.

7.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies in its potential to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of talent management practices within the NMMDM. As discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.10, of the study, investigating existing talent management practices and identifying the challenges faced by the local sphere of government in RSA, the study aims to contribute to capacity development by providing insights into the current state of talent management and highlighting gaps and areas for improvement. By so doing, the study will inform the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework that seeks to develop the capacity of local government employees, ultimately leading to improved service delivery and governance in the NMMDM. Furthermore, the findings of the study will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers and local government officials, guiding the formulation of policies that promote effective talent recruitment and selection, retention, and development strategies tailored to the unique needs of the municipality. Addressing the identified challenges can create a more engaging and supportive work environment, resulting in higher employee satisfaction, reduced turnover rates, and a motivated workforce essential for achieving the municipality's goals and objectives.

As it stands, the quality of services provided by local sphere of government specifically NMMDM, directly correlates with effective talent management. Thus, implementing the study's recommendations can enhance operational effectiveness and improve community services

outcomes. Significantly, the study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on talent management in the local government context, providing a benchmark for other municipalities facing similar challenges and fostering collaboration and an exchange of knowledge among the local sphere of government. Academically, this study will enrich the existing body of knowledge in Public Human HRM as a sub-discipline of Public Administration. It will serve as a valuable resource for students in Public Administration, particularly those specialising in Public HRM, helping them to better understand the underlying theories and integrated implementation frameworks relevant to talent management. Overall, this study is critical as it seeks to address pertinent issues regarding talent management within the NMMDM, leading to enhanced capacity development, improved service delivery, and a more effective local government that meets the needs of its community.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study primarily focused on senior managers and HRM officials, which could not capture the views and experiences of lower-level municipal employees. Future researchers could consider conducting interviews or surveys with lower-level employees to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their perspectives on talent management as HRM practice in the NMMDM. This approach could/ would offer a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions and experiences of talent management practices across all organisational managerial levels. Additionally, future research could explore the impact of different talent management as HRM practices on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance. By delving deeper into these areas, NMMDM can better tailor their HRM strategies to meet the needs and expectations of all employees, resulting in a more engaged and productive workforce. Thus, this research gap could result in increased efficiency, reduced turnover, and improved business outcomes.

7.6 CONCLUSION

This study presented a comprehensive analysis of talent management and capacity development within local government in the Republic of South Africa, particularly focusing on the NMMDM. The research accentuates the vital role of local sphere of government in governance and service delivery while also identifying significant capacity challenges, including political interference, high staff turnover, skill shortages, a fragmented approach, misalignment between HRM and strategic goals, neglect of HRM in governance, and inadequate technological systems and training programs. To address these challenges, the development of an integrated talent management implementation framework is essential. This framework will ensure alignment with organisational objectives and meet community needs through the Integrated Development Plan. Furthermore, the findings of the study underscore the necessity of an integrated approach to talent management that incorporates talent strategic alignment, employee engagement, diversity, and technological

advancements. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and mentorship, NMMDM can enhance workforce capabilities and improve public service delivery.

Moreover, the study advocates for supportive legislative frameworks that facilitate the appointment and development of skilled personnel, thereby promoting ethical governance and employee well-being. However, while the local sphere of government has the authority to approve policies, by-laws, strategies, and procedures, the current legislative and regulatory framework for capacity development does not offer direct guidance on talent management practices. The actionable recommendations derived from this research provide a roadmap for NMMDM to enhance its own talent management practices. By developing comprehensive policies, conducting thorough workforce analyses, establishing a coherent structure for talent development programs, and integrating and implement advanced HRM technological tools for talent management processes to enhance recruitment efficiency, promote transparency, and foster a merit-based selection environment. The NMMDM can significantly improve its operational effectiveness and responsiveness to community demands.

Ultimately, the implications of this research extend beyond academic discourse, calling for immediate action from stakeholders involved in decisions, policymaking, implementation, and oversight at all levels. Embracing an integrated approach to talent management is essential for realising the vision of effective, accountable, and responsive of the local sphere of government in RSA. The future of local governance in the NMMDM and the broader RSA hinges on the successful implementation of these strategies, making the need for transformative change more urgent than ever. Due to the limitations of this study, future research should expand upon and analyse lower-level municipal officials' perspectives and investigate the broader impact of talent management practices in the municipality, ultimately fostering a more engaged and productive workforce within the public sector. Thus, the general objective and the problem statement of the study was addressed through theoretical reviews, contextual analyses, and empirical evidence which provided in-depth investigation into the factors influencing the fragmented approach to talent management practices in NMMDM.

