



**DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE HR FRAMEWORK/MODEL TO IMPROVE HR  
OFFICIALS' PERFORMANCE AT THE PORT OF PORT ELIZABETH**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

With rising economic conditions and intense competitive conditions in business development, companies are increasingly facing the need to hire, motivate and retain talented people (Irana Bagaeva, 2018). Therefore, employees with the skills to meet market and customer requirements, regardless of ownership or the range of production in the modern world, are crucial to growth, survival, and sustainability.

This emphasises the importance of those who must ensure that the above is achieved, that is, the human resources department of the organisation. The Human Resources Department is considered by business leaders and employees to be the body that builds and evaluates the human resources network that drives the effectiveness of the organization (Vanderpyl, 2018). Organisations need to be able to configure themselves, and HR leaders and teams keep their networks strong by not only satisfying regulations but also by leveraging and addressing social trends that benefit the organisation.

Given the background highlighted above, which highlights the importance of an effective Human resource department and the role it ought to play in the organisation's success, growth, and sustainability, it was therefore sought by the researcher to delve into the effectiveness of the Human resources department at the Port of Port Elizabeth, as they have continually been receiving mediocre performance ratings from the organisation's leaders.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore and investigate, from the Human Resource personnel in this department, their opinions of the effectiveness of the service offerings of the Human Resource department of the Port of PE to service the needs of their customers. This led to the development of a qualitative research approach where semi-structured interviews, supported with questionnaires, were conducted on all the personnel of the Human Resource department. The questionnaire contained closed and open-ended statements of opinions held by the respondents, which consisted of the Human resource personnel of the Port of Port Elizabeth. The study findings indicate that the Human Resource Department of the Port of PE is functioning at a mediocre level of service provision and that it is not a high-performing team or highly effective. The impact of mediocre service delivery means that the

department is not fully meeting the client's mandate that drives the People agenda of the organisation. There were a few factors identified in the study that prevented the team from reaching levels of high performance, and some can be attributed to organisational, systemic, and policy challenges preventing the team from reaching the required levels of service. A new Operating model has been presented in this study to address these challenges faced by the department.

Finally, it was imperative to highlight the context in which the Port of Port Elizabeth exists, that being of Transnet which is a State-Owned enterprise that is therefore owned by the government, which has the mandate to drive the South African Government's agenda of poverty and unemployment alleviation.

**Keywords:** Human Capital (HC), Human Resources (HR), Performance, High performance, professionals, High performing Teams, respondents, recommendations, operating model, National Development Plan (NDP), State-Owned Enterprise (SOE)

## DECLARATION

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In accordance with Rule G4.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned thesis is own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.



.....

**SIGNATURE**

1 December 2021

.....

**DATE**

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First and foremost, I would like to thank God Almighty for bringing me to this juncture, it's been a long and challenging one and I am reaching this point only because of Your Love and Mercy.

To the father of my child – thank you for your support. You were there for me at the beginning of this journey, rooting for me, and not once did you ever complain. Yes, it took a toll on us, yet God blessed us with the most amazing gift – our first child, our son Inam, Nile Maqetuka. Enkosi Daddy, you will forever be cherished by me.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Human Resources (HR) or Human Capital (HC), which was previously also termed Personnel Management, has evolved, as has the name and the world we live in today. Gone are the days when processes and expectations required a long-winded process to manifest and to be realised within the world itself, and in organisations. The world, due to Globalisation and advances in technology, has become a much smaller playground, and gone are the days when competitors were only situated in close proximity from one another within the same country.

Competition now exists at a global level and organisations must continually stay abreast of what their competitors might be doing miles away i.e., in the USA, in Germany, in China, etc. to remain relevant. This phenomenon has also lent itself to war on talent, meaning that an organisation in today's time has to remain on top of things and it must be at the forefront of implementing world-class HR strategies and frameworks. These, therefore, cannot be realised or implemented effectively and efficiently if the HR professionals, who are the custodians of people processes, are not geared up to the task. Therefore, HR is no longer only a transaction department that processes payrolls and manages staff files, they are a key strategic department with representation at an Executive level of an organisation.

Empirical studies of Human resources employees' capabilities (i.e., knowledge, skills, experience) highlight that their knowledge and skills influence the HR value of customers and end-users (Jeroen Meijerink, 2013).

Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) therefore exists on a global platform whereby competitors are other ports from other countries and this evolution that has transpired to the time we live in today, impacts the ports greatly. Transnet, which is the mother company where TNPA exists, has a strong people-focused approach that lays the foundation for the realisation of the 7-year Market Demand Strategy, which is founded upon and is currently in its third year of existence, central to it is infrastructure development. The Port of Port Elizabeth (PoPE), formally known as Transnet National

Ports Authority – Port Elizabeth (TNPA – PE), is faced with many people-related challenges which can also be viewed as opportunities for its workforce. 33% of the workforce are due to retire within the next 2 to 10 years and, therefore, the Human Capital/ Human Resource Department must ensure they operate in a manner to add value to the organisation's clients and end-users by ensuring implementing superior HR/HC competence (skills, knowledge, and experience).

The organisation currently views the HR/HC department as providing only mediocre service offerings. This is evidenced from the bi-annual Customer Service feedback questionnaires provided by the Managers and Supervisors where they rate the department with an average score of 3 out of 5.

Added to that, on an annual basis, a culture charter survey based on key values of the organisation is conducted where employees are asked to rate primarily the interaction between themselves and Line Management and Supervisors. For the Port of PE, the results have also been averaging over the past three years. Leaders, Line Managers, and Supervisors are primary to driving a positive culture in an organisation. The interaction between Management and organised labour facilitated primarily by the Employee Relations (ER) team, which is a sub-department in the HR/HC department, is not founded primarily on trust that leaders of the port are indeed having a people-centered approach, and therefore, there is continual hostility amongst their interaction.

This study will focus on the assessment of the HR/HR team's competence and compare that to the best practice High-Performance HR/HC frameworks and make a recommendation of where to adjust how the department can operate at a higher level so that the customer rating can increase to a 5 out of 5. This will therefore assist the port in turning the tide to achieve a higher rating on culture charter 'values' implementation and foster a relationship of trust between business leaders and organised labour, which HR/HC should be driving as the custodian of all people related practices and processes.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

End users and clients of the HR/HC department from the Port of PE rate the HR/HC department as delivering mediocre service and therefore not adding real value to them by offering value-adding superior HR/HC competence. This is evidenced, as

highlighted earlier, by the client service questionnaire ratings. The culture charter values are not being implemented effectively and efficiently by Line Management and the HR/HC department does not seem to be adding value to the business by assisting them on how to do so effectively, efficiently, and consistently. The relationship between the business leaders of the port and organised labour is not a very healthy one and it is not built on principles of trust. The HR/HC department is the primary custodian of all people-related practices and processes.

Physics and the natural sciences have been overtaken by human capital as a resource for wealth. Therefore, management information is indispensable for decision support. Information not only promotes strategic change and financial success, but also draws attention to value creation, HR function reliability, and its value as a strategic asset (Pharny D. Chrysler-Fox, 2014).

An explanatory topic was identified in the assessment of the principles to consider when choosing a human capital measurement for a measurement system (Pharny D. Chrysler-Fox, 2014). Yet there are loopholes in accurately determining the details of what is being measured.

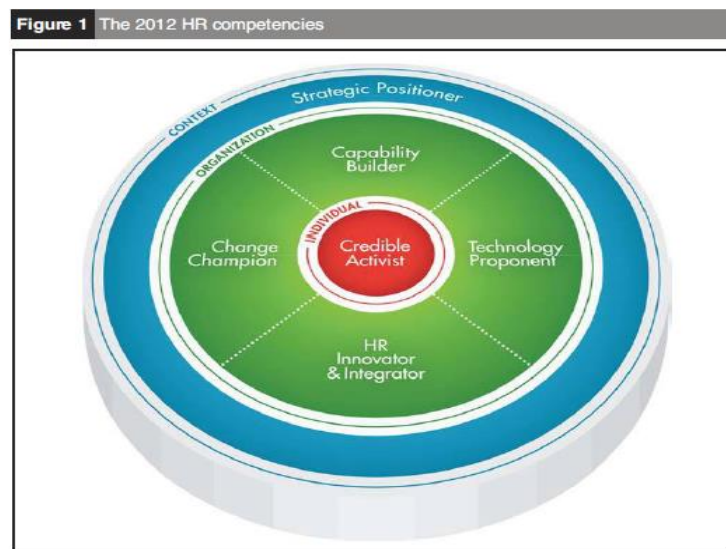
Strategic maps need to consider integrity, interception, responsibility, systems, relationships, and value creation perspectives. Strategy and management integration helps you understand your organisation's value chain and to promote a common understanding of what value creates and how it can further the organisation's people agenda.

Value is created when the HR function conflicts with the desired behaviour of the employee. Therefore, HR professionals are responsible for identifying the drivers and realisation factors of HR and the required personnel actions, both financial and non-financial, as well as material and intangible (Pharny D. Chrysler-Fox, 2014).

Excellent human resources development specialists think and act from the outside in. They are aware of external business trends and translate them into internal decisions and actions. HR creates value by increasing the performance and agility of human capital, talent, and cultural organisational capacity. Services in this range define the necessary skills and abilities expected of effective and high-performance HR professionals (Dave Ulrich, 2012).

These HR experts target and serve the most important customer expectations and adapt the organisation's behaviours and challenges to the customer's needs. It also forms the organisation's strategic response to business conditions and customer expectations by supporting strategic and organisational decision-making (Dave Ulrich, 2012). The following model was defined by Dave Ulrich as an ideal framework after a long study, and it is also the basis for the analysis and comparison of this research study.

**Figure 1.1: Dave Ulrich's Ideal Framework (Dave Ulrich, 2012)**



This study will highlight the current competency levels of the HR/ HC Team at the Port of PE and why the gaps currently exist within the team. It will then highlight gaps in the competency that exist in relation to the current best practice researched HR matrix and models. It will thereafter make recommendations of how to close those gaps in making the team into a high-performing, value-adding one.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

#### **1.3.1 Nature of the research problem**

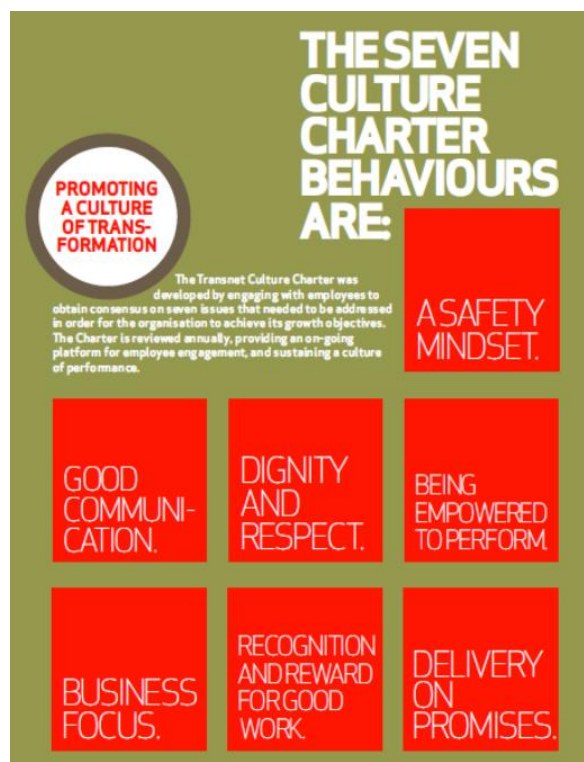
The perception, which might be a fact of the Leadership which included Managers and Supervisors at Operational departments at the Port of Port Elizabeth, is that the HR departments have an inward focus/approach. It does not have a client-centric focus of empowering them adequately to deal efficiently and effectively with people-related matters. Therefore, their inability or lack of competence in handling day-to-day people-



related matters, as they primarily depend on people/ employees to deliver on technical objectives, reduces their ability to meet set organisation objectives and targets that have an impact on bottom-line revenue results.

From an employee perspective, demotivation sets in due to an inconsistent approach, by Line Managers and Supervisors, of handling day-to-day issues as evidenced in the annual culture charter scoring of objectives. This would be in direct conflict with the culture charter value objectives that are set out below, (Transnet, 2013).

**Figure 1.2: Culture charter value objectives (Transnet, 2013)**



The Employee Relations department that interfaces and has the responsibility of ensuring good relations, primarily with organised labour (shop-stewards) and the organisation at large, has the added responsibility of managing matters of grievances, discipline, and disputes and continually reports their dissatisfaction to Senior Management of how matters at the Line Management and Supervisory level are handled inconsistently.

These, at times, are evidenced on the monthly reports that are reported to the Senior HR Manager who in turn reports them at the monthly Operational and Executive meetings at the port. Relations are sometimes compromised between organised

labour and management and are not fully founded on trust principles, which they should be if matters were handled efficiently, effectively, transparently, and consistently between leadership and organised labour. This can be evidenced by the nature of relations in both face-to-face interactions and at statutory monthly engagements.

Yet the matters do not always reach the boardroom due to the quick and competent ability of the ER office to intervene, thereby ensuring a peaceful and mostly amicable resolution thereof. Yet it is clear, from the problems highlighted above, that more can and needs to be done at the Operational level by Line Managers supported and guided by HR/HR Officials.

### **1.3.2 Importance of solving the problem**

*What are the threats if the problem is not addressed? What are the benefits/opportunities if addressed?*

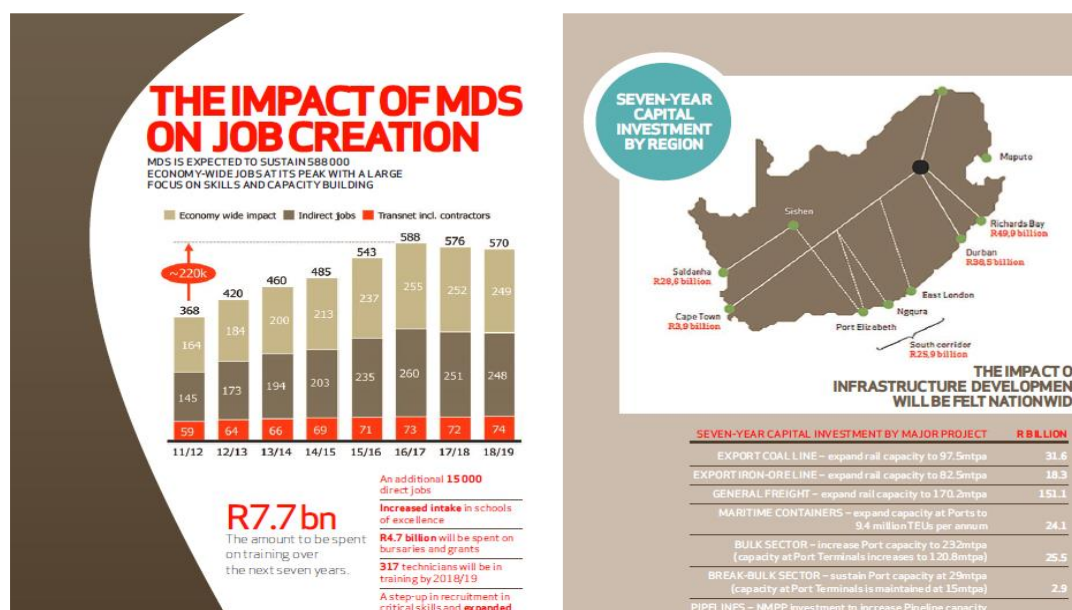
Leadership, in the form of Managers and Supervisors, drives the delivery of Operational targets and objectives as set out in the organisation's strategic objectives and goals, which in turn translate to the realisation of high revenue streams and sustainability. It is also important to note that the importance of implementing a strategy does not lie on the paper it is written on, yet it is primarily implemented by people, as well as the employees of the organisation, and the HR Strategic Plan translates those as noted below, (Transnet, 2013).

Figure 1.3: HR Strategic Plan (Transnet, 2013)



The Port of Port Elizabeth is one of 8 commercial ports in the South African economy falling under the umbrella of Transnet, and it is commercially defined as Transnet Port Authority (TNPA – Port Elizabeth/PE), which is a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE). Being a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE), the pressure is even higher as the primary objective of the organisation is to ensure the implementation of the Government of the day's mandate to ensure stability, and GDP growth, thereby attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) ensuring a country's sustainability. The illustration below graphically depicts the rand investment in the South corridor ports (TNPA – PE & Ngqura) as well as the situation thereof from the S.A. country map, (Transnet, 2013).

Figure 1.4: Rand corridor investment (Transnet, 2013)



Transnet has embarked on a 7-year Market Demand Strategy (MDS), which is currently in its third year of realisation, and is highly focused on Infrastructure Development with an investment of over R300 Billion, which is split amongst the various divisions of Transnet illustrated below, (Transnet, 2013).

Figure 1.5: Breakdown of investment (Transnet, 2013)



Therefore, when matters are not addressed, the ramifications are quite severe and can harm the sustainability of the organisation, and therefore negatively impact the Nelson Mandela Bay economy, as well as, subsequently, South African. Port Elizabeth currently has one of the highest levels of unemployment when compared to other provinces in the country, which according to statistics published by Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force survey (QLFS) trend report, is depicted below for the period January to March 2015 stood at 33.1% (Statistics South Africa, 2015).

**Figure 1.6: South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force survey (QLFS) (Statistics South Africa, 2015)**

Table 2.3: Labour force characteristics by province		
	Oct-Dec 2014	Jan-Mar 2015
	Thousand	Thousand
<b>South Africa</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	35 643	35 799
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	24.3	26.4
<b>Western Cape</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	4 223	4 246
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	22.9	21.0
<b>Eastern Cape</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	4 089	4 098
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	29.1	29.6
<b>Eastern Cape - Buffalo City</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	-	499
Labour Force	-	337
Rates (%)	-	
Unemployment rate	-	27.4
<b>Eastern Cape - Nelson Mandela Bay</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	-	783
Rates (%)	-	
Unemployment rate	-	33.1
<b>Northern Cape</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	761	764
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	28.7	34.1
<b>Free State</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	1 862	1 865
Labour Force	1 138	1 152
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	32.2	30.4
<b>KwaZulu Natal</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	6 643	6 667
Labour Force	3 183	3 330
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	20.8	23.6
<b>Northwest</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	2 400	2 411
Labour Force	1 268	1 274
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	25.2	28.4
<b>Gauteng</b>		
Population 15-64 yrs	9 414	9 469
Rates (%)		
Unemployment rate	24.6	28.4
<b>Mpumalanga</b>		

<b>Population 15-64 yrs</b>	<b>2 723</b>	<b>2 736</b>
<b>Rates (%)</b>		
Unemployment rate	26.6	28.4
<b>Limpopo</b>		
<b>Population 15-64 yrs</b>	<b>3 528</b>	<b>3 543</b>
<b>Rates (%)</b>		
Unemployment rate	15.9	20.1

If the Port of PE addresses these people-related issues, the organisation will realise its strategic goals by people being employed and developed with superior skill sets that can build the economy of the metro. The Human Resources (HR) department's strategic and operational plan has a very important impact on the organisation realising these objectives that have been highlighted in previous paragraphs.

### **1.3.3 What is the primary objective of the study?**

There is a clear timeline to the realisation of the 7-year strategic MDS targets, and therefore, the HR personnel must ensure that they are competent enough to assist the organisation in this realisation, which is key in ensuring the sustainability of the port. If the perceptions by the operational managers are correct that the HR department is inwardly focused, this will harm the bottom-line results of the organisation. Therefore, it is critical to assess this perception, and if correct, to immediately implement the best HR framework which will translate to the department assisting and driving the organisation to achieve a people-focused organisation to meet the MDS strategic objectives.

Therefore, the study that will be conducted will assess the level of current HR service delivery and whether the current Operational focus of the team is aligned with the organisations objectives, as documented in the port's Business Plan.

Working on the assumption at this stage that the HR department does have an inward focus, the study will identify the causes as to why the department may be acting and performing in this manner, and therefore they might make recommendations to change this occurrence based on the researched best HR frameworks and practices.

## **1.4 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What are the current competency levels of the HR/HC professional at the Port of PE?
- What might be the reasons causing the competency gap of the HR/HC professional?
- What is the ideal high-performing HR framework to compare the HR/HC professional to which will enable them to perform at their peak?
- What can be done to close the competency gap to enable the HR/HC professionals to add value to the organisation?

## **1.5 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY OBJECTIVES**

### **1.5.1 Primary Objective**

- To add value to the organisation's people paradigm agenda/strategy by the provision of a high-performing HR/HC value-added service.

### **1.5.2 Secondary Objectives**

- The identification of performance gaps in current HR/HC team outputs.
- The creation of High performing HR/HC framework, enabling HR professionals to perform in line with best HR practices.
- The identification of best practice HR/HR frameworks.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

HR is a key strategic partner to organisation success. The realisation of a business strategy is through its human capital/talent/people/employees. If no consistency in approaches of dealing with people exists, if no processes are in place that deals with the processing of people related transaction matters like their salaries for example, if people are not treated fairly by the leaders they look up to, to provide them with direction just to mention a few. Then one might as well as pack their bags and lock the door behind them. This will lead to the organisation not succeeding in the long term and will thus not be sustainable.

According to (Dave Ulrich, 2009), business leaders said the right thing. He/she wants a business contributor, someone who can help your business build the talent and organisation needed to ensure future growth and profitability.

Therefore, this can only be promoted by experienced and high-performing HR experts. Management is expected to help the company achieve its aggressive financial and customer goals with bold strategies that are difficult to implement (Dave Ulrich, 2009).

Globalisation and economic change are putting pressure on many companies to see their employees as a source of competitive advantage, and many are rethinking their talent development capabilities (Rensburg, 2011). Human resource management is an integral part of all South African organisations, with HR professionals playing a supportive role in such (Lensberg, 2011).

Strategic human resource management is about gaining a competitive advantage through the strategic use of human resources, but strategic HRM and traditional HRM are often distinguished. Nevertheless, there is considerable overlap between the two models, and all HRM models emphasise the importance of strategic work management (Dainty, 2011). In modern times, it is difficult to find anyone who argues that strategy should not play an important role in human resource management, which is especially important in international organisations. Since the days of the Industrial Revolution, the nature, status, and role of human resource management have become increasingly widespread and strategic. Rather, management plays an active role in developing business strategies (PC Bahuguna, 2009).

After having answered all the questions highlighted in the prior section and having implemented the recommendations, the HR team will be able to grow significantly and it will be competitive beyond most others, thereby making them leaders in their fields, and increasing their marketability. They will then be sought after. A healthy pipeline of growth will be opened for career advancement.

## **1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

In this section of the study, the researcher seeks to achieve several objectives by simultaneously addressing three audiences, those being peer reviews, the interested



readers and writers of research. Therefore the researcher needs to be critical about addressing limitations for future research (Olufowote, 2017).

(Greener, 2018) explains further that this is not just about being self-critical or particularly humble, as identifying limitations and explaining to the reader what impact these limitations have on the study results, not only demonstrates rigour but allows other authors to identify a clear direction for future research.

Study limitations are described as a weakness or deficiency in the study research as the limitation of a study serves to acknowledge potential issues and springboards recommendations for future research (Hussey, 2009).

This study focused on the Port of PE's Human Resources Department, yet the port is one of 8 ports in the South African economy that operate as a single organisation governed by the same policies. Though the researcher included the entire team of the Port of PE, many factors influence the operations of the port that are outside the control of the port, some being:

- The strategy of the port stems from the wider HR organisation strategy that is created at the Head Office level, and therefore, for the port to implement the presented recommendations, they will have to be supported and driven from a Head Office to ensure that the same is applied in all ports.
- The honesty of the information presented by some of the respondents was questioned by the researcher. Due to the small sample size, the researcher felt that the responses provided by some of the respondents were to align with others, especially around the respondents' qualifications.

## **1.8 ETHICS**

The researcher of this study was subjected to the University's ethical clearance requirements and process in conducting this research. This was done by the researcher completing and submitting an ethics clearance form i.e., 'Form E', which served as a verification that satisfied ethical considerations related to the respondent's execution of the study (See annexure C).

***Complete anonymity and confidentiality*** in the responses provided by the respondents were also guaranteed by the researcher to the respondents when they were approached to participate in the study. This was repeated at the time that the questions in the semi-structured interview setting were taking place, which assured honesty and openness in the responses provided by the respondents.

## **1.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter introduced the topic of this study and the background of the study highlighting the importance of a Human Resource department in an organisation. It outlined the global environment and the competition that exists regarding people in this now small global village – the world. Therefore, driving HR into being more than merely transaction experts, but to being business partners and key experts to contribute in excelling an organisation to levels of growth and sustainability.

It further highlighted the model of Dave Ulrich as being the ideal researched Human Resource framework which would form the basis in comparing the effectiveness of the HR Team of the Port of PE. The background went further to highlight the organisational strategy of the entire organisation that the Port of PE is a division of, highlighting the importance of the people strategy required to achieve the overall organisational objectives.

Furthermore, the region in which the Port of PE exists was highlighted to depict the high employment rate in this region in comparison to others in the country and the impact of this organisation, the Port of PE could have in being a catalyst in contributing to the growth of this region. Therefore, highlighting the importance, the Human Resource department of the port could play a role in the growth of the organisation and, in turn, the region would contribute positively to matters of i.e., superior skills development, and the creation of employment opportunities as well as the contribution that the organisation could play in transforming and growing this region.

Therefore, highlighting the importance of the HR function and professionals in driving the realisation of these objectives by being able to do this and act from the outside in, translates external business trends into internal decisions and actions. HR must therefore be responsible for creating value by increasing the performance and agility

of human capital, talent, and the culture of the organisation to ensure the realisation of the strategic objectives of the organisation.

The chapter went on to highlight the problem statement of this research, the research questions, the primary objective, and the significance of this study. It also highlighted the significance of the study, as well as the limitation of this study and the ethics followed in carrying out this study.

The chapter on the literature review follows immediately hereafter, along with an appraisal of concepts that were of interest during this study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter (Chapter one), the main problem, primary objective as well as secondary objectives were highlighted and some concepts were selected and defined as the significance of the study were explained. The organisation where the study was conducted was also described. Dave Ulrich's framework on the ideal HR framework was highlighted and it will be broken down further in this chapter as it will assist in ascertaining the gaps that need to be closed within the HR Team if any exist. An enhanced model will also be presented as the researcher concludes this research paper after the analysis is done on the effectiveness of the HR Team of the Port of PE. A very important aspect of HR Team effectiveness in contributing to organisational success and sustainability was also highlighted.

The purpose of an effective HR Team is to ensure that the business meets its core objectives.

This chapter will first highlight the organisation, Transnet, and the role it plays in the South African growth potential. It will additionally highlight the role of State-Owned enterprises in the South African context and what governs their operations. The chapter will thereafter discuss what should be driving an ideal and effective HR Team, as well as what their outputs should be in contributing to organisational success and sustainability. This chapter will also focus on how to build high-performing teams and it will present Dave Ulrich's framework on effective HR. Additionally, this chapter will also focus on the role of HR and how effective teams and effective HR professionals should be driving towards achieving the organisations' people agenda. Additionally it will highlight what makes HR professional successful and high performing. It will also highlight how nonperforming teams operate.

## **2.2 ROLE AND BACKGROUND OF TRANSNET**

The rate of growth for any nation's economy is intrinsically linked to its transportation infrastructure. In South Africa, the weight of burden lies at the feet of Transnet, which is an organisation tracing its roots back to the mid-19th century (M. Huxham, 2019).

Transnet operated at the largest and most crucial part of the freight logistics chain and delivers goods to every South African through its various rail, sea, pipelines, and port operations. Transnet delivers thousands of goods, daily, around South Africa, via its pipelines, and to and from ports. It also moves cargo via its extensive rail network and infrastructure to and from ports after it arrives from the source.

Transnet is fully owned by the South African government but operates as a corporate entity aimed at both supporting and contributing to the country's freight logistics network. It has its footprint in every corner of the South African landscape. The operations of this massive organisation are divided into five operating divisions that all complement one another i.e., Transnet Engineering, Transnet Freight Rail, Transnet Pipelines, Transnet Port Operations, and Transnet Port Authority. The latter is divided into 8 ports, with the Port of PE being one of those ports, and it is also the focus area for this research study.

Transnet's mission is to ensure a globally competitive freight system that enables sustainable growth and the diversification of the country's economy. The main goal of the Transnet is to improve the connectivity, as well as the capacity of integrated ports, destinations, railroads, and pipeline networks (Transnet, 2021). Transnet has a great presence in every corner of South Africa and continues to leave an indelible mark on the lives of all South Africans. Therefore, it is involved in every aspect of life in South Africa. This does not only concern its employees, as it is also important to improve the quality of life of all communities and environments in which it operates throughout South Africa's economy and community.

This translates to the organisation being a catalyst of growth within the communities in which it operates and exists. This research study, therefore, focuses on the efficiency of the Human Resource department of one of the ports, the Port of Port Elizabeth. Especially the efficiency that this department should have in assisting the organisation in the realisation of its people strategy translating to the realisation of one

of its objectives on the growth and sustainability of communities in the areas where it exists by creating employment opportunities and skills development opportunities to the economies. The study explores the efficiency of this department which, if highly efficient, would have a direct influence and impact on the people strategy and the agenda, not only of its internal workforce but also extending to the communities in which it operates.

### **2.3 ROLE OF SOE'S (STATE OWNED ENTERPRISES)**

State-owned entities are anchored on several national policies and planning documents, with the most senior being the National Development Plan (NDP) whose overall goal is to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality in South Africa by 2030 (Nestor, 2018). Other important and supportive documents include the Government's New Growth Path (NGP), which sets targets of creating 5 million additional jobs by 2020 and thereby calling on SOE's like Transnet to support these key developmental objectives through the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), and the Industrial Policy Action Plan.

State-owned entities can be defined as enterprises registered in terms of the Companies Act as a company, and are either listed as a public entity owned by the government or the state (PWC, 2011). These organisations must fulfil their role as drivers in the creation of a developmental state in South Africa, balancing socio-economic and political imperatives. Therefore, the efficiency in how they are managed and maintained is crucial to the realisation of the government's mandate of poverty alleviation and job creation.

The realisation of Transnet's people strategies is key in contributing to the growth of the South African economy. Transnet have not been without flaws in how they have been managed and run, yet this research paper will not be focusing on such. This research will only focus on one port and the efficiency of the Human Capital's team, as well as their contribution to the Port of PE in realising its people agenda by creating jobs and encouraging skills development which, if implemented efficiently, will have a direct link to the realisation of government's growth imperatives.

The next section will therefore focus on a well-researched and recognised HR framework of an effective Human Capital output and the impact it has on the realisation

of business performance, therefore leading to growth and fulfilling the country's socio-economic imperatives on job creation and poverty alleviation.

## **2.4 ULRICH'S FRAMEWORK ON EFFECTIVE HR**

### **2.4.1 The impact of HR effectiveness and business performance**

The six domains of the HR Competency address external trends, thus impacting both the perceived effectiveness of HR Professionals and the performance of the companies supported by HR Professionals. Studies show that HR expertise accounts for nearly 10% of business success. Yet the ability to predict individual effectiveness is a bit different from the ability to predict business success, as insights into technology, HR integration, and skill-building can have a significant impact on business outcomes. Not surprisingly, the challenge is to ensure that both the HR expertise and the effectiveness of the organisation are present for contribution and sustainable high performance.

These results are beginning to capture what HR professionals need to know and do to be effective. These are further refined in Table I, showing specific factors in each of the six skill areas and how they affect both the perceived effectiveness and the performance of HR professionals. High-performance HR organisations in all regions and industries, small and large, appear to have the combination of HR competencies identified by this study.