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ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality (NMMDM):
Municipal Manager, Senior Manager: Corporate Service, Senior Managers, Manager: Human Resource Management (HRM) and Senior HRM Officials

SECTION A: CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I, _____ (name and surname), agree to be interviewed as part of an empirical research study for a master's degree in Public Management and Governance at the North-West University (NWU), titled *An integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government: The case of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality.*

I give my consent to participate in the study with the following conditions:

- I have been informed about the purpose of the interview.
- I acknowledge that my participation in the study is voluntary.
- I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.
- My anonymity is guaranteed, and the feedback from my interview responses will be presented collectively, ensuring that I will not be identified by name in the final report of the study.
- The information I provide to the researcher will be used solely for the purposes of this research study.
- I will respond to all questions honestly, based on my qualifications, personal expertise, experience, and perspectives.

INTERVIEWEE	
Signature:	
Date:	
RESEARCHER	
Signature:	
Date:	

ANNEXURE B

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please note that all responses to this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential. Participant's anonymity will be maintained. Your name and position are necessary just for record-keeping purposes and allow data analysis process easier. This section of the interview deals with background and biographical information.

1. What is your position within the municipality?

_____

_____

_____

2. What are your primary duties in your department?

_____

_____

_____

3. Length of service in your current position

01 to 05 years	1
06 to 10 years	2
11 to 15 years	3
16 to 20 years	4
21 to 30 years	6
More than 31 years	7

4. Years of work experience in the local government overall

01 to 05 years	1
06 to 10 years	2
11 to 15 years	3
16 to 20 years	4
21 to 30 years	6
More than 31 years	7

5. Educational / Academic Qualification Level

Grade 12	1
Post matric studies/Diploma	2
University degree	3
Post-graduate degree	4

SECTION B: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Question 1: Does the municipality have a talent management policy in place?

_____

_____

_____

Question 2: What strategies does the municipality have in place to retain and engage high potential employees identified through succession planning?

_____

_____

_____

Question 3: How talent management as a Human Resource Management practice is aligned to the overall organisational strategy?

_____

_____

_____

Question 4: How does the municipality measure the effectiveness of talent management practices in the municipality?

_____

_____

_____

Question 5: In what manner has the municipality been organised and structured to reward outstanding employee performance?

_____

_____

_____

Question 6: What strategies and practices do the municipality currently implement to ensure a smooth and effective onboarding process for new employees?

_____

_____

_____

Question 7: How does the municipality currently promote employee engagement?

_____

_____

_____

Question 8: Does the municipality have career anchors dedicated to promoting career management programs for municipal employees?

_____

_____

_____

Question 9: What specific resources are lacking or inadequate in supporting the effective implementation of talent management strategies within the municipality?

_____

_____

_____

Question 10: To what extent are political leadership and management involved in the development and implementation of organisational support strategies to embrace a culture of learning and development?

_____

_____

_____

Question 11: How do human resource management practitioners and senior management perceive the status of unevenness in terms of capacity and skills within the municipality?

_____

_____

_____

Question 12: What specific strategies or mechanisms are in place to facilitate the integration of talent management strategies within the municipality?

_____

_____

_____

Question 13: How does the municipality measure the impact of employee workplace experience on talent attraction, retention, and development?

_____

_____

_____

Question 14: How does the municipality ensure that technology is used in a way that promotes fairness, equity, and inclusion in the talent management process?

_____

_____

_____

Question 15: How does the municipality promote diversity, equity, and inclusion through its talent management programs?

_____

_____

_____

Question 16: Do you have any further comments or suggestions on how talent management practices and human resource management policies and strategies can be improved in the municipality?

Thank you for your participation

ANNEXURE C

School of Government Studies
Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520
Tel: 018 299 1625 / 082 373 1589
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za
Email: Luni.Vermeulen@nwu.ac.za
Date: 27 October 2022

Mr OA Losaba
Municipal Manager: Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality
Private Bag X 2167
Mahikeng
2745

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

This letter hereby serves to request permission to conduct research at the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality for a master's study that I supervise. Mr Mohlolo Ntaopane (student number: 26184087), is enrolled for the MA degree in Public Management and Governance at the North-West University (NWU). His dissertation is titled, *An integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government: the case of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality*.