#### **2.4.1.1 *Change champion***

As change advocates or champions, HR experts must ensure that the organisation's measures are integrated and maintained through a disciplined change process. Strong human resources development experts ensure that the internal capabilities of the organisation are tailored to change or that they are leading the external pace of change in the organisation. As advocates of change, HR professionals help bring about change at the organisational level, such as changes in patterns, or initiatives, and enables individual change at an individual level. HR professionals play two important roles in making a difference in these three levels. Firstly, they start making changes and discuss why the change is important, overcome resistance to the change, involve key stakeholders in the change process, and clarify the decision to initiate the change.

Second, they support change by institutionalising change through organisational resources, organisational structure, communication, and continuous learning. As advocates of change, HR experts work together to create an organisation that shapes change in a way that is agile, flexible, responsive, and creates sustainable value.

#### **2.4.1.2    *Capability builder***

Effective talent development professionals begin with skills that combine individual skills into an effective and powerful organisation by helping the organisation define and build key skills that are well known to the organisation. HR professionals need to be able to research and invest in the creation of organisational skills. These skills last longer than the behaviour or performance of an individual or system. Skills are called corporate culture, processes, or identities.

HR professionals need to perform skill audits to determine the identity of the organisation. These skills include customer service, speed, quality, efficiency, innovation, and collaboration. One such new ability of a successful organisation is to create an organisation where employees find their purpose and the purpose of their work. HR professionals can help line managers make meaning so that organisational skills reflect the deeper values of employees.

#### **2.4.1.3    *Technology proponent***

Over the last few years, technology has changed the way people think and perform the strategic work and management of human resources. In general, HR professionals need to use technology to provide for HR management systems more efficiently, such as benefits, salaries, medical expenses, and other management services. In addition, HR professionals need to use technology to stay connected. Technology is playing an increasingly important role in improving communication, performing administrative tasks more efficiently, and connecting employees and customers.

A new technology trend is to use technology as a tool for building relationships through social media. Social media allows companies to position themselves for future growth. Technology-savvy HR professionals improve the identity of the organisation outside the company and improve social relationships within the company. As technology



experts, HR professionals need to access, advocate, analyse, and coordinate technology for information, efficiency, and relationships.

#### **2.4.1.4 Strategic positioner**

High-performance HR professionals think and act from the outside in. They target and serve the company's most important customers by identifying customer segments, knowing customer expectations, and tailoring their organisational behaviour to customer needs.

They have a complete understanding of external business trends and translate them into internal decision-making and action. They understand the general conditions that affect an industry or region (social, technical, economic, political, environmental, demographic trends, etc.). It also supports the design and strategic decision-making and organisation to form the organisation's strategic response to business conditions and customer expectations.

#### **2.4.1.5 Credible activist**

Effective human resources development professionals are trusted activists. Confidence arises when HR managers rely on them to keep their promises, build personal relationships of trust, and keep their commitments. To be a trusted advisor begins with deep business knowledge and insight. As an activist, HR professionals have a perspective not only on HR activities but also on business needs. As an activist, HR professionals learn how to actively influence others through clear, consistent, and effective communication. Some people call this HR with an attitude. To be reliable, but not praised by talent activists, but with little influence. Activists can be unbelievable people and may have good ideas, but they haven't received much attention. To be a trusted HR activists, HR professionals need to be confident and dedicated to developing professionalism.

#### **2.4.1.6 Human resource innovator and integrator**

Effective HR professionals innovate and integrate HR practices into unified solutions that solve business problems. They must know the latest insights on the key HR practice areas related to human capital (talent sourcing, talent development),

performance accountability (appraisal, rewards), organisation design (teamwork, organization development), and communication. They must also be able to turn these unique HR practice areas into integrated solutions, generally around an organisation's leadership brand. These innovative and integrated HR practices impact business results by ensuring that HR practices maintain their focus over the long run and do not become seduced by HR fads or irrelevant "best practices".

## **2.5      ROLE AND IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENTS AND HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY IN ORGANISATIONS**

Human resources (HR) strategies are parallel, facilitating the implementation of strategic business plans. Careful risk-taking is part of an effective competitive strategy for high-performing companies (W.F. Cascio, 2014). Cascio and Boudreau (2012) further explain that the HR strategy is related to the processes and decisions that companies make regarding the management of their employees. Personnel strategies are often developed in line with corporate strategy by creating the workforce and capacity of the organisation needed to achieve the organisation's strategic goals. Steve Jobs saw this connection quite clearly, as the following quote suggests:

*"My passion has been to build an enduring company where people were motivated to make great products. Everything else was secondary. Sure, it was great to make a profit, because that was what allowed you to make great products. But the products, not the profits, were the motivation, it ends up meaning everything – the people you hire, who gets promoted, what you discuss in meetings (Isaacson, 2012, p. 97)".*

Apple's competitive strategy was to make great products as per Steve Jobs' vision and mission and that indeed is what they became; they are the leaders in the technology and telecommunication space. Its HR strategy flowed directly and naturally from that strategy. At a broader level, HR strategy requires a focus on planned major changes in the organisation and critical issues such as the following:

- What are the HR implications of the proposed organisational strategies?
- What are the possible external constraints and requirements?
- What are the implications for management practices, management development, and management succession?
- What can be done in the short term to prepare for longer-term needs?

HR strategy and its organisation's competitive strategy are interdependent (Cascio and Boudreau, 2012). Both require a prudent and balanced approach to risk. HR strategy must optimally balance risk-taking and risk-mitigation, in line with the organisation's competitive strategy and the role of human capital within that strategy.

With all that said, HR departments spend less than 1 percent of the operating budget in most companies. Many executives view them as an expensive annoyance. They know that effective employee management is the key to the future, but often do not see human resource departments as doing this cost-effectively, therefore it is critical for an organisation's Human resources department to reengineer its staff first (Fitz-end, 1997).

Business faces many serious human resources problems and are downgrading the very human resources sector designed to help find solutions. Therefore, the argument states that salvation is in the hands of the personnel specialists themselves, who must become value-added partners for managers. They must switch from being administrators and huggers as that is not what is required by the organisation of today when moving into the future (Fitz-end, 1997).

## **2.6 HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS**

Due to organisational change in recent years, as being recognised by the growth of the small firms as well as the growth of professional, high-technology, and creative economic sectors and the move from the bureaucratic to more adaptive structures resulting from changing markets, the change of employee's attitudes, and the technology revolution, one can notice the increased importance of teams in organisations (Thomson, 2003).

Katzenbach and Smith (1999) stated that teams are a good way of dealing with the challenges in today's complex world and they argue that teamwork leads to higher firm performance and that teams outperform individuals.

Yet, it can also be stated that employees, due to higher education and skill level, become more and more demanding and ask for teamwork as a job design, which is especially the case in service sector organisations where the 'intellectual capital is the key asset'.

Apart from team composition, team motivation becomes a fundamental aspect of management in a high-performing organisation as it is argued that the degree of motivation is strongly linked with the organisation's success, and that motivated employees have fun at work and therefore spend more time working rather than looking around.

Organising work in a team can lead to higher levels of work satisfaction and thus higher levels of company performance through a stronger involvement in the decision-making process. This topic affects all managers in the company, not just the HR department. They build and motivate high-performance teams to maximise team effectiveness and gain competitive advantage by adopting the best talent strategies to succeed in a rapidly changing business environment. Business leaders need to know how to attach and lead. Globalisation increases the need to build and maintain effective teams (Williams, 1998) which is the role played by business leaders and HR should have an ability to influence this culture in leaders of an organisation thereby encouraging growth and sustainability of an organisation.

## **2.7 DEFINITION OF 'HIGH PERFORMING'**

High performance is interchangeable with the term "effective" (Quader, 2008 2009). Katzenbach and Smith (1999) distinguish between truly extraordinary and high-performance teams in that they are "much better than their peers and far exceed their reasonable expectations."

A more meaningful and detailed explanation about what makes a team high performing, was given by Hackman (2002), who refers to the following three things that an effective team fulfils:

*"The very best teams always serve their customers well. The productive output of the team (that is, its product, service, or decision) meets or exceeds the standards of quantity, quality, and the timeliness of the team's clients – the people who receive, review, or use the output. But they also become increasingly capable performing units over time, as members gain experience and discover new and better ways of working together. And finally, they provide settings in which each individual member can find in his or her teamwork a good measure of personal learning and fulfilment".*

## 2.8 CREATING A HIGH PERFORMING CULTURE AND TEAMS

Mediocrity has no place in most organisations, yet well-meaning organisations struggle to break the status quo, so they can become high-performing organisations. The key is transforming the organisation's culture to create a results-driven environment that fosters teamwork, innovation, and top-quality care.

Recognised high performers are the first to admit that it's not an easy task. A high-performing organisation has dedicated employees in line with its mission, vision, and values and are motivated to reach its business goals, but this is not a rapid process (Runy, 2007). Runy (2007) further explains that transforming an organisation into a high-performance culture is not a one-year program, and that it should not be started if the organisation does not want to make at least a five-year commitment to increase their performance.

Kuatt (2016) states that the best way to build a successful team is to look at everyone's performance and to ask if everyone is working towards their best potential. If so, you will get great results. He goes on to say that the best members of the group can help others reach new heights. High-performing teams never stop improving and developing. Use coaches, consultants, and trainers to learn, develop, adapt, and invent new theories, processes, technologies, and products for greater success (Kuatt, 2016).

*"There is no untrustworthy team."* A two-year study of team performance at tech giant Google showed that the best-performing teams have one thing in common. It is the psychological security that allows moderation. Taking risks, speaking, being creative, and shutting your throat out without fear of being cut is one of the actions that can lead to breakthroughs (Dellzonna, 2017).

Kuatt (2016) further describes two success factors for sustainable business success. One element is "team learning". This is necessary to convey important information and ideas from individuals to larger teams and across organisations. The second element, "individual proficiency", focuses on motivating individuals to learn and improve. To summarise these factors, a high-performance team includes high-performance individuals who seek personal skills. Encourage and support the entire group to reach a new level and continue to learn to reach new levels of success.

The amygdala, the alarm bell in the brain, ignites the fight-or-flight response, hijacking the higher brain centers. This “act first, think later” brain structure shuts down perspective and analytical reasoning. Quite literally, just when we need it most, we lose our minds. While that fight-or-flight reaction may save us in life-or-death situations, it handicaps the strategic thinking needed in today’s workplace (Dellzonna, 2017).

Dellzonna (2017) states that the success of the 21st century depends on another system: a mode of positive emotional expansion and construction that enables us to solve complex problems and foster partnerships. Increased positive emotions such as trust, curiosity, self-confidence, and inspiration help to open up and build psychological, social, and physical resources. When we feel safe, we are more open-minded, resilient, motivated, and tenacious. Humour is growing as well as finding solutions and divergent thinking, which are the cognitive processes that underlie creativity.

## **2.9 WHAT IS A NON-PERFORMING TEAM**

Though this research is focused on assessing what high-performing teams are, how they are defined, and what contributes towards successful teams, one must also highlight the spectrum on the other end. High-performing teams have been defined, yet one must slightly focus on what poor-performing teams are.

The quality of cooperation, coordination, shared mental models, communication and leadership are some of the factors that describe good teamwork (P. O'Connor, 2016).

Collaboration can be described, and goodwill and respect are shown and displayed amongst members of a team and requires that people work together to manage situations. Yet if some members within the team do not view and value collaboration as having that sort of impact on team success, then that contributes negatively to team success, therefore not contributing to a high-performing team.

If such a team is marred with bullying and undermining, then collaborative efforts will prove fruitless to team success.

O'Connor (2016) also shares a common mental model that enables team members to form accurate explanations and expectations about coordinated behaviours and the tasks that lead to them. If team members do not share a common cause, then there is a problem with the success of the team. Therefore, leadership actions and actions are crucial in building such an environment into an environment that is useful to everyone involved.

Poorly prescribed tasks, tasks that do not lend themselves to teamwork, or the absence of appropriate group rewards can contribute to poor team performance (S. Gavriel, 1999).

## **2.10 SUMMARY**

The literature that was presented in this chapter first focused on the role of Transnet and its primary contributory role in the South African community. This was key as the Port of PE is a division of this larger organisation, and therefore its mandate directly aligns and must drive the imperative of this institution called Transnet.

Transnet's mandate is to ensure a globally competitive freight system that enables sustained growth and diversification in the country's economy. Transnet, with its wide footprint in every corner of South Africa, continues to leave an indelible mark on the lives of all South Africans. Therefore, it is involved in all aspects of life in South Africa. This also extends beyond its employees and plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life in all communities and environments in which it operates, this being in the entire South African economy and community.

This translates to the organisation being a catalyst of growth within the communities in which it operates and exists.

Further to the above, it was also imperative to highlight the organisation as being a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE), owned by the government or the state, and therefore it has the responsibility of meeting the government's mandate of job creation and poverty alleviation in South Africa by contributing to the 2030 National Development Plan targets.

Therefore, the efficiency of how this organisation is managed is key to the realisation of this very important mandate with the country possessing a high unemployment rate and with the region where the Port of PE exists having the highest poverty and unemployment levels in the country, South Africa as graphically highlighted in chapter 1.

It was further highlighted on how high-performing teams should operate, and the key elements that make high-performing teams were mentioned, therefore contributing to organisational success and driving towards the meeting of the NDP plans and targets of poverty and unemployment alleviation. The Human Resources department was highlighted as to the role it ought to play in this area of organisational success by highlighting Ulrich's model of a highly effective Human Resources Team. The HR department was called the catalyst of change and it was determined that an organisation's competitive strategy and its HR strategy are interdependent.

The HR professional were highlighted as needing to become value-added partners for managers, as well as the change agents and drivers, and it was mentioned that they needed to switch from being administrators and huggers as that is not what is required by the organisation of today. An effective HR Team needs to realise the critical role it plays in an organisation by having dedicated employees in line with its mission, vision, and values and it must be motivated to reach its business goals. That is the kind of mandate that an effective HR Team needs to drive away the days of being paper pushers as that does not serve the purpose of today's organisation or they risk becoming a mere irritation to the organisation.

The next chapter will highlight the research methodology which will be used in assessing the effectiveness of the HR professionals at the Port of PE as they were rated by organisational leadership as being mediocre in their outputs. Therefore, it is key to assess how effective this team is in contributing to organisational wide high team performance, and in contributing to the growth of the organisation leading to the growth of the community and driving the government's mandate.



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, the researcher will commence by defining what research is and outline the research methods and methodologies. Thereafter the research approach used for this research will be highlighted. Yet while delving into that, the researcher will briefly discuss the three traditions from which she had to select. The researcher will also be discussing the sample design, data collection method, ethical issues, data analysis method, and the method of reporting and synthesis.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH DEFINED

In a study by Kothari (2006), *research* is referred to as a scientific and systematic search for significant information on a particular topic. Research is a controlled and logical search for relevant material on a particular subject. Moreover, and according to the same author, a methodology is an analysis of applied methods in each field of study.

Kothari (2006) states that research, in a sense, refers to the search for knowledge, careful research, or the search for new facts that are effective in gaining new insights and developing new knowledge. Collis and Hussey (2003: 1) also believe that research is a process of systematic process that enhances the knowledge of researchers. Therefore, the survey process is identified as a time-series process that conducts the survey. The process begins with the identification of the research problem, which develops into a goal and ultimately leads to the formulation of a hypothesis. Research requires a scientific approach and the skilful use of specific methods, not just the process of collecting and using data.

Applied research was used in this study. According to Kothari (2006), applied research aims to find solutions to urgent problems that challenge corporate organisations. Applied research focuses on addressing the specific situations faced by a company or solving specific problems in an organisation. (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:12) define *research methodology* as a general approach taken in carrying out a research project which dictates the specific tools a researcher selects in conducting the research. The primary purpose is to justify the use of the specific methods employed in the research methodology process in solving the primary objective of the current study.

Research methods are usually the techniques that researchers use to carry out their skills. The method is a means of collecting data such as surveys, interviews, and observations, and is called a tool for analysing data. This is a statistical method, or topics can be extracted from unstructured data. The term may also refer to aspects of the research process, such as sampling (Bryman, 2008). According to the same author, he described methodology as a study of applied methods. It is to clarify the practices and assumptions that use different kinds of methods. Yet practices and assumptions are slightly different issues and focal points and are primarily based on assumptions rather than practices.

### **3.4 RESEARCH APPROACHES**

In this research, the researcher obtained secondary data from reviewing various journals, books, and material from the organisation being researched, as well as electronic sources. Participation by the respondents was done completely voluntary. They were approached by the researcher who works for the same organisation wherein the research was conducted, and they all agreed to participate. There were a total of eight (8) participants who made up the full complement of the Human resources department of the Port of Port Elizabeth.

Qualitative methodologies allow researchers to improve their interpersonal and subjective skills and to apply them to the research exploration process (Alasa, 2017). Qualitative research allows researchers to evolve with their research participants, as was done in this study. In studies with an interpretive phenomenological approach to analysis, participants, and researchers all work within the same organisation, and the proximity of the researcher and the participants doubles the useful elements of the study. This approach allows participants to express their opinions and living

experiences as being unbiased and personalised, and allows people to share their living experiences.

That was indeed the case with this study. The case study was used to research a single case or a minor quantity of instances namely, comparatively, in their actual life setting (Hak, 2008). This research was based on a single case study focusing on the performance of HR/HC professionals at the Port of Port Elizabeth.

The decision to follow this approach was influenced by mediocre feedback and frustrations felt by the clients towards the department regarding the levels of service received.

The researcher will now elaborate further on the various research approaches.

### **3.4.1 Quantitative Research**

There are three general approaches to research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed. Researchers choose a quantitative approach to answer research questions that require numerical data. A qualitative is approach for researchers who need textual data, and a mixed approach requires both numerical and textual data (Williams, 2007). Quantitative research can be used as an answer to related questions about variables in the survey. It starts with the problem and includes the formation of a hypothesis, literature search, and qualitative data analysis. The result of this method is prediction, description, and confirmation.

Quantitative research can be used as an answer to questions about variable relationships within a study, trying to explain and predict what other people and places will produce. Qualitative research is further described as an intention to establish, confirm, or verify relationships and to develop generalisations that contribute to theory (Ormrod, 2001). Since this method is a scientific method, it is firmly fixed to the positivist paradigm/theory. This method focuses on collecting new, problematic data from large populations, and analysing this data, but ignoring individual emotions, emotions, and environmental conditions (Rahi, 2017).

### **3.4.2 Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is a holistic approach with discovery, described as a deployment model that takes place in the natural environment, allowing researchers to develop levels of detail from a high level of involvement in the experience. (Williams, 2007). The main identifier of this research approach is the social phenomenon considered from the participant's point of view. This approach involves targeted use to describe, explain, and interpret the data collected and used in this research study.

Qualitative research builds its assumptions based on inductive (analysts identify important categories and patterns and relationships of data through the discovery process) rather than deductive reasoning. The strong correlation between the observer and the data is a clear difference with open and inductive question and observation style. An essential feature of both detailed interviews and focus groups is the use of open-form questions following exploration on the participants' answers (Nayak & Singh, 2015).

Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what people have built, how they understand their world, and what their experiences are in the world. Therefore, qualitative researchers study things in the natural environment and try to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning that people give them (Nayak & Singh, 2015).

The qualitative approach is used to collect details on a particular topic. This approach assumes that one person represents the group. Interpreting human emotions and emotions is just as important and is ignored by the quantitative methods described above (Rahi, 2017). Therefore, the qualitative method is used by the interpretation paradigm/theory when a researcher wants to observe or interpret the environment to develop a theory (Rahi, 2017).

Qualitative research involves qualitative goals and discovers the underlying motivation or desire by using detailed interviews for such purposes. It aims to discover the underlying motivations of human behaviour that can be analysed to clarify why people are motivated to act in a particular way. Reda Elmabruk (2018) defines a qualitative approach to descriptive case studies as an approach in which a description of the situation is available during the study. The main feature of this type of research is that

researchers have no control over the phenomena or activities they are studying. He/she can only report what is happening, and when it is happening, and perhaps provide an explanation or justification for such an event.

The case study design allows for an in-depth study to be carried out on a particular observable activity or phenomenon and is used to research a single, solitary case.

In this research paper, the Case study approach is most appropriate and will be used to focus on performance at the Port of Port Elizabeth's HR/HC department.

There are several different methods for conducting qualitative research, yet the following five are recommended as, Case Study, Grounded Theory, Ethnography, Content analysis, and Phenomenological (Ormrod, 2001). They will be explained in the table that follows according to (Williams, 2007):

**Table 1.1: Different methods of conducting a Qualitative research (Ormrod, 2001)**

No.	Methods of Qualitative Research	Description
1	<b>Case Study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defined time frame.</li> <li>• You are bound by an individual or place and time.</li> <li>• Study people, programs, or events.</li> <li>• The structure must be a problem, a situation, a problem, and a lesson learned. Refers to several sources. NS. Direct or participatory observations, interviews, archived records or documents, physical artifacts, and audio-visual material.</li> <li>• Researchers need to spend time in the field interacting with the people surveyed.</li> <li>• A report containing lessons learned or patterns found in connection with theory.</li> </ul>

2	Ethnography Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies an entire group that shares a common culture.</li> <li>• Studies an intact cultural group in a natural setting over prolonged periods.</li> <li>• Focus on everyday behavior to identify norms, beliefs, social structure, and other factors.</li> <li>• Tries to understand the changes in the group's culture over time.</li> <li>• The researcher needs to be immersed in the daily lives of participants.</li> <li>• If interviews are lengthy, the researcher gathers documentation by using audiotapes and videotapes media.</li> </ul>
3	Grounded Theory Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers seek to derive a general abstract theory of processes, actions, or interactions based on the views of study participants.</li> <li>• Researchers start with theoretical data.</li> <li>• Grounded theory research is the process of collecting data, analysing it, and repeating a process called constant comparison.</li> <li>• Data can be obtained from a variety of sources, including interviews with participants or witnesses, review of past videotapes or records, and on-site observations.</li> <li>• Grounded Theory provides a context for this method, but researchers demand that the theory be revealed from data collected in the field, not from the research literature.</li> <li>• Investigate people's behaviors and interactions.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report consists of five aspects. NS. Explanation of research questions, literature research, explanation of methodologies, data analysis to explain a theory, and the discussion of implications.</li> </ul>
4	Phenomenological Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This theory is based on the understanding and experience of the participants.</li> <li>• Focuses on the participants' perceptions of the event. Situations and studies try to answer questions about the experience.</li> <li>• The essence of this study is the quest for the underlying meaning of experience, emphasising consciousness orientation. Here, experience includes both memory, image, and meaning-based appearance, as well as inner consciousness.</li> <li>• Researchers need to set aside prejudice, as researchers usually have some relationship, experience, or involvement with the situation in this study.</li> <li>• The data collection method consists of lengthy interviews to understand and interpret the participants' perceptions of the meaning of the event.</li> <li>• The format of the procedure is a report that helps readers understand the essential structure of the experience by creating survey questions that examine the meaning of the experience after the interview, analysing the data to find clusters of meaning. Conclude with.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This study collects data that leads to the identification of common themes in people's perception of experience.</li> </ul>
5	Content Analysis Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This method is a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of materials to identify patterns, themes, and biases.</li> <li>• The content analysis reviews forms of human communication including books, newspapers, and films as well as other forms to identify patterns, themes, or biases.</li> <li>• The collection of data is a two-step process, as starting, the researcher must analyse the materials and put them in a frequency table as each characteristic or quality is mentioned. Followed by the researcher conducting a statistical analysis so that the results are reported in a quantitative format.</li> </ul>

To conclude on the qualitative research approach various techniques are shared according to (Williams, 2007):

- Documentation of the data and the process of data collection.
- Organisation/categorisation of the data into concepts.
- Connection of the data to show how one concept may influence another.
- Corroboration by evaluating alternative explanations, disconfirming evidence, and searching for negative cases.
- And finally representing the findings.

This study is therefore firmly entrenched in a qualitative approach and aligned to the above-stated characteristics.



### **3.4.3 Mixed method Approach**

The mixed approach to the study includes a method of collecting or analysing data from the two approaches of the qualitative and quantitative studies highlighted above in a single study (Creswell, 2003). In addition, researchers explain that they collect or analyse not only the numerical data that is common in quantitative research but also the data that is found in qualitative research, to answer the research questions defined by particular research.

This approach follows multiple forms of drawing data on a variety of possibilities i.e., statistically and via an analysis of a text. The literature does not guide and direct the study but becomes an aid once patterns or categories have been identified (Nayak & Signh, 2015).

## **3.5 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

According to (Ryan, 2018), there are three well-known and used philosophical research paradigms that serve as guides to research methodologies and analysis. They are positivism, interpretivism, and critical theory. Therefore, it is important to understand these three paradigms, their origins, and their principles. The researcher can then make informed decisions about the most appropriate approach to research that provides information about its design, methodology, and analysis.

### **3.5.1 Positivism**

Positivism believes that knowledge should be objective and free from any form of bias stemming from the researcher's values and beliefs (Ryan, 2018). The four characteristics of this approach are as follows:

- Phenomenalism, which stated that only knowledge confirmed by a scientist is genuine.
- Deductivism, which indicated hypotheses can be tested for provable 'laws.
- Objectivity, which indicates that science must be value-free.
- Inductivism, which indicates knowledge to be gained by gathering facts that are a basis for laws.

The above is supported by (Paulina Pawlikowski, 2018), who expressed the view that all true knowledge was science, and everything was measurable.

### **3.5.2 Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is the technique of analysing and evaluating thoughts to improve them. That is, self-initiative, self-discipline, self-control, and self-correction (R. Paul, 2006). Ryan (2018) further explains that critical thinking seeks to challenge the worldview and the underlying power structure that creates it. We recognise that the evolution of society makes it more and more complex and therefore difficult to study. It looks at oppression and how to fight oppression, with an emphasis on the exploitation of some parts of society (alienation), and the view of society as a political or other purpose (reification).

### **3.5.3 Interpretivism**

Interpretivism argues that truth and knowledge are subjective as well as culturally and historically situated based on people's experiences and their understanding of them (Ryan, 2018). According to Ryan (2018), it is viewed as the polar opposite of Positivism (antipositivism) which bases its foundations on a purely objective approach. Interpretivism has a 'relativist' ontological perspective which suggests that reality is only known through socially constructed meanings and that there is no single shared reality.

The approach to be followed in this research paper will be following the Interpretivism tradition, as people's experiences and their views will be sought in seeking an understanding of why performance is not at peak levels. This question will be answered by referring to their knowledge and experiences, which could be subjective.

It means that there are multiple realities because the perceptions of individuals affected by culture, norms, understanding, social reality, and the definition of the situation, are different. Pham (2018) extends the anthropological approach to follow. According to this, a single phenomenon can have multiple interpretations rather than one truth that can be determined by the measurement process. Rather than trying to generalise the basis of understanding to the entire population of what positivism does,

researchers gain a deeper understanding of phenomena and their complexity in their unique context (Pham, 2018).

### **3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design is a conceptual blueprint in which research is carried out, representing the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Islamia, 2016). Islamia (2016) further states that the study design should not be associated with any type of data collection method or data, but that it should be recognised as the type of evidence needed to properly address the answers to the research questions that are needed.

Akhtar (2016) defined research design as the structure of research. This is the "glue" that brings together all the elements of the research project and is the proposed research plan. According to Akhtar (2016), the research design should be able to provide answers to the following reserve queries:

- What is the study about and what type of data is required?
- What is the purpose of the study?
- What are the sources of needed data?
- What should be the place or area of the study?
- What time, approximately is required for the study?
- What should be the number of materials or number of cases for the study?
- What type of sampling should be used?
- What method of data collection would be appropriate?
- How will data be analysed?
- What should be the approximate expenditure?
- What should be the specific nature of the study?

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION**

#### **3.7.1 Data**

Data is the controlled editing and preparation of materials, details, dimensions, and observations that researchers need to create research reports. In this study, data was collected through completed questionnaires and conducted in semi-structured

interviews by the researchers (Boadou, 2011). Based on literature surveys and customer survey feedback reports from Human Resources services, the researchers investigated which questions should be asked in an interview survey to achieve the desired goals.

Theory embodied in the literature of a discipline is important in pointing towards appropriate research questions that are of general interest and that might be fully explored in the context of the proposed study (Rowley, 2002).

Data collection and, in general, the execution of a good case study, depends critically upon the competence of the researcher. Unlike, with say, a questionnaire, the evidence that is to be gathered is defined as it is collected and the researcher is an active agent in the process. This means that the researcher undertaking data collection needs to be able to ask good questions, listen, and interpret the answers. This would involve having a good grasp of the questions and propositions on the case study and being able to approach the study in an unbiased and flexible manner.

Data collection must be guided by a study protocol which includes the following sections:

- An overview of the case study project.
- Field procedures, such as the use of different sources of information and access arrangements to these sources.
- Case study questions, or the questions that the case study

In ***gathering evidence*** there are three key principles on data collection that need to be observed according to (Rowley, 2002):

- **Triangulation** – the evidence can be collected from multiple sources; it uses evidence from different sources to corroborate the same fact or finding.
- **Case Study Database** – A case study database of the evidence gathered needs to be collected, whilst a report may be the primary distillation of the case study. This base may include case notes made by the researcher, case study documents that are collected during a case study, interview notes and transcripts, and an analysis of the evidence.

- **Chain of evidence** – The researcher would need to collect a chain of evidence. The report should make clear the sections of the case study databases that are drawn upon through the appropriate citation of documents and interviews. It should be clear that the data collection followed the protocol, and the link between the protocol questions and propositions should be transparent.

### 3.7.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are a data collection instrument that is made up of questions and answers and which is often utilised in the study of humans and their related social activities (Igwenage, 2016).

The researcher in this study designed questionnaires that were easy to be understood and not misinterpreted, they were kept short and were plainly formulated. The questionnaire consisted of both closed and open-ended questions.

Questionnaires are generally utilised as survey implements to collect data (N. Mathers, 2007). The questionnaire at the beginning of the survey started with Background information.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of an Employment information question. These were to assist in providing context to the participants and they consisted of multiple-choice questions.

The third and last part of the questionnaire consisted of a combination of questions i.e., 'yes' and 'no' questions, multiple-choice questions, and all but one of the questions allowed the respondents the opportunity to further elaborate on the closed questions.

As the researcher worked in the same organisation where the survey was conducted, it assisted in planning the process of the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. The researcher set up a meeting with the Human resource department and explained to the participants what the research was about, explained the process to be followed in completing the research, and what the researcher wanted to achieve with the outcome of this study, which was to assist the department to reach higher levels of service. As the topic was sensitive, the researcher was cognisant thereof and ensured the participants of the anonymity thereof. The researcher was a member of

the organisation's management team and was trusted by the participants, as such they all agreed to participate in the study.

A date was agreed upon between the group and the researcher regarding when the questionnaires would be hand-delivered by the researcher and when the one-on-one semi-structured interviews would take place to guide the completion of the questionnaire and to clarify any misunderstandings regarding the questions posed. Upon the delivery of the questionnaires by the researcher, clarifying questions were asked by the participants regarding how to complete the questionnaire, and all were responded to and well understood by all. Mathers (2007) explains it to be much easier for the researcher to interact with respondents in circumstances where the questionnaires are personally handed over, as this increases the response rate. He further explains it to be beneficial, as postal surveys can take up to six weeks before they are returned and that the likelihood of questionnaires getting lost through hand-delivery would be unlikely.

Questionnaires were distributed to the 8 respondents who make up the Human Resources department of the Port of PE. The researcher felt it would be best to follow this approach instead of conducting structured interviews as those could be intrusive upon individual space and might not receive genuine responses. Therefore, a semi-structured approach of interviews was conducted where the respondents were allowed space to think through and apply their minds when responding to the questions in the questionnaire.