As part of Mr Ntaopane's study an empirical investigation should be conducted. To collect adequate research data for the study, he wishes to interview the senior management (including yourself as Municipal Manager, the Director: Corporate Services and senior officials in the HRD Directorate) that deal with talent management and the related policy from a strategic perspective.

Mr Ntaopane will comply with the ethical requirements as determined by both the NWU and the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. The privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of the interviewees will be prioritised to ensure that no person will be identified in the study. The data gathered through the empirical investigation will be used for the purpose of Mr Ntaopane's

research only. Should it be requested, a copy of the dissertation can be provided to the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality upon the completion of the study.

It would be greatly appreciated if permission can be granted to Mr Ntaopane to conduct his empirical research at the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you need any additional clarification or information.

Sincerely

Professor Luni Vermeulen

ANNEXURE D

NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

Cnr. Carrington Str and 1st Avenue, Industrial Site, Mahikeng, 2745 | Tel: (018) 381 9400|Fax (018) 381 4300
Private Bag X2167, Mahikeng, 2745| www.nmmdm.gov.za

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER

09 October 2024

Prof. Luni Vermeulen
North-West University
School of Government Studies
P/ Bag X 1290
Potchefstroom
2520

Dear Prof. Vermeulen

Subject: Permission granted to conduct research on Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality [Mr MA Ntaopane – Student No. 26184087]

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to formally grant Mr MA Ntaopane permission to conduct your research titled *"An Integrated Talent Management Implementation Framework for Capacity Development in the Local Sphere of Government: The Case of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality"* through North -West University.

We acknowledge the significance of your research in enhancing talent management practices within local government, particularly in relation to capacity development and service delivery. For any assistance during your research, please contact Adv. Kabo Pulenyane, our Acting Senior Manager: Corporate Services. We kindly request that you share your findings with the municipality upon completion, as they will be valuable for our future strategies.

Thank you for your dedication to this important research area. We look forward to your insights.

Best regards,

O.A. Losaba
Municipal Manager

Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)

Faculty of Humanities Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support
Tel: 018 285 2457

Email: Erhabor.Idemudia@nwu.ac.za

Senate Committee for Research Ethics
Tel: 016 103 4446
Email: Feziwe.Mseleni@nwu.ac.za

29 November 2024

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)** on **28/11/2024**, the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: An integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government: The case of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality.

Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof. L. Vermeulen and Prof. E.J. Nealer

Student/Research Team: M.A. Ntaopane (26184087)

Ethics number:

N	W	U	-	0	1	1	7	3	-	2	2	-	A	7
Institution				Study Number						Year			Status	

Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

Application Type: Single study

Commencement date: 28/11/2024 **Risk:** Low risk

Expiry date: 28/11/2025

Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

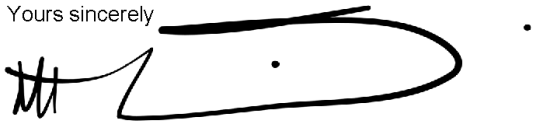
- *The study leader/supervisor (principal investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the BaSSREC:*
  - *annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and*

- *without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.*

- *The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the BaSSREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.*
- *Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.*
- *The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.*
- *In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRE and BaSSREC reserves the right to:*
  - *request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;*
  - *to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;*
  - *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
    - *any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;*
    - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the BaSSREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;*
    - *submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or*
    - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*
- *BaSSREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via BaSSREC-Admin@nwu.ac.za.*

The BaSSREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the BaSSREC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof. E. Idemudia

Chairperson NWU Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

ANNEXURE F

CERTIFICATION

24 November 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This Certificate serves to inform that the dissertation

An integrated talent management implementation framework for capacity development in the local sphere of government: The case of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality

was submitted to me by Mr Mohlolo A NTAOPANE for proofreading, linguistic editing and academic writing treatment. Through the use of Track Changes in the Review Function on WORD, inter alia, identified and indicated typing-, language- and linguistic shortcomings and through comments, I suggested changes and improvements to be considered and affected to the final document.

Yours faithfully

Mrs S Stanley
Language EDITOR
Cell: 066 2414 555
E-mail: markstanley969@gmail.com
SATI registration NO: 1000981