### **3.7.3 Interviews**

Interviews are conducted when researchers want to gain knowledge from specific people. It is also useful when researchers want to seek the opinion of the responsible person on the topic (Driscoll, 2011). Kendall (2008) believes that the data collected from the interviews provides a complete understanding of the respondents' ideas, beliefs, and abuses. Holland (2012) adds that many studies in many areas use interviews as the basis for their studies.

It is due to the foregoing statements that the researcher in this study conducted semi-structured interviews with eight members of the Human Resource sector, who were involved in this research study. Semi-structured interviews are regularly used in the

qualitative research design (B. DiCicco-Bloom, 2006). According to Edwards & Holland (2013), semi-structured interviews provide the respondents with an opportunity to reply on individual terms, unlike most structured interviews.

These interviews also allowed the respondents to express matters that are important to them and allowed for the researcher to collect references from their experiences of performance. The researcher gave the respondents space to write from their own experiences and to express themselves fully while completing the questionnaire individually. The respondents permitted for this researcher to be present whilst completing the questionnaire, and to elaborate on their thoughts, understanding, and feelings of their performance levels. This allowed the researcher to clarify questions they were uncertain of, therefore allowing them to be fully immersed in their thoughts whilst completing the questionnaire and expressing themselves.

Lastly, because the interviews were structured across an array of prearranged open-ended questions, and other questions emanating from the discourse between this researcher and respondents, the researcher had the advantage of probing meaningfully into the social and subjective matters regarding their levels of performance and service delivery to clients over years.

### **3.8 THE SAMPLE/ POPULATION**

Individuals, or units of interest, form a population (C. K. Boone, 2011). Pandey & Pandey (2015) gives a general definition of the population as a percentage of society to which the survey results apply. Which, in the case of this research, was the entire Human Resource department of the Port of P.E.

(Hussey, 2009) States that ensuring a minimum sample size is not a concern of qualitative studies, as it is for quantitative studies. It is further defined that sample size is relative to the population size.

The researcher in this research study selected a sample from the Port of Port Elizabeth. This sample constituted of managers and junior employees of the Human resource department. The entire Human resource team/department formed part of the survey and there were a total of 8 professionals.

Sample selection is an important factor in conducting research. In a study conducted by Neuman (2006), the authors show that studying a particular population is sometimes impractical and always likely. Collis and Hussey (2003) have a very high selection of samples for research because the samples are part of a particular group or population of people and consist of a collection of items used for research purposes. *"The basic idea of sampling is that you can draw conclusions about the entire population by choosing a few elements within the population,"* Cooper and Schindler (2008: 228) added. Another definition describes the sample as an undistorted subset of the entire population examined (Collis and Hussey, 2009). This is so that the results of the sample selected by the researcher can be applied to the entire population.

The sample types are classified into probability (objective) and nonprobability (subjective) samples. According to a study conducted by Evans (2010), in probability samples, the number of participants from whom the sample will be drawn is known in advance and each member of the population has a non-zero probability of being selected. Conversely, in nonprobability sampling, members are picked out from the population using a non-random approach. Nonprobability sampling methods include judgment sampling, snowball sampling, quota sampling, and convenience sampling; probability sampling methods on the other hand include random sampling, stratified sampling, and systematic sampling (Evans, 2010).

### **3.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

#### **3.9.1 Reliability**

Reliability is a model used for assessing and/or weighing the quality of data in research, therefore quality remains the fundamental assessment in every research (Golafshani, 2003).

Surveys distributed by researchers can provide the same or similar answers if the questions that require comments are changed by another researcher, but are distributed to the same respondents. This is supported by (Nayak & Signh, 2015) and indicates that the same answer can be obtained if multiple measurements are made using the instrument. It doesn't matter if it's a question faced by a person, machine, or a scale.



### 3.9.2 Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy and trustworthiness of instruments, data, and findings in research. Nothing in research is more important than validity, which is emphasised by (Nayak & Singh, 2015). The validity of data is tied to the validity of the instrument. If the questions posed to people to recall their behaviour are not valid instruments for tapping into the informants' past behaviour, then the data retrieved by those instruments are not valid.

In the case of this research, it can be confirmed that the validity and reliability were sound, as all questions were asked by the researcher in the semi-structured interviews through the questionnaire, and the respondents had to tap into their knowledge of assessing their own performance levels based on their performance behaviours over a period by assessing their work, which aligned to the above-stated definitions. The researcher's presence also ensured that all questions were understood by all in the same manner, and therefore, they could accurately respond to what was being asked and meant to be assessed.

### 3.10 ETHICS

The researcher of this study was subjected to the University's ethical clearance requirements and process in conducting this research. This was done by completing and submitting an ethics clearance form i.e., 'Form E', by the researcher, which served as a verification that satisfied ethical considerations related to the respondent's execution of the study. These were to satisfy the respondents' confidentiality. Respondents were also asked if they would willingly volunteer for this study once an explanation had been given.

***Complete anonymity and confidentiality*** in responses provided by the respondents were also guaranteed by the researcher when they were approached to participate in the study. This was repeated at the time that the questions in the semi-structured interview setting were taking place, which assured honesty and openness in the responses provided by the respondents.

(Resnik, 2013) Defines ethics as standards of behaviour that differentiate between tolerable and intolerable deeds. This is supported and defined further by (Gammel,

2006) as moral considerations upon shared traditions in relation to common existence, personal routines, groups, and mankind in general.

### **3.11 SUMMARY**

In Chapter 3, the researcher started by defining what research is and thereafter highlighted the methodologies and methods that are used in conducting research. This was followed by highlighting the various research approaches, such as qualitative, and mixed, and highlighted that which was to be conducted for this research study, which is qualitative, and highlighted the various methods used in this latter highlighted approach.

The researcher briefly discussed research paradigms to guide the research methods and analysis of this study, which were positivism, and critical theory, and interpretivism, the latter being the selected and most appropriate approach.

The researcher then moved to discuss the Research Design, which is the conceptual blueprint within which research is conducted. This is attributed to the technique of how data would be collected and analysed, and would therefore highlight the structure of the research.

Data collection was thereafter defined and would highlight how evidence in this study would be collected from the respondents of this research study.

Population and Sampling were thereafter defined as well as sampling, and sampling the sample, were also defined.

Reliability and Validity were penultimately defined, as well as the importance they hold in a research study, and the researcher ended with defining the importance of ethics in a research study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, the researcher dealt with the research method to be followed in this research, which will be dealing with the development of an effective HR Framework or Model to improve HR Officials' performance at the Port of Port Elizabeth.

Chapter 3 also dealt with the methodology used in understanding the intention of this study.

As previously discussed, data and information were collected through a focused questionnaire. In this chapter, the researcher will analyse and interpret the data gathered.

The researcher collected and gather data from the respondents of the Human Resources/ Human Capital (HR/HC) Department of the Port of Port Elizabeth. This included how they viewed their level of performance levels to be and they compared themselves to others in the HR/HR profession.

Clients of the Human Resources Department of the Port of Port Elizabeth had rated the performance levels of the HR/HC professionals at the Port of Port Elizabeth a 3 out of 5. A rating of 3 means that the department is performing at an average level of service delivery as viewed by its clients. Meaning there is room to improve in the eyes of their clients. The questionnaires were used to gather data.

#### **4.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The questionnaire was used in obtaining data for this study and it was divided into three main sections (See Appendix A). Section one of the questionnaire provides the background information of the respondents who are the HR/HC professionals at the Port of Port Elizabeth. Section two provides the employment information. And the last section provides information on the knowledge relating to the levels of performance of the HR/HC Professionals at the Port of Port Elizabeth.

Qualitative feedback was received from the respondents by including multiple open-ended questions and 'yes' 'no' questions. As highlighted in the previous section of this research, the researcher personally issued questionnaires to all the respondents of the HR/HC department of the Port of Port Elizabeth. The department consists of 8 employees in total, and all were interviewed by the researcher.

In the sections that follow, the results from the eight respondents will be discussed.

#### **4.2.1 Background information of respondents**

##### **Section A**

The purpose of this section is to provide background information on the respondents in this study. Table 4.1 below depicts the demographic composition of the respondents, composed of all the HR professionals at the Port of P.E.

**Table 4.1: Gender of respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Male</b>	3	37.5%
<b>Female</b>	5	62.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table indicates that 62.5% of the respondents were female, making up 5 members of the team of 8. Three (3) of the respondents were males, making up 37.5%. Therefore, the team predominantly had females making up the majority of the team members, versus the three male HR professionals.

The following table 4.2 below depicts the race of the respondents.

**Table 4.2: Race of respondents**

<b>Race</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>African</b>	4	50%
<b>Coloured</b>	2	25%
<b>White</b>	2	25%
<b>Indian</b>	0	0%
<b>South African Asian</b>	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table indicates that 50% of the respondents are African, totalling 4 of 8 members of the team. Whilst 25% are Coloured, making up 2 members, and the remaining 25% White, making up 2 members. The team's race makeup was predominantly African members with a quarter each making up Coloured and White members.

The following table 4.3 depicts the age categories of the respondents:

**Table 4.3: Age category of respondents**

<b>Age categories</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>18 - 25</b>	0	0%
<b>26 - 34</b>	1	12.5%
<b>34 - 42</b>	3	37.5%
<b>42 - 50</b>	2	25%
<b>51+</b>	2	25%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

37% of the respondents were between the ages of 34 and 42 years old. Followed by 25% each between the ages of 42 and 50 years and the age group of over 50 years of age. The youngest age category of the respondents was between 26 and 34 years of age, making up a percentage of 12.5. Thus, 50% of the respondents were 42 years of age and younger and the other 50% were over the age of 42 years of age. There were no team members younger than 25 years of age, which could translate to a team that was fairly experienced to experienced.

The following section of this chapter deals with information relating to section two of the questionnaire, which is Employment information. That will be information relating to the grade level of the respondents within the Port of Port Elizabeth, and it also deals with the years of experience of the respondents. The section also highlights whether respondents were at a management level or junior level of a combination. It also highlights the educational level of the respondents and lastly the gross earnings of the respondents. The information contained in this section is important as it illustrates the balance which was maintained by the researcher in obtaining respondents from both the managerial-level as well as junior-level employees.

## **Section B**

This section of the responses represents the Employment Information of the respondents. This will highlight the level of respondents in the organisation i.e., Junior or Managerial. It will focus on the educational level and earning category of the respondents. This will assist the researcher in assessing understanding and identifying where the problems might be in levels of performance from the team if there are any identified.

**Table 4.4: Employment Category**

<b>Employment Category</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Senior Management</b>	0	0%
<b>Middle Management</b>	4	50%
<b>Supervisory</b>	0	0%
<b>Junior Level</b>	4	50%

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>
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Table 4.4 above illustrates the employment category of the respondents, of which 50% are at a Middle Management level and 50% are junior-level employees. One can therefore not assume that the older group were in managerial positions and the younger at junior level. The researcher observed that, through engagement with the team, the older group was the respondents that were holding junior positions and the younger 50% of age group 42 and lower were holding the managerial level positions.

Table 4.5 below illustrates the years' experience of the respondents in their current positions within the Human Capital department at the Port of Port Elizabeth. Respondents who have less than 5 years' experience account for 62.5%; those with 11 – 15 years' experience account for 12.5% and those with more than 20 years' experience account for 25% of the sample. Therefore 37.5% of the respondents amounting to 3 of the respondents, were in their positions within the Port of PE HR department for quite some time and were holding the same positions, between 11 to more than 20 years. 5 of the respondents, accounting for 62.5%, were in the HR department at the Port of PE for between 0 – 5 years holding management positions. This question did not explore the previous experience of the respondents within the HR field, yet an assumption can be made that they assumed the management positions coming in with previously attained experience in the HR field from other organisations or divisions within Transnet.

**Table 4.5: Years in current position**

<b>Years' experience categories</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>0 – 5 years</b>	5	62.5%
<b>6 – 10</b>	0	0%
<b>11 - 15</b>	1	12.5%
<b>16 - 20</b>	0	0%
<b>More than 20 years</b>	2	25%

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>
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Table 4.6 below assesses whether the respondents had previous Supervisory or Managerial experience. 87.5% of them had no previous Supervisory nor Management experience, and 12.5% of the respondents which equated to one individual had previous Supervisory experience. From the consideration of this variable compared to the previous question of year experience, the researcher could therefore deduce that most respondents holding managerial positions had vast experience in the HR field, yet they lacked managerial or supervisory experience.

**Table 4.6: Previous Managerial role**

<b>Previous Managerial role</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Yes</b>	1 – Supervisory role	12.5%
<b>No</b>	7	87.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.7 below illustrates the educational level of the respondents of which 75% have a National Diploma as the highest qualification level, and 25% have acquired Degrees. From this, the researcher established that all the respondents had post-matric qualifications. Yet the researcher questioned the honesty of the answers provided by some of the respondents in this regard, especially of those who were in their positions for a considerable amount of time, the group older than 42 years of age.



**Table 4.7: Highest Educational Level**

Highest Educational Level	No.	Percentage
Matric	0	0%
National Diploma	6	75%
Degree	2	25%
Honours	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

The last question tabulated in 4.8 below of this category assessed the annual gross salary brackets of the respondents of which 50% earn between R401 000 – R600 000, 37.5% earning between R601 000 – R800 000, and finally 12.5% of the respondents earn between R201 000 and R400 000.

**Table 4.8: Annual Gross salary bracket**

Annual Gross salary bracket	No.	Percentage
R100k – R200k	0	0%
R201k – R400k	1	12.5%
R401k – R600k	4	50%
R601k – R800k	3	37.5%
R801k - above	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Section C

The next and last section of the questionnaire assesses knowledge relating to the performance of HR/HC professionals at the Port of Port Elizabeth. The primary and secondary objectives of this research will be addressed through the questions and answers provided by the respondents in this section.

According to (Moser, 2017), qualitative research considers the natural contexts in which individuals or groups function, as it aims to provide an in-depth understanding of real-world problems. In contrast to quantitative research, generalisation is not a guiding principle. According to most qualitative researchers, the 'reality' we perceive is constructed by our social, cultural, historical, and individual contexts.

The primary research objective of this research was to assess the value add of the HR/HC professionals to the organisation's people paradigm agenda/strategy by the provision of a high-performing HR/HC value-added service. The literature review focused on defining what High-Performance Teams are and the means of creating a high-performance culture within teams.

Respondents in the following part of the research questionnaire were asked to respond to multiple opened-ended questions, 'yes' 'no' questions and all but one was provided for the elaboration of the responses. This assisted the researcher in creating further understanding and insights into each of the respondent's experiences, opinions, and perceptions of their contributions to the high-performance culture of the Human Capital department of the Port of Port Elizabeth.

Themes were sought by the researcher, and these were centred on the HR/HC professional's perception or knowledge of their individual performance and contribution leading to the success of the team.

The following section comprises three main themes:

- Assessing on perceived qualification relevance to the job/role the respondents are doing.
- Assessing the competency requirements and gaps of the respondents in relation to the jobs/roles they are performing.

- Assessing the respondents' opinions of what they think would contribute to a high-performing department.

The analysis of the respondents will therefore be presented in tabular form with a discussion of the responses on each theme.

#### **4.2.1.1 Theme one of section C: Knowledge and Qualification assessment related to current roles**

Questions were asked from the respondents of their highest and most relevant academic qualifications in relation to the current jobs/occupations they were in. The respondents were asked, in cases where they might not possess the relevant academic qualifications, whether they had the intent of closing such gaps.

**Table 4.9: Highest qualification attainment and relevance thereof in relation to current to current job/occupation**

Highest qualification attainment and relevance thereof in relation to current job/occupation	Yes	No
	100%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>

All the respondents felt and thought that the educational/academic requirements required for their jobs/occupations, which are stipulated in their job descriptions, were relevant. Job descriptions mainly define employees' main responsibilities, the duties of their jobs, standards of performance, and authority in organisations (Khairat, 2016). They contain the requirements for the highest qualification requirements of a particular job, as well as the skills, and experiences that can contribute to an individual's success, thereby enhancing their competitiveness and ultimately contributing highly to overall Team success, and to be recognised as high performing.

Some of the respondents, therefore, elaborated further to qualify their responses regarding the relevance of their academic qualifications in relation to their job/occupation.

**Respondent 1:**

*“Qualifications assist with People Management skills which is an important component of the outputs of this role I occupy”*

**Respondent 2:**

*“Coming from a Specialist role prior to this one which is a Generalist role the academic qualifications assisted me in my growth as I at least had knowledge on other matters which I needed to manage.”*

**Respondent 3:**

*“I am a qualified Social Worker having to provide assistance and support to the workforce on wellness-related topics or tasks therefore it is imperative that a qualified person does this job”*

The next part within this section was for the respondents to advise if they individually had academic qualifications gaps in relation to their jobs and in cases where they might exist to assess whether they had intentions of closing such academic gaps.

All the respondents felt they had no academic qualifications gaps, yet one of the respondents did not have the required academic qualification in relation to the job they were occupying.

*This respondent responded as follows:*

**Respondent 1:**

*“I may not have the required academic qualification for the job I am doing however I have been doing this job for over 30 years therefore with the work experience I have acquired I feel I am adequately and suitably qualified for the job I am doing”.*

**Respondent 2:**

*“I am overqualified instead for the position I am in.”*

**4.2.1.2 Theme two of section C: Competence Assessment is relation to current occupation/role**

The penultimate section of the questionnaire focused on assessing the competence of the HR/HC professionals. Most responses will be tabulated with the elaboration appearing after each. The respondents were also given an opportunity at the end of this section to add any further comments they felt would be relevant to enhance their competence level.

(Irana Bagaeva, 2018) Lays down a competence approach as providing ample opportunities for describing the professional and personal aspects required to achieve a high level of efficiency of the organisation. Competence can be defined as the sum of the abilities of a particular person guiding their behaviour to meet the requirements of work and to achieve the desired results.

In the research, the researcher chose eight core Human Resources/Human Capital competencies for the respondents to choose from in relation to their assessment of themselves and from feedback received through organisation performance reviews.

Junior Officials within the organisation advised not to have a formal performance management process, yet for the managers it exists.

**Table 4.10: Core Organizational Human Resources competencies**

<b>Core Organisational Human Resource competencies</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Effective communication</b>	8	0
<b>Interpersonal skills</b>	8	0
<b>Planning and Organising</b>	8	0
<b>Facilitation skills</b>	6	2
<b>Management skills</b>	5	3
<b>Leadership skills</b>	5	3
<b>HR Technical expertise</b>	8	0
<b>Relationship Building</b>	7	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		

All eight (8) of the respondents indicated to be competent on four of core Human Resources competencies, i.e., Effective communication, Interpersonal skills, Planning and organising skills, and HR (Human Resource) expertise.

From the 8 respondents, 7 translating to 87.5% indicated competence in Relationship Building. Facilitation skills competency was highlighted as existing in 75% of the respondents. 62.5% of the respondents highlighted being competent in Management skills and Leadership skills. 62,5% of the respondents with managerial experience would depict that the experience was attained in their current roles as only one had indicated having previous supervisory experience in response to question 4.6 above. One can also deduce that some of the respondents at a junior level had attained supervisory or management experience whilst being in a junior position.

As highlighted earlier, a formal performance management system/ tool does not exist within the organisation for junior officials and it only exists for Management grades.

Therefore, four of the non-managerial respondents have no response to the next questions, which talks about the current to previous individual performance rating of each of the managerial respondents going back three years.

Though the junior officials had no current nor previous performance rating, they highlighted on the questionnaire that the question was 'not applicable', yet all four highlighted that they had never been performance counselled at any stage of their careers for non-performance.

The organisation makes use of a Balance scorecard approach for the performance rating of all managers. From an academic point of view, a balanced card is a set of management techniques focused on value creation and suggests that this approach can be used to support the strategy implementation of an organisation (Ferreira, 2019).

Performance rating using the Balances Score Card approach within the Port of PE uses a 5-rating scale, with 1 being a non-starter, 2 a poor performer requiring further development and coaching, 3 being a competent performer at levels expected by the organisation in line with job outputs, 4 a solid performer performing at a higher level of output than a 3 performer and a 5 rating being an exceptional performer at consistently high levels of performance beyond one's job outputs.

Four of the respondents who are at Management levels shared their performance ratings over three years, they will be shared in the next table.

**Table 4.11: Three-year performance ratings of 4 Managers from respondents**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Year 1 rating</b>	<b>Year 2 rating</b>	<b>Year 3 rating</b>
Respondent 1	3.5	3.8	4
Respondent 2	3.5	3.1	2.8
Respondent 3	3	3.3	3
Respondent 4	3.2	3.4	4

The above illustrates that only one of the respondents in year 3 was below the required performance outputs being 2.8 accounting for 12.5% of the sample. These ratings meant that the managers in the department were performing at a competent level, not solid nor exceptional, which would be depicted by a 4 and 5 respectively.

The department was rated as being at a mediocre level of performance by clients, with a 3, and therefore the researcher questioned whether the performance of the team was not linked to this average/competent performance of the managers within the department.

The next questions focused on seeking input from the respondents on what factors they thought should be in place or fixed within the department or organisation to ensure that they all excel from their current levels of performance. They were given core areas identified by the researcher to choose from and were also able to add anything above what the researcher put forward. These results will be illustrated in graphic form and thereafter text as written by the respondents.

**Table 4.12: Factors to improve job performance**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Respondents' selection of</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
<b><i>Introduction of uniform HR processes within the Organisation</i></b>	<b>7</b>	<b>87.5%</b>
<b><i>HR Resources</i></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b><i>Interdepartmental Integration</i></b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
Organisational support	0	0%
<b><i>HR structure</i></b>	<b>3</b>	<b>37.5</b>
HR Strategy	0	0%

Additional comments received from the respondents on the factors to improved job performance were as follows:



**Respondent 1:**

*“Uplifting of levels/grades in HR Structure would assist as they will have a higher remuneration value.”*

**Respondent 2:**

*“We are specialists and get bored with routine. It at times comes across as a loss of passion for one’s job, perhaps being developed and made generalists instead can assist.”*

**Respondent 3:**

*“The HR structure needs to be revisited to allow for interdepartmental integration. A person in Employee relations should be able to handle queries related to payroll, training, etc., and vice versa.*

*Uniform processes within the entire organisation, i.e., with other ports, should be the aim of the organisation to ensure consistency in service delivery thereby building credibility with our clients.”*

**Respondent 4:**

*“Increase the numbers of HR personnel.”*

**Respondent 5:**

*“Ensure uniform practices with all ports as all belong to the same organisation. There is a perception that HR service delivery is too slow.”*

**Respondent 6:**

*“Additional administrative resources are required as it becomes challenging delivering all that is required of me being a single person and specialist in the area, I manage which is EAP (Employee Assistance Programme).”*

**Respondent 7:**

*“Consistency in application of policies and procedures at all ports is required as clients talk to their peers in those ports and when they pick up inconsistencies, we lose credibility, and they play us against one another.”*

From the tabulated responses given by the respondents above, the researcher can deduct **HR strategy** and **organisation support** as having no or minimal impact on improving the job performance of the HR/HC professionals. The **Introduction of uniform HR processes with the organisation** is deemed by the respondents as having the biggest contributor towards performance improvements by HR/HC professionals at **87.5%**, followed by **HR resources** which stands at **75%**.

From the written responses of the respondents, four main aspects can be established to assist in the performance improvement of professionals in the HR/HC department of the Port of PE. They are as follows:

- A revisit of the **HR structure** is warranted.
- For the **Specialist** role to be made **Generalist** roles or rotate people within the HR department to carry out different tasks as the routine of repetitive work gets boring.
- For the organisation to create uniform processes and practices within the larger organisation including other ports which are not part of this research study.
- The final is increasing the number of HR resources within the department, highlighting specifically for administrative tasks.

#### **4.2.1.3 Theme 3 of section C – Contributors to High Performing Team**

The penultimate question of the questionnaire focused on the researcher seeking input from the HR/HC professionals on what they thought would contribute to the outputs of a High performing HR/HC department. Again, the respondents were given multiple questions, a 'yes' 'no' question were also given an opportunity to share their opinion in free text to all but one question.

This information will be shared in graphic form, followed by the free-text responses shared. Thereafter, a summary of the results will be given.

**Table 4.13: Factors contributing to a High-performance HR/HC department**

<b>Factors contributing to High performing HR/HC Department</b>	<b>% Of respondent's responses</b>
Effective, Efficient, and proactive Employee Assistance Programs (EAP – Wellness)	37.5%
Effective, Efficient, and proactive Recruitment services	37.5%
Effective, Efficient, and proactive Talent Management services	25%
Effective, Efficient, and proactive Employee Relations services	37.5%
Effective, Efficient, and proactive Payroll and Administration services	50%
Integrated HR/HC department	87.5%

The table above indicates that the HR/HC professionals' rate highly, at 87.5%, that an **Integrated HR/HC department** would contribute to a high performing team, followed by an **Effective, Efficient, and proactive payroll and admin services** rated at 50%.

Respondents added the following responses in free text to elaborate further on how the HR/HC department can be high performing:

**Respondent 1:**

*"We should know what is happening in each other's spaces/areas to be able to deal with employee queries more effectively. We should have more meetings cutting across the different sub-departments within HR to share information and learn what is happening in each other's spaces/areas'.*

**Respondent 2:**

*“If one person is absent from work, we are unable to handle employee queries of what the HR/HC Specialises in, this should not be the case.”*

**Respondent 3:**

*“All specialists should sit in An open plan area, where each can learn from one another whilst still specialising.”*

**Respondent 4:**

*“End the specialisation.”*

From the responses, the researcher can deduce that the routine of specialised work is not stimulating the HR/HC professionals. They require variety, be it in a form of information sharing and learning from one another from different sections within the department, which can take various forms. This can be done through meetings or all sitting in open planned spaces/offices where the sharing of information will be inevitable.

The specialisation, they highlighted, seems to be limiting the service delivering/offering to clients especially from day-to-day queries that come in from clients. They indicated that if a specialist is absent, then the query would wait for the person to return to the office before it can be dealt with, which is problematic.

The final question to the research questionnaire seeks to understand whether the HR/HC professionals thought that the department was performing at a level of a high-performing department and they were also asked to elaborate on their responses where possible.

The information will be presented in a table format and thereafter will be followed by the written responses from the HR/HC professionals who stated:

**Table 4.14: Performing at level of High Performing HR/HC Department**

Partly	Fully
100%	0%

The table above indicates that all respondents and members of the HR/HC department of the Port of PE deem themselves as only partly performing their functions in areas of their individual responsibility. All have elaborated as follows:

**Respondent 1:**

*“We are better than other Divisions, we are used at the benchmark. People leave and join other divisions, but they constantly call us for guidance and input whilst having their own HR departments. We might not be seen by the present clients as top-performing however we do good but can always do better.”*

**Respondent 2:**

*“Due to resource challenges, one can only get to the basics dealing with day-to-day queries, therefore facilitating training and workshops which can be value-adding to the employees tends to take a back seat.”*

**Responded 3:**

*“Resource challenges.”*

**Respondent 4:**

*“Not having enough resources prevents one from performing at full potential – manager, and team.”*

**Respondent 5:**

*“Segregation of duties has created some tasks to be scattered and done by various individuals therefore there is no longer a 1-stop-shop where one could handle a full query from beginning to end. Now one can only do a section of a query and hand the person over to the next person to handle the next query from 1 individual. The red tape/ bureaucracy which has been increased over the recent while has limited our individual offerings.”*

**Respondent 6:**

*“Getting exposure in other sub-departments within HR department would be ideal.”*

**Respondent 7:**

*“Resource challenges, the silo approach to working, budget constraints, and moratorium on filling of vacancies has become extremely problematic. All stops when there is a moratorium, thereafter the go-ahead gets given to fill the vacancies. The work at that stage becomes overwhelming leading to the additional resources requirements.”*

**Respondent 8:**

*“I recommend a specialisation of an aspect of work e.g., Overtime management and not the way we are currently structured where a person/sub-department is responsible for full Admin services.”*

The responses to the final question do not veer too far from previous responses of the HR/HC professionals at the Port of PE.

Section 3 of the research questionnaire is centred on seeking input from the respondents about what they thought their individual levels or own performance was. It further presented competencies related for the respondents to gauge themselves against the expected to level of competence. The section also focused on seeking input from the respondents on how they could individually improve in their task execution.

The section also sought input from the respondents on what they thought would contribute to a High performing department. And finally required the respondents to respond on whether they were performing at the required peak, and if not, what would be the contributor for such and what should be done to improve or change that picture.

The responses from the respondents in this section were quite uniform to a larger extent. What they all agreed on was that the department was not performing to its peak and they too as individuals were not performing at their peak due to various factors which were presented.

To conclude, the information presented in this chapter was the analysis of information presented by the respondents of the study.

To follow, the chapter will be concluded with a brief synopsis of the chapter.

### **4.3 SUMMARY**

Chapter 4 of this research study consisted of the analysis of data presented by the respondents of the study. They were all given individual questionnaires to complete and the confidentiality of their responses was emphasised.

The objective of this study was to investigate the value add of the HR/HC Professionals of the Port of PE, to the organisation's people paradigm agenda/strategy. Also to identify gaps, if any, in current HR/HC professionals' outputs in relation to a High performing Human Resource/Human Capital (HR/HC) framework, therefore enabling HR/HC professionals to perform in line with best HR practice. Therefore, contributing to organisational success leads to the organisation meeting the government's mandate of poverty alleviation and unemployment.

Qualitative research considers the natural environments that individuals or groups operate in, and aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the real-world problems (Moser, 2017). In this study, the researcher ensured that the complete anonymity of respondents would be maintained and this was communicated to them before the completion of the questionnaires, as is suggested by Moser (2017). They were assured that the researcher would be the only person working with the information and that it would be kept completely confidential, and this created the platform for the respondents to also be more open and honest with their responses to the research questions.

The research thereafter reviewed the information, which was provided by the respondents, and kept the identity of the respondents anonymous. The chapter was divided into 3 sections in the interpretation and analysis of the data.

Data was collected from 8 respondents who make up the Human Resource Team and Department of the Port of Port Elizabeth.

Section one and two of the questionnaires dealt with the background and employment information of the respondents.

This section revealed the following, that 62.5% of the respondents were female; 75% of the respondents were black (50% African, 25% Coloured), and that 50% held managerial positions and the other half were juniors reporting to the managers.

In this section it was also revealed that 62.5% of the respondents were in their positions between 0 – 5 years, 20% were in their positions for more than 25 years and 12.5% for 11 – 15 years.

This section also highlighted that 87.5% of the managers had no previous managerial experience and only 12.5% had previous supervisory experience.

This section also highlighted that 75% of the respondents had a minimum qualification of a National Diploma and 25% had Degrees. Finally, in this section, it was highlighted that 87.5% of the respondents were earning between R400 000(k) – R800 000(k) per annum. This information was important to highlight the type of person profiled by the researcher, inspiring confidence in the responses provided by the respondents.

The section that followed in the questionnaire and analysis focused on assessing what the respondents thought of their individual skills and competence in relation to the positions they assumed. It also sought to understand whether the respondents had any intention of closing competence gaps in case they were highlighted. This section also focused on assessing what the HR/HC professional thought of what would be a high-performing department and doing self-assessments on themselves to determine whether they were operating optimally to contribute to the department's High performance and if not, what contributed to such. This also included what they thought should change to ensure that those maximal peak levels of performance were realised.

The analysis of this section was done by identifying key themes from the responses, those being:

- Assessing on perceived qualification relevance to job/role the respondents are doing.
- Assessing the competency requirements and gaps of the respondents in relation to the jobs/roles they are performing.
- Assessing the respondents' opinions of what they think would contribute to a high-performing department.



From the responses given by the respondents, they all thought that the qualification requirements of the positions they were in were relevant. Most had the qualification requirements of the positions they were in and where they did not have the required qualification they had extensive experience, spanning over 20 years to substitute for such. Only one of the respondents was higher qualified than the position they were in.

From the core Human Resources competencies presented to the respondents, they all felt that they possessed all the competencies required, excluding Managerial, Leadership, and Facilitation skills, which were possessed by only four of the managerial respondents, making up 50% of the group.

The managerial respondents were the only group in the organisation that were subjected to performance reviews, which take place twice a year, a mid-year performance rating, and a final year performance rating. Performance scores going back three years were provided by the said group and all but one in only one year met the required levels of performance. The required score to prove the meeting of the performance objectives would be a three (3) score.

The respondents were also asked about what factors they thought should be done to change or improve departmental outputs to ensure a high-performing team. Uniformity in HR process and policies across the various ports was the highest-rated factor at 87.5%, followed by HR Resources at 75%, revisiting the HR structure at 37.5%, and inter-departmental integration at 12.5%. The respondents were able to add to their responses in the free text area provided and they re-emphasised the factors needing change.

The research picked up some common threads/themes on the responses, which were assisted by the free text that was provided for and added to by the respondents.

The analysis of the data provided, revealed the following, that all the HR/HC professionals were not operating optimally in their positions due to one or more of the following factors:

- The respondents needed variety from the routine and the highly specialised roles they were in, therefore recommending departmental structure changes to enable them to be generalists or enhance the work to ensure that they could do

a variety of tasks. This could be done in a variety of ways; it was suggested that certain tasks be specialised, and the rest be shared amongst the team. They also supported moving to a more Open plan set-up to ensure that they learn from one another.

- The respondents had peak periods in their sub-departmental outputs and warranted extra resources for those periods.
- They noted that there are resource challenges in general within the Human Resources department.
- That the organisation had to find ways of ensuring uniformity in policy and process implementation across the entire organisation.

The overall analysis of the results reveals that there are pockets of excellence within the department, yet they need to be amplified by revisiting certain factors within the organisation. It also revealed that the department is quite balanced in terms of experience spanning over many years and expertise. It did not highlight challenges or a lack of understanding of the HR Strategy, and therefore, the researcher could conclude that the respondents knew exactly what needed to change or be improved to ensure High Levels of performance at an individual level, contributing to the departmental levels of High performance which are sought.

The next chapter, Chapter 5, will give the conclusion of the research study, which will further look at the findings of the study, and recommendations will be presented.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **STUDY OUTCOMES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The researcher started this research in Chapter 1 with the introduction of the topic of this research where the Primary and Secondary objectives of this study were presented. The topic was on developing an effective Framework/Model to improve the HR/HC (Human Resources/ Human Capital) Official's performance at the Port of Port Elizabeth.

To achieve what was warranted by the topic, the primary and secondary objective of this study was:

- To investigate the value of the Human Resource department and HR/HC official's performance in efforts of achieving the organisation's people paradigm agenda/strategy.
- To then identify levels of performance and performance gaps in current HR/HC team outputs.

In this chapter, the researcher therefore discusses and interprets the outcomes to this research objective and in the latter part of the chapter makes recommendations based on the outcomes of the study.

#### **5.2 ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Section A of the research findings highlights the demographics of the respondents, Section B focused on the employment background of the respondents. Section C focused on assessing performance and gaps associated, the competence of individuals/respondents, and the individual contributions to team success.

In Section A, the following was revealed, that 62.5% of the respondents were female; 75% of the respondents were black (50% African, 25% Coloured) and that 50% held managerial positions and the other half were juniors reporting to the managers.

This highlighted to the researcher that the respondents were majority females and that there was a good balance of Managerial and Junior employees.

Section B highlighted that 62.5% of the respondents were in their positions between 0 – 5 years, 12.5% for 11 – 15 years, and 20% were in their positions for more than 25 years.

This section also highlighted that 75% of the respondents had a minimum qualification of a National Diploma and 25% had Degrees.

The researcher could therefore conclude that the respondents were highly qualified, that the group was very diverse though predominantly black, and that the spectrum on experience and expertise was quite balanced amongst the group of respondents.

Yet the researcher questions the honesty of some of the respondent's responses pertaining to the attainment of qualification i.e., National diploma. This is from the responses given by the respondents with more than 25 years experience who make up 20% of the sample. This is based on the comment made by one of the respondents where they indicated that their experience over the years makes up for the qualification.

This section also highlighted that 87.5% of the respondents were earning between R400 000(k) – R800 000(k) per annum. This information was important to highlight the type of person profiled by the researcher, inspiring confidence in the responses provided by the respondents.

This section also highlighted that 87.5% of the managers had no previous managerial experience and only 12.5% had previous supervisory experience.

The respondents all thought that the qualification requirements of the positions they were in were relevant. Most had the qualification requirements of the positions they were in and where they did not have the required qualification they had extensive experience, spanning over 20 years to substitute for such with only one of the respondents who was higher qualified than the position they were in.

This indicated to the researcher that the earnings of the respondents were appropriately aligned to the organisation's Remuneration scales. It also highlighted to the researcher that even though one or more of the respondents might not have the relevant qualifications, that they were being compensated in line with others that might

be in the same or similar roles/jobs with qualifications. The researcher attributed the lack of qualification to the evolution of jobs, with advances in technology naming but one that has occurred in recent times.

50% of the respondents were assuming Management positions, yet the responses indicated to the researcher that 87.5% of these respondents were assuming Management positions for the first time in their current roles, indicating a young/newly experienced management team. This indicates to the researcher that the managers were therefore managing people with more years of experience and who were older than they were, but highly qualified.

Section C of the research focused on assessing what the respondents thought of their individual skills and competence in relation to the positions they assumed. It also sought to understand whether the respondents had any intention of closing the competence gaps in case they were highlighted. This section also focused on assessing what the HR/HC professionals thought of what would be a high-performing department, and the participants did self-assessments on themselves to determine whether they were operating optimally to contribute to the department's High performance, and if not, what contributed to such. This also included what they thought should change to ensure that those maximal peak levels of performance were realised. The questions were based on the Likert-scale rating and they were also allowed to elaborate further.

Themes that were therefore identified by the researcher consisted of:

- Assessing on the ***perceived qualification relevance*** to the job/role that the respondents are doing.
- Assessing the ***competency requirements and gaps*** of the respondents in relation to the jobs/roles they are performing.
- Assessing the respondents' opinions of ***what they think would contribute to a high-performing department***.

All the respondents felt they possessed all the competencies required to fulfil their roles/ jobs, excluding the competence of Managerial, Leadership, and Facilitation skills

which was possessed by only four of the managerial respondents, making up 50% of the group.

In this section, it was also revealed that the only group in the organisation that gets subjected to performance reviews that take place twice a year, namely the mid-year performance rating and the final-year performance rating, are managers. Performance scores going back three years were provided by the said group and all but one in only one year met the required levels of performance. The required score to prove the meeting of performance objectives would be a three (3) score.

This, therefore, indicated to the researcher that in the greater scheme of things there were no performance issues from the managers. In the free text provided to the respondents, none expressed having issues in areas of individual performance nor did the people that report to them. This also highlighted to the researcher that there were no Management respondents that were solid and excelling in their performance, which would have been illustrated by performance scores of 4 and 5 respectively. Though not presenting a performance gap as they were achieving 3 scores, it still indicated that more could be done to develop the managers to levels of excellence depicted by 4 and 5 performance scores.

The respondents were also asked about what they thought should be done to change or improve departmental outputs to ensure a high performing team, as in Chapter 1 of this research it was indicated by the clients of the HR department of the Port of PE that the department was not performing at the levels of a high performing team, and this was illustrated by scores which were below a 3 rating by some clients to the department.

Uniformity in the implementation of HR process and policies across the various ports was the highest-rated factor at 87.5%, followed by shortages in HR Resources at 75%, revisiting the HR structure followed at 37.5%, and inter-departmental integration at 12.5%. The respondents were able to add to their responses in the free text area provided and they re-emphasised that these factors needed to change to ensure movement towards becoming a high-performing department.

From all that was provided by the respondent's analysis of the data provided, it was revealed that **all** the HR/HC professionals were not operating or performing optimally in their positions due to one or more of the following factors:

- The respondents needed variety from the routine and highly specialised roles they were in, therefore recommending departmental structure changes to enable them to be generalists. Or to enhance the work to ensure people could do a variety of tasks. This could be done in a variety of ways and it was suggested that certain tasks be specialised, and that the rest be shared amongst the team. They also supported moving to an Open plan office setup to ensure that they learn from one another, enabling them to handle clients' queries more expediently.
- The respondents mentioned peak periods in their sub-departmental outputs and warranted extra resources for those periods.
- The respondents indicated resource challenges in general within the Human Resources department.
- They also mentioned that the organisation had to find ways of ensuring uniformity in policy and process implementation across the entire organisation.
- The managers were still developing in their skills and competence of management, which has a role of inspiring change, therefore, contributing to organisational levels of excellence.

These findings highlighted to the researcher that there were systemic issues in the organisation which prevented individuals from performing at their peak. It indicated that the people were executing their tasks fully but not optimally so.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations in this study stem solely from the responses given by the respondents of the study who were individuals that made up the entire team of the Human Resource Department of the Port of PE. These were sought from a questionnaire given to the respondents. Most recommendations were derived from the free-text responses given by the respondents of how the Human Resource department can move from providing an average service to moving towards a high-performing department. What the researcher commends is the honesty from the respondent's

self-assessment where they revealed that they were not performing at the levels of a high-performing department. This indicated being very self-aware of the levels expected from their clients.

The researcher could therefore deduce that not performing to the levels of a high-performing department was not done intentionally.

### 5.3.1 Recommendation 1

It is therefore recommended that the following should take place for the department to reach those levels of High performance, and this being purely based on the research results.

Firstly, the respondents expressed being bored or not stimulated with routine work as they were highly specialised and operated in silos within the department.

They also recommended a structure change to support such a change in the department.

Based on this input, the researcher would ***recommend a revisit of the Operating model of the department which could lead to a re-engineering of the Human Resource department structure***. This model must allow the individuals freedom to assume generalist roles whilst still being responsible for some specialist's functions that they are experts in.

### 5.3.2 Recommendation 2

Secondly, one of the biggest areas that was highlighted by the respondents as needing change, which was the inconsistency in the application of processes and policies across the entire organisation – the Port of Port Elizabeth is one of eight ports in the South African economy.

It would thus be ***recommended that the Port of PE initiates communication platforms in the forms of weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly meetings with another port's HR/HC department to discuss any issue on alignment, misalignment, etc.*** These platforms can also be used to share ideas with and from other ports on how to do things better to enhance service delivery and consistency amongst all ports. These



need not be long meetings and can be used as information sharing and alignment platforms.

### 5.3.3 Recommendation 3

Thirdly, the respondents highlighted shortages in resources within the department and some indicated those as being at certain peak times.

The researcher is not convinced that adding more resources would solve any issues/challenges, therefore, contributing to a high-performing team, especially if those were to be sourced in during the current state and structure of the department. ***A resources study can be done to assess the adequate manning levels of the department, yet that can be done parallel to structure changes/ re-engineering. Therefore, contributing to the development of the most appropriate operating model to meet the needs of the customer. That can therefore lead to scoring the HR department 5's or exceeding the levels of service expected versus the current 3 scores that the department receives.*** One can deduce that the department is doing what it's supposed to be doing. Yet the researcher, while looking at the current HR structure, believed that the department has not moved forward to the times of service delivery that are expected today –those of being a *human resource innovator and integrator, credible activist, Strategic positioner, technology proponent, capability builder and change champion as highlighted in Dave Ulrich's model of high performing HR Teams*. Instead, they are still highly transactional.

This value offering defines the required skills and abilities expected of effective and high-performance HR professionals (Dave Ulrich, 2012). These HR experts target and serve key customer expectations and tailor organisational behaviour to customer needs. It also forms the organisation's strategic response to business conditions and customer expectations by supporting the formation and the decision-making of strategic and organisational decisions (Dave Ulrich, 2012).

Katzenbach and Smith (1999) explain in Chapter 2 of this research that, High performing teams can deliver performance well, more than similar teams, and far above reasonable expectations. They are those teams that best serve the customer well, whose productive outputs meet or exceed the standards of quantity, quality, and timeliness of the clients.

An organisation's competitive strategy and its HR strategy are interdependent (Cascio and Boudreau, 2012). This message is further emphasised as it's stated that salvation lies in the hands of human resource specialists themselves, who must switch from being administrators and huggers to value-generating partners (Fitz-end, 1997).

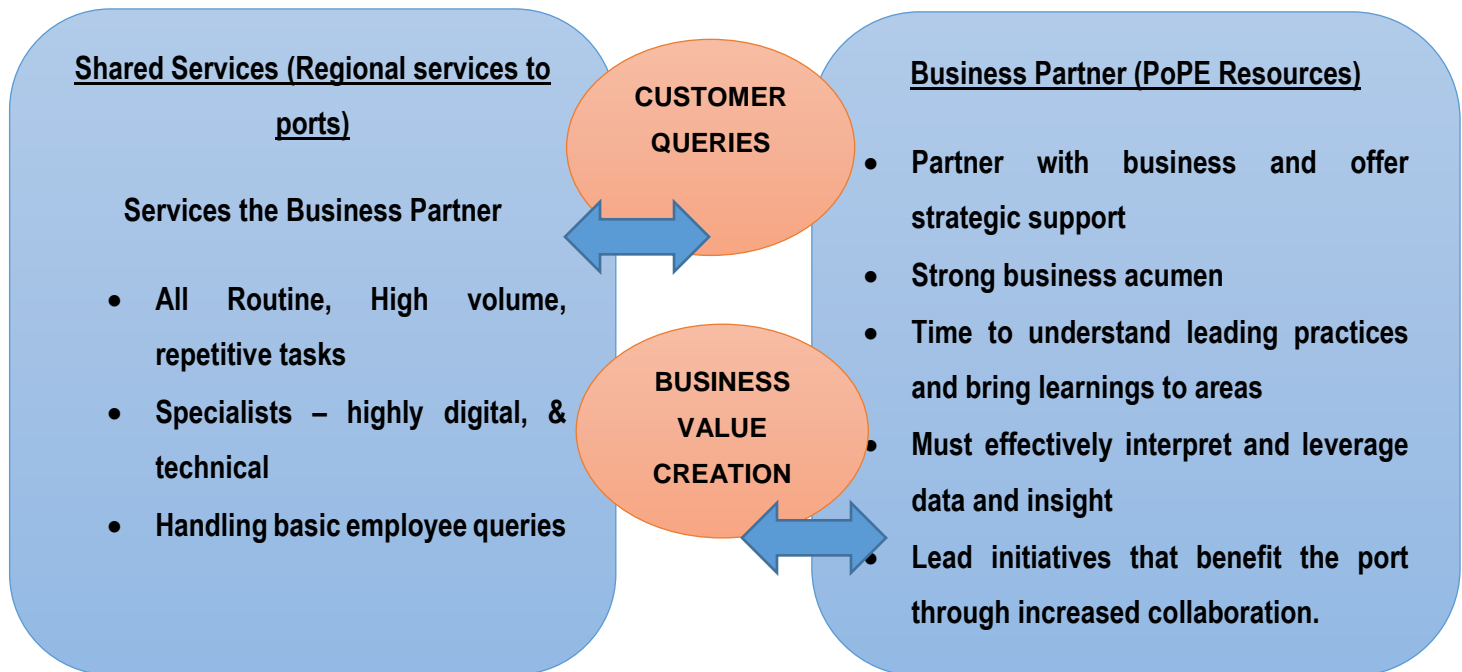
Ulrich's Framework on Effective Human Resources reveals six (6) competency domains and how they affect both the perceived effectiveness of HR professionals and business success. It is indicated that High performing HR organisations across regions and industries, both small and large, appear to have the mix of HR competencies identified through this research. These are:

- Change champion
- Capability builder
- Technology proponent
- Strategic positioner
- Credible activist
- Human resources innovator and integrator

#### **5.3.4 Recommendation 4**

The Operating Model/Framework the researcher recommends the department move to and implements, is that of a combination of Shared Services and Business Partnering, as indicated in the graph below:

**Figure 1.7: Proposed and recommended HR operating model (S. Maqetuka, 2020)**



The Shared services Representatives will be those who focus on high volume, routine, and repetitive tasks. They would deal with the day-to-day employee queries. Their focus will be on the seamless provision of HR service and enhanced employee experience as they will be operating in a highly digitised integrated platform, therefore handling queries expediently.

This service will be a regional service servicing ports within the same region. In the Eastern Cape, they will handle all those transactions for the ports i.e., Recruitment, Training plan implementation, Payroll, Employee Relations services. The ports services would be the Port of PE, Port of Ngqura, and the Port of East London.

Employees will be able to access the service from self-service kiosks, telephonic assistance, and face-to-face. Therefore, some employees from the Port of PE structure who currently perform these routine, transactional queries will be transferred to this structure of Shared services. Their jobs will be enhanced with technology and more efficient processes. They will be specialists, yet they would be able to move between the various activities due to the nature of highly efficient services. The issue of the inconsistent application of processes will be drastically reduced and later eradicated as the structure matures.

The Business Partners will be partnering with the business and focused on adding value to the core of the operations of the port. They will be highly focused on implementing continuous improvement practices and the provision of an excellent HR business value-adding service. They will be playing an advisory and supporting role to the business-to-business problems, thereby contributing to organisational success. They will be a highly experienced expert with deep business understanding. The focus will be on employee engagement, leadership effectiveness, and advocating and championing People service delivery. They will focus on Risk mitigation and increased People processes. These individuals will form part of the Port of PE HR/HC Team.

#### **5.4 STUDY LIMITATIONS**

Study limitations are described as a weakness or deficiency in the study research, the limitation of a study serves to acknowledge potential issues and springboards recommendations for future research (Hussey, 2009).

The study focused on the Port of PE's Human Resources Department, yet the port is one of 8 ports in the South African economy, and they operate as a single organisation governed by the same policies. Though the researcher included the entire team of the Port of PE, many factors influence the operations of the port that are outside the control of the port.

The strategy of the port stems from the wider HR organisation strategy that is created at the Head Office level, therefore for the port to implement recommendations presented, they will have to be supported and driven from a Head Office to ensure that the same is applied in all ports.

Therefore, the recommendations made in this study for the Port of PE can only be driven for implementation elsewhere, the port can merely share the view to try and influence and steer organisational thinking towards the directions presented here forth.

The researcher also questioned the honesty of the information presented by some of the respondents as the questionnaire was somewhat personal. Due to the small sample size, the researcher felt that the responses provided by some of the respondents were to align with others, especially in the area that looked at

qualifications. Those responses that were questioned were from the more experienced respondents in terms of their years of service.

Therefore, there is an opportunity created for a wider organisational study, from all the 8 ports, on assessing the efficiencies of HR departments across the entire port system.

## **5.5 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this study was to develop an effective HR Framework/Model to improve HR/ HR professionals' performance at the Port of Port Elizabeth.

The primary objective of this study was to *assess the provision of a high-performing HR/HC department's provision of service to the organisation's people paradigm agenda/strategy.*

The study met the requirements of the primary objective and concluded that the service offered by the Human Resource department at the Port of PE to the people paradigm agenda was not superior and excellent. This was confirmed by all the respondents of the study where they indicated that they were partially performing their functions instead of fully. All the respondents responded that none were operating at the level required by the organisation due to various factors identified i.e.:

- Not having adequate resources,
- No longer stimulated by specialists' functions,
- Are not structured correctly to meet the demands of the customer,
- Inconsistency of process and policy implementation with other ports in the port system.

A qualitative study was conducted where 8 respondents formed the sample. These were all the members of the Human Resource department of the Port of PE.

Finally, recommendations are as follows:

- A new Human Resource Operating model had been presented for implementation to address the challenges highlighted. This will address the issues of not being stimulated with the specialised work currently being performed by the department and team. This will also address the issue of resources shortages. The change will ensure that the team addressed the value

add off the department, therefore contributing to the ports People paradigm agenda.

- Secondly, a recommendation was made for the ports to have a joint regular engagement to ensure alignment and constancy in the application of HR policies and practices across the entire organisation.

To conclude, this research study in the literature review of Chapter 2 focused on highlighting the important role that State-Owned enterprises play in driving the government's agenda of poverty alleviation and the creation of unemployment. Further highlighted was the role of Transnet and the footprint of Transnet in South Africa, therefore having the responsibility of creating jobs and skills within the South African community.

This was supported by the HR Plan of Transnet, which was highlighted in Chapter 1. Further in Chapter 1, the high South African unemployment rate was depicted, as well as the Transnet strategy, which aligned with the Government's agenda of poverty alleviation through employment or increasing of headcount and skills development. The importance of Human resources not being able to divorce itself from driving organisational excellence was highlighted and its role was to be the catalyst of organisational excellence.

Dave Ulrich's model was therefore chosen by the researcher as the ideal to highlight what a high-performing HR Team should focus on, which was used to compare the performance of the HR Team of the Port of PE.

Chapter 3 highlighted the research methodology and approach that was going to be used in this research study to assess the levels of performance of the HR Team of the Port of PE because their clients were rating them at levels of 3 versus 5, therefore depicting that the team is not providing superior levels of service. An approach that was selected as being most appropriate was that of a Qualitative approach.

Ethics to be followed for the study was highlighted, thereby ensuring the anonymity of respondents for their participation.

Chapter 4 highlighted the interpretation and analysis of the data provided by the respondents.

And finally, in Chapter 5, the recommendation and an ideal HR model were crafted by the researcher to be followed to try and raise the levels of performance of the HC Team to that of a 5 from 3, with 3 being mediocre. This would therefore contribute to organisational success for the Port of PE, enabling it to effectively drive the government's mandate of poverty alleviation and reducing levels of unemployment in South Africa.

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## ANNEXURES

### ANNEXURE A : QUESTIONNAIRE

Date]

Dear Respondent

I am studying towards my MBA (Master in Business Administration) degree at the Nelson Mandela University Business School. I am conducting research on **Developing as effective HR Framework/Model to improve HR Officials Performance at the Port of Port Elizabeth (Transnet National Ports Authority – Port Elizabeth)** I believe that my study will make an important contribution to **the organisation.**

You are part of our selected sample of respondents whose views we seek on the above-mentioned matter. We would therefore appreciate it if you could answer a few questions.

There are no correct or incorrect answers. Please answer the questions as accurately as possible.

Please note also that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that you have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage. We also guarantee your anonymity and the confidentiality of information acquired by this questionnaire. Neither your name nor the name of your firm will be mentioned in the study.

Thank you very much.

## **QUESTIONNAIRE TO HR/HC PERSONNEL AT THE PORT OF PORT ELIZABETH**

1. What is your educational level? Please tick the appropriate box.

Matric ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Honours ☐  
Masters ☐ Doctorate ☐

2. What qualification level is required for the job you are performing? Please tick the appropriate box.

Matric ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Honours ☐  
Masters ☐ Doctorate ☐

3. Do you think the qualification requirement of the job you are performing is appropriate? ☐ ☐

Yes No

Please elaborate.

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4. Should there be a qualification gap as per questions (1) & (2) above, please advise whether you have an intention of closing the gap by e.g., studying further?

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5. Depending on how you have answered question (4) please advise whether it is your requirements/goal or an organization requirement for you to close the qualification gap?

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6. Herewith the core HR/HR competency requirements by an HR/HC professional at the Port of PE, please tick those you possess?

Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interpersonal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planning	and	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organising	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Facilitation		Management		Leadership		<input type="checkbox"/>
HR Technical expertise	<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationship Building	<input type="checkbox"/>			

7. What has been your performance rating over the past 3 years (1 – 5 rating scale)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Y1	Y2	Y3



8. What are the factors that can help you improve or excel in your job?

Uniform HR Processes within Transnet	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organisational Support	<input type="checkbox"/>
HR Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interdepartmental Integration	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Please feel free to elaborate on any of the factors above.*

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9. In your opinion, what would contribute to the outputs of a High Performing HR/HC department?

Please tick the appropriate factors:

Effective, Efficient and Pro-active Employee Assistance Programmes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective, Efficient and Pro-active Recruitment service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective, Efficient and Pro-active Talent Management service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective, Efficient and Pro-active Employee Relations service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective, Efficient and Pro-active Payroll and Administration service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrated HR/HC department	<input type="checkbox"/>

[illegible]

- Partly ☐ Fully ☐

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# ANNEXURE B: INTENTION TO SUBMIT TREATISE FOR ASSESSMENT



## INTENTION TO SUBMIT TREATISE/DISSERTATION/THESIS FOR ASSESSMENT

TO: FACULTY ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

PLEASE FAX OR EMAIL THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE RELEVANT FACULTY ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION MANAGER:

FACULTY	MANAGER	FACSIMILE	EMAIL
HUMANITIES	Ms D Nzioki	041 504 1057	Drucilla.Nzioki@mandela.ac.za
BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES	Mr A Smith	041 504 9804	Adanaan.Smith@mandela.ac.za
EDUCATION	Mr R Salie	041 504 9383	Ridaa.Salie@mandela.ac.za
ENGINEERING, THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	Mr J Dorothy	041 504 9751	Jonathan.Dorothy@mandela.ac.za
HEALTH SCIENCES	Ms M Afrikaner (acting)	041 504 9324	FPGSC@mandela.ac.za
LAW	Ms N Terblanche	041 504 9660	Nikki.Terblanche@mandela.ac.za
SCIENCE	Ms N Bobi (acting)	041 504 2369	Nokuvo.Bobi@mandela.ac.za

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF THIS FORM FOR POSSIBLE GRADUATION IN APRIL:  
27 AUGUST 2021

*When the treatise/dissertation/thesis nears completion, the student must inform the relevant Faculty Academic Administration Office in writing of his/her intention to submit it for examination. Such notice must be given at least three months before the prospective date of submission. See the General Prospectus.*

### STUDENT DETAILS

FACULTY	Business and Economic Science
NAME OF QUALIFICATION	MBA
STUDENT NUMBER	214308928
FULL NAMES	Siphokazi, Suzanne
SURNAME	Maqetuka
STUDY ADDRESS	20 Cosmos Villas, Cosmos Street, Westering, Port Elizabeth, 6025
CONTACT DETAILS	083 297 6127
TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT	DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE HR FRAMEWORK TO IMPROVE HR OFFICIALS PERFORMANCE AT THE PORT OF PORT ELIZABETH
SUPERVISOR'S FULL NAMES AND SURNAME	Professor M. S. Bayat
EMAIL	mbmsaheed@gmail.com
TELEPHONE	083 786 1326
CO-SUPERVISOR/S FULL NAMES AND SURNAME	N/A

**PLEASE INDICATE WITH AN (X) IN THE RELEVANT BOX**

<input type="checkbox"/>	This is to inform you of my intention to submit my research project for examination purposes for possible graduation in April
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-submission for this cycle
<b>NB for doctoral candidates: Kindly be reminded of the requirement for a publishable manuscript/article to be submitted in accordance with rule G5.14.4 in the General Prospectus</b>	

STUDENT'S signature ..... Date 1 September 2021.....

SUPERVISOR'S signature ..... Date 1 September 2021.....

## ANNEXURE C: ETHICS FORM E

# NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

FORM E

### ETHICS CLEARANCE FOR TREATISES/DISSERTATIONS/THESES

*Please type or complete in black ink*

FACULTY: Business and Economics Faculty

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT: Business School

I, (surname and initials of supervisor) Professor M. S. Bayat

the supervisor for (surname and initials of candidate) Siphokazi Magetuka

\_\_\_\_\_ (student number) 214308928

a candidate for the degree of MBA

with a treatise/dissertation/thesis entitled (full title of treatise/dissertation/thesis):


Developing an effective HR Framework/Model to improve Human Resources/ Human Capital Officials at the Port of Port Elizabeth (Transnet National Ports Authority/TNPA – PE)

considered the following ethics criteria (please tick the appropriate block):

	YES	NO
1. Is there any risk of harm, embarrassment of offence, however slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties or to the communities at large?		x
2. Is the study based on a research population defined as 'vulnerable' in terms of age, physical characteristics and/or disease status?		x
2.1 Are subjects/participants/respondents of your study:		x
(a) Children under the age of 18?		
(b) NMMU staff?		x
(c) NMMU students?		x
(d) The elderly/persons over the age of 60?		x
(e) A sample from an institution (e.g. hospital/school)?		x
(f) Handicapped (e.g. mentally or physically)?		x

3. Does the data that will be collected require consent of an institutional authority for this study? (An institutional authority refers to an organisation that is established by government to protect vulnerable people)		x
3.1 Are you intending to access participant data from an existing, stored repository (e.g. school, institutional or university records)?		x
4. Will the participant's privacy, anonymity or confidentiality be compromised?		x
4.1 Are you administering a questionnaire/survey that:		
(a) Collects sensitive/identifiable data from participants?		x
(b) Does not guarantee the anonymity of the participant?		x
(c) Does not guarantee the confidentiality of the participant and the data?		x
(d) Will offer an incentive to respondents to participate, i.e. a lucky draw or any other prize?		x
(e) Will create doubt whether sample control measures are in place?		x
(f) Will be distributed electronically via email (and requesting an email response)?		x
<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your questionnaire DOES NOT request respondents' identification, is distributed electronically and you request respondents to return it <i>manually</i> (print out and deliver/mail); AND respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO.</li> <li>• If your questionnaire DOES NOT request respondents' identification, is distributed via an email link and works through a web response system (e.g. the university survey system); AND respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO.</li> </ul>		
<p>Please note that if ANY of the questions above have been answered in the affirmative (YES) the student will need to complete the full ethics clearance form (REC-H application) and submit it with the relevant documentation to the Faculty RECH (Ethics) representative</p>		

and hereby certify that the student has given his/her research ethical consideration and full ethics approval is not required.

  
SUPERVISOR(S)

18/04/2019  
DATE

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE

  
Siphokai Maqetuka  
STUDENT(S)

16 April 2019  
DATE

Student(s) contact details (e.g. telephone number and email address):  
Siphokai.maqetuka@transnet.net & 083 297 6127

Please ensure that the research methodology section from the proposal is attached to this form.

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#### ABSTRACT

With rising economic conditions and intense competitive conditions in business development, companies are increasingly facing the need to hire, motivate and retain talented people (Irana Bagaeva, 2016). Therefore, employees with the skills to meet market and customer requirements, regardless of ownership or range of production in the modern world, are crucial to growth, survival, and sustainability.

This emphasises the importance of those who must ensure that the above is achieved, that is, the human resources department of the organisation. The Human Resources Department is considered by business leaders and employees to be the body that builds and evaluates the human resources network that drives the effectiveness of the organisation (Vandersyl, 2018). Organisations need to be able to configure themselves, and HR leaders and teams, after all, keep their networks strong by not only satisfying regulations, but also leveraging and addressing social trends that benefit the organisation.

Given the background highlighted above which highlights the importance of an effective Human resource department and the role it ought to play in the organisation's success, growth, and sustainability it was therefore sought by the researcher to delve into the effectiveness of the Human resources department at the Port of Port Elizabeth as they have continually been receiving mediocre performance ratings from its organisation's leaders.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore and investigate from the Human Resource personnel in this department their opinions of the effectiveness of the service offerings of the Human Resource department of the Port of PE to service the needs of their customers. This led to the development of a qualitative research approach where semi structure interviews supported with questionnaires were conducted on all the personnel of the Human Resource department. The questionnaire contained closed and open-ended statements of opinions held by the respondents being the Human resource personnel of the Port of Port Elizabeth. The study findings indicate that the Human Resource Department of the Port of PE is functioning at a mediocre level of service provision and is not a high performing team

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**ANNEXURE E: GRAMMAR EDITOR LETTER**

S. Ferreira

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**To whom it may concern**

This document serves to confirm that the following thesis paper has been checked:

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Should you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Jolene.

Kind regards

Simoné Ferreira